

Favorite Fernandino FOOD

By Betsy Wilson

THE CRAB TRAP has been serving Amelia Island for 27 years since opening during the Shrimp Festival in 1979. The setting for this two-story eatery, the Seydel Building, has been here for 120 years. It was built by two German brothers as separate apartments for their families, with stairs over two stores -- a general store and millinery on the ground floor. Over the years it was home to steamship agents, then the local newspaper. It's on North 2nd Street in the heart of the historic district within walking distance of plentiful parking, shopping, touring and several inns.

The Richard Germano family owns and operates the restaurant as well as the Amelia Inn & Suites, and their family tradition rests on pride of service and quality.

Max and Holly Wohlfarth, proprietors, excel in customer service and bring back their local clientele as well as visitors.

"We make everything here," Max explained the secret to success. "Everything...everything...everything."

He means literally every single thing is made fresh on site, beginning with the batter for fried seafoods, the grill sauce, the salad dressings, the spicy delicious cocktail sauce -- everything. Features are fresh local shrimp, fresh fish, hand cut steaks, gator tail appetizers, homemade key lime pie. Deep fried Southern style crab cakes are a popular choice, and locals come often for the snow crab. Hush puppies are light and plentiful. Buckets are handy in the middle of

the tables when diners are shucking and peeling their own crustaceans.

Max knew he was destined to be in the business after learning that many of his ancestors had been in the restaurant business including his grandfather who had once been executive chef of the famed Menger Hotel in San Antonio.

Any trip to Amelia Island is spiced with a visit to The Crab Trap. It's a great place to meet the locals and partake of friendly conversation as well as enjoy the water view and the meal.

The Crab Trap Punch recipe is possibly a closely guarded secret which rivals any Caribbean bar specialty. It would be advisable to sample a couple and analyze the ingredients while your seafood or steak is being prepared. ■

RECIPES

BLACKENED SHRIMP WITH COCONUT RUM GLAZE

- 1 dozen Fernandina shrimp
- Blackening spice to taste
- 1 oz. coconut rum
- 1 oz. Pina Colada mix
- 1 oz. butter
- 1 serving rice or pasta, cooked

Add butter to a very hot pan. Coat shrimp in blackening spice and add to pan. When shrimp become firm, add rum and Pina Colada mix. Saute until shrimp are cooked. Serve over rice or pasta.

Recipe also may be adapted for light white fish such as ponga, a fish similar to grouper and popular with many local restaurants for its availability as well as superior taste.

CRAB TRAP PUNCH

- 1 shot tequila
- 1 shot vodka
- 1 shot coconut rum
- 2 shots pineapple rum runner
- Top with sweet and sour mix
- Splash grenadine to color
- Garnish with a cherry

