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The Club Turns Four—And Focuses on the Food



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“The first year we were open feels like it took 10 years off my life!” laughs Frank Christopher, owner of [The Club](#) in Provincetown. That feeling is only a memory now, as The Club has emerged as one of Ptown’s most popular dining destinations. “We figured it out,” Christopher says. “The restaurant has to support the music, not the other way around. And people get it, because they’ve come to trust and like us as a restaurant. It used to be that people would stop in for drinks before heading out somewhere else for dinner, or they’d order something light while sitting on the deck. That’s changed over time.”

Christopher opened The Club with plans for it to be Ptown’s answer to Smoke, his New York City jazz supper club. Bring in big-name performers, create a place with atmosphere, and the sky’s the limit. “That first year, we were all about the entertainment,” he says. “Everyone we brought in was phenomenal, the real deal of working performers. But it was planes, trains, automobiles, housing, and food—and that was all before we even got them on stage! And then you look down at the empty room and know your whole payroll is going to the musicians.”

Now the restaurant enjoys “a loyal clientele who come for the entire meal!” says Christopher. “Now people are choosing us as their destination. And it’s so exciting to live that way, to have all these loyal customers—during the winter when we’re closed, I get Facebook messages checking in to see how I’m doing.”



The Club has earned that loyalty. "It's not about me, it's not about Lea DeLaria, it's about the club. About the people. About our staff. I look at them and I feel so proud. Rob, our host—he's poetry in motion, watching how he handles the book and has this seemingly effortless way of moving around the room. Eddy, our executive chef, he's been with me for years and brings such passion to everything he does."

We remind him that the first year he was struggling with teaching new staff how to open a bottle of wine. "We still have to teach people how to open wine," he says with a smile. "But you can teach people that. You can teach them to serve, to bartend. But you can't teach them to be passionate about The Club project. And those are the people I have here now. People who believe in what we're doing."

It's not just the staff that Christopher appreciates. "We have tons of regular customers, some still from that first year. They're awesome," he says. "Some customers come to town for a week and they have every meal with us."

Again, back to the food... and the attitude. "We're in such a beautiful spot," says Christopher. "That first year, people came for the beautiful deck. If people come to a restaurant solely for the view, something's not right. Now people come and they don't care where they sit in the restaurant, they're here for everything we have to offer. That's rewarding, that's when you know you're doing it right."

While The Club continues its tradition of live music, it's the food that is truly fabulous, and Chef Gullon delivers. From tamarind glazed ribs to blackened cod to jambalaya, there's something on this menu for everyone. (Or go for brunch and try the mascarpone stuffed French toast. Really.) "We've become a legitimate spot in Ptown," says Christopher. "The concept is evolving in a way that benefits everybody." He laughs. "My shoulders are relaxed!"



He feels closer to the town than ever. "It's like being in a pinball machine," he says. "It's the way it works in Ptown. You launch, and then suddenly you're bouncing off bumpers all over the place. It was daunting." But things have changed. "I don't bounce anymore because I have support from my team and love from my customers."

"I eat, drink, sleep, exercise The Club," Christopher adds. "I'm always thinking, wondering what's working, how we can make it better. This is what I'll be doing forever. This is a major labor of love."

Look around town, and you're sure to see a t-shirt or cap with the familiar black and pink design. "People love to wear the logo," says Christopher. "It's a testament to giving you a chance, understanding that you do your best, you continue trying. If you fail but then make honest corrections, people will follow."

"Stay tuned!" he adds. "It's an ongoing story."

The Club

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