

RESTAURANTS

Taste of the Caribbean comes to Fredericton

■ Caribbean Flavas Fine Dining offering taste of the islands

BY JENNIFER MALO
Telegraph-Journal

FREDERICTON – It's a taste of the islands, mon.

Caribbean Flavas Fine Dining, the latest addition to Fredericton's cuisine scene, is opening today on York Street.

After five months of transforming an office building into the warm colours of paradise, the restaurant is finally opening and hungry Frederictonians can end their salivating.

Majid Ali, the father in the family-owned restaurant, said there have been people knocking on the restaurant's doors already wanting a table.

In fact, the first two days are solidly booked.

Mr. Ali said it's traumatizing for him to have to turn away customers because they have a full house.

"We feel that we're going to have a difficult time letting customers know I can't accept your reservations tonight because we are just booked up," he said.

Former residents of Trinidad – and for several years in between, Halifax – mom, dad and their twin daughters moved to Fredericton when their son, Naz, was accepted at the University of New Brunswick.

Opening a Caribbean restaurant was a natural idea, but what exactly is Caribbean cooking?

"Caribbean cuisine is no different from yours, it's just how we marinate it and how we cook it," said Mr. Ali. "What makes Caribbean cuisine different from you is that we have been influenced by 10 different cultures over 500 years."

On the menu are curries, jerk, and even some Chinese dishes, but Mr. Ali said it's like no other Chinese food since its influenced by Dutch, French and Italian cooking.

"Two things you're going to get dominant in Caribbean cuisine is love and passion," he said.

Designer Suzanne Castonguay said she decorated the restaurant to feel like a portal to the Caribbean.

Warm colours of blue, yellow, orange and fuchsia as well as shimmering drapes and a mural of palm trees on the back wall add to the illusion

The trickling of water from



Noel Chenier/Telegraph-Journal

Ben Langille, Naz Ali and Kendra MacLellan display an array of the dishes on the menu at the Caribbean Flava Fine Dining restaurant, which has just opened in Fredericton.

the centrepiece fountain mixes with the tropical music in the background.

"The fountain was something that they insisted on because of the atmosphere it creates and it's also nice for sound deadening ... it gives you more privacy between tables," said Ms. Castonguay. "It's going to be a really nice place to enjoy a meal and have some colours you wouldn't have in your house. When you go out, you want something different and this is it."

Along with the colours of the Caribbean, Mr. Ali wants to imitate the easy-going pace of the islands.

"When you come, I don't want you to be hurried. I want you to be totally relaxed when you leave here, hence the ambiance of the fountain and the Caribbean beach scenes," he said.

Kitchen designer Sean Duplessis said used an open concept which is becoming more popular in Canada.

It's a unique establishment,

said Mr. Duplessis, but it's not strictly the décor that adds warmth to Caribbean Flavas, he said.

"I think not only the equipment and design but the warmth of the people is really going to bring the people in. When you're in here, you really feel like you're part of the family," said Mr. Duplessis.

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