

Littleton Independent

Louisiana native brings bayou to Littleton

Restaurant offers Cajun comfort food along Santa Fe Drive

By Kyle Harding | December 5, 2016



Greg Jones said that he was reluctant to eat at The Lost Cajun restaurant in Breckenridge while on a ski trip to his place in Keystone, but his son insisted.

“I don’t eat Cajun food outside of Louisiana,” he remembered saying at the time.

Jones moved to Colorado two years ago from Alexandria, a city in the central part of Louisiana, so that his wife, Karin, could take a job as a nursing administrator at HealthSouth in Littleton, but he had spent most of his life in the Bayou State.

“As soon as I tasted it, I knew this was food from home,” Jones said.

The Lost Cajun is a small chain started by another Louisianian living in Colorado, Raymond Griffin, who opened the first restaurant in Frisco six years ago. It now boasts 11 locations, six in Colorado and the remainder in Texas, Tennessee and South Carolina.

After eating there, Jones set out to become a franchisee and open the first location of the restaurant in the Denver area, at 5350 S. Santa Fe Drive, Littleton.

“I lived my entire life in Louisiana,” he said. “I know what this food is supposed to taste like.”

Jones is a retired accountant and his father was in the grocery business, but going back generations, his ancestors were farmers, fishermen and trappers.

He didn’t have restaurant experience, but he had an old friend who did, and happened to live in the area. He brought Jon Schaffer on board as a manager. He and Schaffer had served together in the Army in Germany 35 years ago, and Schaffer had 15 years of experience in the restaurant business, including at a large casino in Las Vegas.

“He called me and said ‘I want to open a restaurant’ and I said ‘no, you don’t,’” Schaffer said.

Schaffer had no experience with Cajun food, but has grown to appreciate the complexity of its mainstays, like gumbo and jambalaya.

“The flavors, they just build and develop,” he said.

Jones is proud of having received compliments on the food from fellow Louisianians.

“This food is what is cooked in their momma’s kitchen,” he said. “Every Monday they had red beans and rice. Every weekend they had gumbo. Four hundred years of culture — in Louisiana, our culture revolves around food.”

He’s also proud of repeat customers, a factor that he says is an important measure of success for restaurants.

Jones said he’s competing against himself to offer the best experience possible to his customers — comfort food combined with Southern hospitality — instead of competing against a pair of restaurants in the area with similar fare: Lucille’s Creole Café, located nearby on Bowles Avenue, and NoNo’s Café, off County Line Road.

He says the signature dishes are probably gumbo and jambalaya, which he calls “essential Cajun,” but he also sells a lot of catfish, and fried alligator is on the menu as well. He has a hard time saying what his favorite is.

“If I were pinned down, I’d have to say the roast beef po’ boy,” he said.

He doesn’t sell Colorado beers, other than Coors. Nothing against Colorado craft beer, but he says you can buy it anywhere here. He gets beer from Abita Brewing Company, a Louisiana brewer.

Jones has big plans for the location, in the Riverbend center along Santa Fe Drive, including a patio.

“We’ll be doing crawfish boils, we’ll be having live music,” he said. “We’re looking to turn this into a little corner of Louisiana right here.”