

DINING



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LOWCOUNTRY CASUAL

Hubee D's serves up homemade wings and tenders in a down home atmosphere

By Nicole Bryan
 Contributing Writer

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John Ferguson and Dana Sinkler Jr. serve up something new but deeeeliciously familiar at Hubee D's.

A classic 1964 Studebaker truck sits parked out front of Hubee D's Tenders & Wings in the St. Andrews Shopping Center. It's very symbolic for West Ashley's newest restaurant, which may cater to a generation on the go but still manages to serve up down home food in an old school way.

Debuting earlier this month, Hubee D's owners Dana Sinkler Jr. and John Ferguson aim to offer a brand of fast-casual dining without forfeiting culinary quality. "I've been in the food business for over three decades. It's a challenge to come up with something 'new,'" says Sinkler, who also owns Just Fresh Café and Catering in Mount Pleasant. "In researching our concept, we discovered the fast casual market to be saturated with burgers and Tex Mex."

While Hubee D's may not be reinventing the wheel when it comes to food, they're definitely trying to improve it. And it starts with the food itself. Fresh never-frozen chicken marinated in fresh buttermilk, hickory-smoked jumbo wings, hand-cut fries, and salads are all prepared in-house daily. Building on his own family recipe, Sinkler crafted a menu that specializes in an array of local inspired sauces, such as Lowcountry Buffalo, Old Edisto Honey Barbecue, and Wadmalaw Island Jerk just to name a few.

Sinkler was raised in the Lowcountry and earned a business degree from the College of Charleston. He was the 1986 Valedictorian of the Culinary Institute of America and co-founded Dana Alexander Inc, producers of the nationally distributed Terra Chips, an all-natural gourmet vegetable chip.

Ferguson brings his experience as a partner of the Charlotte-based Carolina Restaurant Group to Hubee D's. He joins Sinkler with the idea to offer an authentic dining experience, primarily focused on chicken and wings.

"We are really focused on one specialty" Ferguson says. "Chicken and wings are in high demand and we want to do them extremely well."

At Hubee D's patrons can eat in or take-out. The layout and main dining area resembles a country store rather than a fast casual restaurant. Sinkler and Ferguson both wanted to create more of a "throwback" restaurant than a commercial space. Along with the local nods already presented in the menu, local architects, contractors, graphic designers, and artists were used to build something authentic. Local artist David Boatwright created a mural in the main dining room of "Hubee," Ferguson's Studebaker truck, which serves as an unofficial mascot. Keeping with the diner-inspired layout, a vintage jukebox sits at the far end of the room.

"We really are Lowcountry casual," says Ferguson. "As delicious as our dishes are, you can still get a meal with all the fixin's for under five bucks."

Hubee D's is located at 975 Savannah Hwy. For more information or to look at the menu, visit www.hubeeds.com.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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