

BUSINESS

>> FOR MORE LOCAL BUSINESS NEWS, GO TO HENDERSONVILLESTARNEWS.COM

Restaurant offers 'island attitude'

By Sherry Mitchell
HENDERSONVILLE STAR NEWS

An afternoon may not be enough time to sneak away to the beach, but residents can still get a taste of the islands at Barefoot Charlie's restaurant in Hendersonville.

One of the city's newest venues, the bright red, yellow and blue restaurant boasts a tropical flair with an island-style menu and cozy waterside dining.

It was a theme inspired by one local family's travels: Nancy, Charles and Dave Manis.

"As a family, we've taken a lot of trips abroad, and we just all have an appreciation of the islands because, it's so relaxed," Dave said. "This place kind of lent itself to that with the lake. People can come in here and get away for an hour and kick back somewhere that visually reminds them of taking it easy in the islands."

To jump-start that "get away from it all" feeling, Barefoot Charlie's offers a array of wine, beer and one-of-a-kind tropical-inspired drinks like the frozen bikini, tropical storm and of course, margaritas.

"Our margaritas are marvelous," Nancy said.

From coconut shrimp and Jamaican jerk chicken, to ocean city crab cake melts and Jerk shack pasta, chef Dustin Rupoli, formerly of Radius 10 in Nashville and a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America,

is becoming a hit with local diners. Each weekday Rupoli has a different special of the day.

"If you come in for lunch, I strongly recommend the daily special," Dave said. "Dustin is a mad scientist back in the kitchen. Everything he makes is awesome."

Aside from being delicious, island fare food is also a healthy alternative, Nancy said.

"It's good, but it's also heart-healthy," she said. "It's all fresh, never frozen. Our pineapple is cut fresh to order and all of our sauces are homemade."

Barefoot Charlie's offers live music Friday and Saturday



JUST THE FACTS

Name: Barefoot Charlie's

Type of business: Island-style restaurant

Location: 125 Sanders Ferry Road

Hours of operation: Monday-Thursday 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. and Sunday open at 11 a.m.

Contact: 431-2859 or visit www.barefootcharlies.net

nights, and Wednesday night is Writers in the Round with music from 7:30-10:30 p.m. Shuffleboard is a favorite pastime for many customers, especially the tournaments. And the smoke-free establishment also caters to kids, with a children's menu,

pint-sized chairs and coloring books.

"The kids love to come here," Nancy said. "It's a destination for everyone. The only crowd we don't appeal to is the rowdy crowd."

The Beach Club Room, over-

Nancy and Dave Manis are gearing up for a great, island-style summer at Barefoot Charlie's restaurant in Hendersonville. The outdoor patio, where customers can enjoy waterside dining, seats up to 55.

SHERRY MITCHELL/HENDERSONVILLE STAR NEWS

looking Old Hickory Lake, can be reserved for weddings, showers and other special events. The restaurant also has a catering license and can help plan a special event on or off-site.

Nancy admits she's never been a slave to the kitchen and owning a restaurant was never in her long-term plans. But the rewards have been well worth the effort, she said.

"We never dreamed of having a restaurant," Nancy said. "What has been the most amazing thing is the total love and friendship of the people on the Walton Ferry peninsula and the way the charities are gravitating towards us for support."

"The people we have met, the locals, are just a great group of people," Dave added.