

Master creates art in and out of the kitchen



Shanta Hauser, executive chef at The Bistro at Winston-Salem Hotel & Spa, hosts a food tasting and art exhibition on Saturday, June 20.

Photos by Erin Mizelle for the Winston-Salem Chronicle

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Free food tasting and an art exhibition welcomed patrons of The Bistro on Saturday, June 20. The Bistro, inside the Winston-Salem Hotel and Spa, at 3050 University Parkway, held an event to mark its grand opening.

For executive chef and artist, Shanta Hauser, opening her own restaurant where she can display her artistic ability is a dream come true.

Although she always had dreams of becoming a chef, Shanta admits visual art has always been her first love. From the National Black Theatre Festival held here in Winston-Salem to Greece, Shanta has displayed her art across the world.

"I started off as a visual artist," Shanta said. "I've shown in the Lincoln Center in New York, Diggs Gallery, Greece, and a lot of other places, I was doing that at first, then the cooking started to really take over."

Eight years ago, Shanta joined the Winston-Salem Hotel and Spa as a caterer. At that time Shanta was not the master chef she is today but, she was confident in her ability to cook, and was determined to reach her goal of owning a restaurant.

"I wasn't a chef but I knew I could cook. They let me cook for one of their staff meetings. They tasted the food and called me to tell me I was hired," Hauser said.

"Next thing you know, I've been here eight years."

Winston-Salem Hotel and Spa, which was the Sundance hotel, has never had a restaurant. In years passed, the hotel would only host banquets that Shanta would come in to cater.

Shanta said when she was responsible

for catering the events for the hotel, she had little and sometimes no help. From selling tickets to cooking all the food, Shanta had to do everything herself. Now with a full staff of employees, Shanta said setting up for the food tasting and grand opening was a lot less stressful.

"I've always been like a one-woman show, but now I have the opportunity to have a trained staff," Shanta said. "This is the first time I've done an event that I haven't been stressed because I have the support to pull it off."

The general manager of the hotel, Walter Smith, said he has done a lot of grand openings, but he has never done an opening with an art exhibit. Smith said he was blown away by how talented Shanta is when he first met her.

"I've seen Shanta's vision and wanted to bring that alive. She is amazingly talented," Smith said. "From what I hear, she can play the clarinet, the violin, she's a painter, she is an artist with food as well. She is truly an incredible talent."

According to Smith, the best thing on the menu at the Bistro is the pecan crusted salmon.

"The salmon is just amazing. It has pecans and is topped with a cranberry sauce. it is very good."

Shanta said that achieving her dream was a long process. The single mother of three said she is a prime example of what you can do even though the odds may be against you.

"You have to have a lot of motivation and determination," Shanta said. "Anything is possible. Just stay motivated and speak your dreams into existence. Words are very powerful."



The blackened shrimp salad at The Bistro at Winston-Salem Hotel & Spa.



The fried cheesecake with fresh strawberries at The Bistro at Winston-Salem Hotel & Spa.



Some of the artwork produced by executive chef, Shanta Hauser. "Celebration" (at the top center) then artwork trio, from left to right: "Now," "Before," "After."

Farmers Market Seafood Festival coming

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The first-ever Seafood Festival at the Dixie Classic Fair Farmers Market will offer cooked seafood and seafood for purchase as well as live music, food trucks and kids' activities on Saturday, June 27.

Forsyth Seafood Market & Café will be at the farmers market with a wide variety of seafood for sale, including whiting, flounder, tilapia, snapper and more. Cooked samples will be available.

Forsyth Seafood will also have its food truck at the market from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will be offering fried and grilled items as well as its famous coleslaw and hush puppies. The Rollin' Sol food truck and the Kona Ice truck will also be at the market.

B.Kin Band, a local quartet that plays roots, bluegrass and Americana music, is scheduled to perform from 10 a.m. to noon.

Also coming this summer is the annual corn-shucking contest, to be held July 11, and the salsa contest, to be held Aug. 8. Beekeepers will return to the market on Sept. 5.

The Dixie Classic Fair Farmers Market, established in 1974, is the oldest farmers market in Forsyth County and is open at the Winston-Salem Fairgrounds every Saturday year-round from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. Enter through the parking area off 27th Street.



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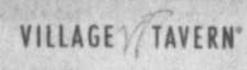
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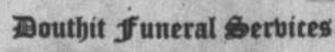
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