

Seafood's the name of the game

Jacques restaurant in Bingham Farms has gone from French tableside cooking to emphasis on fresh seafood instead.

The "Petite Jardin" has been dropped from the restaurant's name. Now it's an explicit Jacques Seafood.

Over luncheon, Jacques general manager Mark Fraker explained the change. "It was a group decision by the owner and management," he said. "The French tableside cooking service was becoming a little stagnant."

He believes Jacques has now "filled in a niche in the North Woodward area for a fine dining restaurant that serves as a seafood restaurant also."

Fraker was asked how Jacques stacks up against Charles's Crab in Troy, one of the top-rated seafood restaurants, also located in the northern suburbs.

"I don't want to say we're a step above Charles's Crab, but our waiters are in tuxes and waitresses in black and white," he said.

CHARLEY'S CRAB, by contrast, stresses informality in its dining, although Chuck Muer "traditional has said he encourages 'traditional professionalism' in service.

Daily specials at Jacques tend to the elegant, such as sweetbreads and crab wellington. "We mix French specialties with seafoods," said executive chef Carol Haskins.

Ms. Haskins called the emphasis on seafood "an exciting new concept that's been well received."

She drew attention to the setting for these dishes. Jacques, with a sumptuous decor and centering around an atrium, has received praise as one of the Detroit area's most beautiful restaurants.

Fraker said that going to seafood is a way of going along with the American palate. "People see seafood as diet-watching and healthy."

He said prices have come down considerably at Jacques with seafood predominating. Restaurant critiques previously listed Jacques food as "very expensive."



Ethel Simmons

FRAKER THINKS the new designation should be "moderate to expensive." Prices of entrees start out at \$8.75 for dinner.

The menu formerly was a la carte, but now a salad and fresh vegetable de jour is served with all entrees. Salads include a new sweet and sour ginger dressing the chef developed.

Ms. Haskins said all seafood served is fresh, except for shrimp and crab. Besides local fresh seafood, fresh fish is flown in from Boston.

"Carol has come up with innovative sauces, that are light sauces and don't cover up the flavor," Fraker said.

To a sautéed fish, Ms. Haskins adds wine, butter and cream, finishing the sauce at time of preparation. "It's not made up ahead," she said. "It's nice to find a restaurant that does everything from scratch."

One of the specialties winning popularity at Jacques is stuffed flourider with crab meat. "That's really taken off," Ms. Haskins said.

BLUE POINT STEAK, a filet mignon stuffed with fresh oysters and broiled, is also a big favorite. "Jim (Thompson, the owner) said 'that's not going to sell,'" Fraker said. But the volume of orders is proving Thompson wrong.

The Blue Point Steak is an Australian dish Fraker served when he was food services manager at the Community House in Birmingham, which features ethnic foods at its film series dinners.

Whole, one and one-eighty-pound Maine Lobster, steamed or broiled, at an \$11.95 introductory price for October, also was heavily ordered.

"Last weekend 35 percent of the entrees served were lobsters," Fraker said.

Another specialty is Seafood Symphony, combining whole steamed Maine lobster, one-quarter Dungeness crab, steamers and mussels.

MS. HASKINS created Shrimp à la Grecque, shrimp sautéed and seasoned with oregano, mushrooms, green onions, sherry, feta cheese and Greek olives.

There's also a chopped veal and lobster special.

Jacques has enlarged its bakery and is selling retail the breads and goods baked on the premises. The bakery, Jacques Patisserie, was scheduled to open Saturday, also offering some daily seafood specials to take out, along with fresh fish and lobster.

Marvin Gardens, casual, family dining spot adjoining Jacques, has a New York deli menu now. It also offers a couple of broiled fish dishes daily.

Mark Fraker was at The Community House for two years before going to the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce as director of the food industry council.

He, as well as Ms. Haskins, joined Jacques recently for the new menu.

CAROL HASKINS was previously at Healthy Jones for six months and the Great Dane for one and one-half years. She started out at the Village Club in Bloomfield Hills, where she "got into gourmet cooking."

Her background also includes working as a baker at Bloomfield Open Hunt, then the Money Tree, Great Oaks Country Club, and Cooper's Arms. At one point, she worked "at Tweeny's at night and the Great Dane in the morning."

Jacques is at 30100 Telegraph, north of 12 Mile Road.

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"The Collegiate Marches," written by John Philip Sousa, are featured on the Detroit Concert Band's current LP release — Volume VIII (HL 80779-S) in its "Sousa American Bicentennial Collection."

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Polish dancers highlight event

The atmosphere of Lubin, Wielkopolska and Rzeszow will come alive in the dances of the Wawel Polish Folk ensemble performing at an "Ethnic Sunday: Polish Adventure" at 3 p.m. Sunday at the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit, 111 E. Kirby in the Cultural Center.

The dance performance is part of a two-hour afternoon designed by the International Institute and the Friends of Polish Art as an introduction to Polish culture.

The program also includes a slide presentation on Polish Christmas Customs and Crafts by Dr. Helen Suchara, professor of education at Wayne State University, and will finish with authentic Polish refreshments including sausage, salads and pastries.

Ethnic Sundays are a continuing series of events at the International Institute highlighting a different ethnic culture once a month.

"WE FIND that Ethnic Sundays pro-

vide metropolitan Detroiters a more detailed look at a particular ethnic culture for those who are especially interested. It is an intimate atmosphere where ethnic representatives and visitors have a chance to meet," said Mary Ball, executive director of the International Institute.

Helen Gordon of Dearborn Heights is chairperson of the "Polish Adventure" event, along with committee members Christine Blisek of Grosse Pointe Woods, Helen Suchara of Livonia and Anne and Lee Udrych of Highland Park.

The Detroit-based Wawel Polish Folk Ensemble recently returned from a summer trip to Poland where it took part in the fifth World Festival of Polish Folk Dance and won three first place awards.

The 25-member troupe is the oldest independent performance group in the Polish community, founded in 1955. It has appeared with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

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