

There have been many firsts in the careers of renowned chefs Anne Quatrano and Clifford Harrison: their first Atlanta restaurant, Floataway Café; their first James Beard award in 1991; their first inclusion in *Gourmet* magazine's Top 50 Restaurants in America in 2006. And the list goes on and on.

But this year the couple, who also owns Bacchanalia, Quinones at Bacchanalia and Star Provisions, will add another first to their list of culinary accomplishments when they open their newest restaurant, Abattoir (French for slaughterhouse), in early spring in part of the original meatpacking plant in the White Provision development on Howell Mill Road: They'll be taking on a chef/business partner, Bacchanalia chef de cuisine Joshua Hopkins.

"Opening another restaurant is a huge step for us. We wanted a partner that loves to cook, a kitchen chef that's driven, and Josh has the passion," says Quatrano, Abattoir's chef and owner. "Doing this restaurant with someone like him makes me feel more at ease. He's the perfect fit."

Hopkins, who's been on staff at Bacchanalia for nearly four years, started out in 2005 as one of the restaurant's line cooks, but was promoted quickly to sous chef and eventually to chef de cuisine. "I love working with Anne. She has an incredible sense of detail," Hopkins says. "I couldn't have a better mentor."

Hopkins says he's always wanted his own restaurant and was thrilled when Quatrano asked him to come on board. "It's nice that

a little bit of the restaurant is yours," he says. But the one thing he insists is that ownership won't change his passion or the way he works. Perhaps that's because he's had to work so hard to get where he is today. Hopkins credits much of his success to the guidance he's received while working under Quatrano and several other Southern chefs, including executive chef Frank Lee at Slightly North of Broad and Jason Scholz at High Cotton, both part of Maverick Southern Kitchens restaurant group in Charleston, S.C., as well as Christian Chemin at the Capital City Club.

Despite never attending culinary school, Hopkins says he's known since he was a child he wanted to be a chef and spent his youth helping his mother cook dinner for the family. He credits her as teaching him how to use fresh ingredients and combine simple flavors.

And you can bet he'll be using everything he's learned from all of his mentors when he takes the helm at Abattoir, where he'll be working in tandem with Quatrano to create the restaurant's casual, ingredient-driven menu. Dishes will be based around whole-animal cuisine—think freshly butchered whole fowl, fish, beef, pork and other game. That means no part of the animal will be wasted, so, among traditional dishes, expect items on the menu like headcheese, innards, feet and tongue (yes, feet and tongue!).

First Mate



Bacchanalia's chef de cuisine stakes his claim on what could be Atlanta's best new restaurant.

Joshua Hopkins will be chef de cuisine and business partner at Abattoir.

“We will be getting in whole pigs and lamb, and will be making our own charcuterie and curing our own hams,” Hopkins says. “Everything will be regional, and we will use as many local and organic growers as we can. The food won’t necessarily be Southern, but the ingredients will definitely be Southern.”

The entire concept for Abattoir grew out of the restaurant’s space itself, which is located in what used to be Atlanta’s meat-packing district. Unlike Bacchanalia, which features upscale dining, Abattoir will be more casual. There will be a dining room with seating for 150 and a smaller separate bar with additional seating for 20. Quatrano has worked hard to ensure the design will reflect the original bones of the building, so the existing brick walls and beams in the ceiling have been incorporated into the plan. Repurposed heart pine floors, paneled walls and a honed soapstone bar will add to the organic feel. A

“kitchen table” will be situated with a prime view of the chefs and kitchen staff at work, and Bacchanalia is in plain sight from one of Abattoir’s windows. “That is very comforting,” Quatrano says.

So what’s comforting for Hopkins? “Absolutely, partnering with Anne is an honor,” he says. “How could I say no? I hope that one day we’ll own the restaurant together.” —SARAH GLEIM

ABATTOIR

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Abattoir’s space is still under construction, but the final design will reflect the original bones of the building, with the existing brick walls and ceiling beams as part of the look.



As you enter Mojitos Cuban-American Bistro, you get the overwhelming feeling of being on an exotic beach off the coast of steamy Havana. Portraits of palm trees and sunny beaches line the walls, and you can’t escape the sounds of maracas being passed around in celebration along with friendly kisses on the cheek. Situated in the historic downtown area of Norcross, Mojitos is just what Atlanta needs

restaurant. “My mother is in the kitchen, the kids are running around sometimes; it is a continuation of our home,” says Yanin, who adds that, as entertainers-turned-restaurateurs, he and his brother often sing, play music and entertain guests on weekends. “We have always been into playing. What you see here is what would happen if we got together at our house.” And because Yanin admits, “We try and get all our guests

Mint Condition

Mojitos Cuban-American Bistro heats up Atlanta!

to keep things hot this winter. Proprietors Luis and Yanin Fernandez have made their dreams come true by starting this family-run

involved,” be ready to participate. In terms of the food, expect authenticity. To witness true culinary evidence of Cuban-American fusion fare, try the guava BBQ baby back ribs, lechón asado (slow roasted pork loin) or, for something a bit spicier, camarones enchilados (shrimp Creole) simmered in a spicy, tomato-based Creole sauce. For an expert opinion, *JEZEBEL* caught up with CBS Consumer Reporter Adam Murphy as he jammed with the Fernandezes. “Best stuffed rice—bar none,” he says. With a recent health score of 97, we will have another round of Mojitos, por favor! 35 S. Peachtree St., 770.441.2599, mojitosbistro.com. —ALISSA MULLINS