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“Meet the Chef: Sherman Smith”

Kitchen manager/chef at Majestic Grille



PHOTO BY MICHAEL DONAHUE
"There's nothing I don't like," says Sherman Smith, kitchen manager/chef at Majestic Grille.

Age: 29

Title: Kitchen manager/chef at Majestic Grille

Who or what was your first cooking influence? My mother and my grandmother together. I was watching them at an early age and was able to pick up kind of fast on it. (They made) just original home food, soul food -- cornbread, greens and chicken, just really down home food.

What was the first thing you ever cooked or baked? It was a hamburger. Age 7.

What made you decide to become a chef and when was that? It was kind of a path I went down. When I was in high school we did "Canterbury Tales" and each person had a character and I was the cook. When I went into the Army, my occupation was a cook. I grew a passion for it that way.

What was your first food-related job? When I was 16 it was at Bol a Pasta. I was a dishwasher. That was my first experience in the kitchen. I used to look at the guys and they'd be tossing sauté skillets up.

What was something important that a fellow chef taught you? Having a little love for what you do. If you don't really like it, it's gonna come across to the people. Like "This is just something he's doing to make a paycheck."

What is the Sherman Smith style? I'm more of an upscale casual dining chef. I can go down-home, though. I can do the lunch specials just like my grandmama used to make.

Describe a dish you created. Pork loin stuffed with sausage and cherries with a nice little cream sauce on top of it.

What do you cook or bake at home, if anything? I go back to regular home food. You can't beat a burger. The spaghetti is my favorite. I mix hamburger meat and Italian sausage and put a little chicken stock in it and different cheeses, two kinds of tomato sauce, peppers, onions and I bake it.

What's your least favorite ingredient? There's nothing I can't eat. There's nothing I don't like.

-- Michael Donahue: 529-2797