

New



in the Neighborhood

by Troy Putt-Baker Photos/Glenn Race



Chef Lorraine Platman and Christopher Leskauskas, CEO of Peddler's Village, preview the new menu for Sweet Lorraine's. Photo/Glenn Race

When Peddler's Village CEO Christopher Leskauskas was looking for a new restaurant concept for the Spotted Hog, he considered many possibilities in his search for great food and interesting design. Architect/designer Howard Ellman, a consultant for Peddler's Village, immediately recommended Sweet Lorraine's, a privately owned restaurant located in Michigan. Leskauskas and his team flew to Detroit to investigate and liked what they saw.

Sweet Lorraine's, owned by chef Lorraine Platman and her husband, Gary Sussman, has been in business since 1982. Now with three

locations in the Detroit area, it is rated by Zagat among Michigan's top ten restaurants.

Lorraine, dressed in crisp kitchen whites, calmly goes about multitasking as she talks about her background. Born in Southend-on-Sea, Essex, England, she immigrated with her parents to Michigan at the age of ten. A slight English accent still colors her speech. As a child she won awards for her artwork and later studied environmental science and wildlife ecology at Michigan State University and Grand Valley College.

After graduation she managed an art gallery, moonlighted catering events and baked desserts in her kitchen. Her Russian cheesecake became so popular among friends and local restaurants that she soon needed more space to keep up with the demand. So she purchased an old coffee house and launched Sweet Lorraine's Café. "Strangely enough," she says, "it all began with a cheesecake."

Under a licensing agreement with Lorraine, Peddler's Village owns and oper-



Succulent crab cakes are presented with citrus-scented tartar sauce.



Lorraine loves art, wildlife ecology and good food. Her restaurants, she says, can be described as *world beat*.



Barcelona vegetarian paella features red and black beans, bell peppers and saffron rice.

ates the restaurant here, and it opens this month in the space previously occupied by the Spotted Hog. The space has been totally redesigned and now includes outdoor patio seating for eighty-six. The new multilevel dining room is colorful and exciting, and is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Recorded music, from old jazz to bluegrass to the wonderful sounds of Brazil and other countries, provides additional atmosphere.

The new chef for the Lahaska, PA, location has yet to be announced, but Lorraine describes the food, like the music, as *world beat*. "Our menu borrows from ethnic cuisines around the world and spotlights exquisite and unique seasonings and flavors," she says. "We celebrate international

holidays such as the Chinese New Year, and our daily specials may include flavors from Korea, India and Jamaica, for example.

"In all of our restaurants, maple-cured salmon, pecan chicken and Lorraine's salad with spring greens, dried cranberries and Gorgonzola cheese are favorites. We seek out the best local ingredients, including Piedmontese beef, free-range chickens and organic produce. Everything is made on the premises from scratch."

And what about the cheesecake? Yes, cheesecake will be on the menu, along with other desserts made in-house daily. Welcome, Lorraine.♥



Fish and chips, a signature dish from Lorraine's native England, are served with Lorraine's special dipping sauce and cole slaw.