# D'joint-elegance on Liberty Road

EAGER TO PLEASE — The talented staff of the D' Joint supperclub on Liberty Heights Rd. are from left to right, William Ross, one of the establishment's partners, Gail Jackson, a waitress, Chef John Dean, Romain Wise, a barmaid, Tony Lee, assistant chef and Dan Carr, first cook.

The D' Joint supperclub was established more than three years ago by several astute, young businessmen with a desire to provide excellent cuisine combined with fantastic entertainment.

Located in the 6000 block of Liberty Road, the superclub has been featured as one of Baltimore's finest "soul food" restaurants.

Its decor dictates a contemporary design - accomplished by Odell Brock - but its kitchen is total "soul!"

The superclub's chef, John Dean, has cooked in many of the city's finest restaurants and is famous for his ribs. The taste of this lucious ribs will please any discriminating diner - sweet, mild or hot.

D' Joint's has facilities for private parties, wedding receptions and meetings. Please do not hesitate to call the management for information or reservations.

AFRO photos by Roman Hankewycz

SMILING FACES — The smiles of Karen Martin, left, and Valerie Washington belie the enjoyable evening they are having at the D' Joint supperclub, a Liberty Road establishment attracting young moderns such as these young women.

# AFRO's good food guide

Good food always has been the watchword in Baltimore.

Its proximity to the Chesapeake Bay has made seafood, particularly crabs, synonomous with Baltimore.

Crabcake and Baltimore are interchangeable ... well, almost.

But as a seaport, Baltimore, also has seen a blending of the food of many cultures.

In the resurging central city, restaurants as splendid and pretentious as anything in New York, Paris or Washington now abound. Everyone it seems now is a restauranteur.

Baltimore no longer is the crabcakes, fried chicken and steamed crab provincial city of yesteryear.

The new Baltimore boasts restaurants specializing in as many types of food as there are nations in the United Nations.

Far East Indian cuisine, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese "Mandarin," Hunan and Szechuan - there are differing kinds of Chinese cooking in case you did not know - French, Mexican, native American, Caribbean and upon occassion East and West African eating places crop up in Baltimore.

One of the best kept culinary secrets of Baltimore is black cooking, that is to say, meals scrumptious and modest in price, to be found in a number of lack-owned neighborhood taverns and restaurants that only the most avid seekers of soul food has completely explored.

The majority of dining places in this first AFRO dining out guide are in this category.

Sampsons, in West Baltimore, can be considered the modern granddaddy of such soul food dispensaries. More recently the Soul Shack and for a long time, the Red Rooster - depending on the chef - were drawing city-wide clientele.

The Riggs Lounge seems the current leader in the neighborhood-tavern-restaurant sweepstakes. Though smallish, the food is good and the prices reasonable.

Most of the black-oriented eating places in this guide feature traditional Southern cooking, with such staples in our gastronomic heritage as pork chops, cornbread, greens- collards and kale mainly - spoon and cornbreads and freshly made rolls.

Sampson's we dare say, never has had its hot rolls challenged or bested.

Chicken, the bay fish of

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# ADVICE

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"sorry, cut-off shorts, sleeveless t-shirts and bare feet are not permitted" do not attempt to begin World War III.

The establishment is correct and you would be dead wrong should the gendarmes arrive.

DRINKING LIMITS:

By law bartenders and waiters have a right to shut off your after-meal drinking if it looks as if you are well on your way to alcoholic stupor.

When a restaurant employee says "sorry sir, maam, you've had enough" they are acting in your best interests whether your decree of "highness" has you convinced or not. Better a hot cup of coffee than a smash-up on your way home.

IF YOU DIDN'T LIKE THE SERVICE:

Discreetly tell the manager the serving person was surly, the peas were cold, or you waited far too long. You can punish the server by leaving no tip, but this is not classy.

Leave a lesser tip and tell the manager why on your wayout. Never get in confrontations with the help. It marks you as less than a classy person.

CREDIT CARDS:

Some restaurants no longer accept credit cards or ones other than those you have. Check by phone first.

SECURITY:

No neighborhood in any city is completely safe. Lock your doors

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# —Good times guide

(Continued from Page 18)

the season, oysters, short ribs of beef.

What black diners took for granted for so very long now is what the determined diner sallies forth to find.

In the era of frozen dishes, French cooking - even among sisters who should know better - and all kinds of exotic cooking dramatized by TV how-to-do it shows and popular cookbooks, more and more Baltimoreans are going back to the source.

It is a delicious irony. The food our grandmothers filled us up with now is a collection of delicacies you gather up friends and family and go out and pay for.

Here are some of the best of these neighborhood and city-wide dining places.

For the most part, the atmosphere is informal, the prices range from 4 to 10 bucks a plate per person and alcohol is served.

Call ahead to see if children are welcome. Most often they are until a certain time in the evenings.

Have fun.

Among the many fine eating established featured in the AFRO's Dining Out supplement are such restaurants as:

Shogun Restaurant - at North Charles between 21st and 22nd Streets. Featured is Japanese food, the specialty being "Sushi" - a fish dish, as well as chicken, beef, pork and steak.

Wine and beer are served. Shogun's hours are 5 until 10 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday; 5 until 11 p.m., Friday and Saturday and Sunday from 5 until 10 p.m. The restaurant is closed Mondays.

Meals range from $6 to $15.

Guest House - a deli, carry-out and bake shop, located at 3020C Liberty Heights Ave. Sandwiches, the thick, juicy variety, are sold, as well as homemade salads - the establishment's specialty - shrimp, tuna, macaroni and egg are available.

Homemade rolls, sweet potatoe and apple pies, dinner loaves pound cake and some of the best cheese cake in the city also are among the many foods available at this fine eatery.

Open from 7 a.m. until 6:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday; Friday and Saturday hours are from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. and on Sundays, the Guest House is open from 8 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.

Sampsons - at 944 W. Fayette St. features soul food with delicious hot rolls as their specialty.

Restaurant hours are from 8 a.m. until 11 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday. Friday and Saturday hours are 8 a.m. until 12 midnight. And Sunday Sampson's is open from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. The restaurant is closed Mondays.

The average price of a fine meal at Sampson's is between $4 to $5.

Hats Restaurant - at 419 N. Paca, this establishment features American food as its specialty - the sumptious 'Hatburger.'

Hours are 9 p.m. until 2 a.m. daily. The average price of a wholesome meal at Hats is about $3.

Dotson's - located at 7317 Furnance Branch Rd. in Glen Burnie. People come to sample Dotson's fine food, including their famous ribs, from all areas of Maryland, Washington, D.C., and as far as Philadelphia.

One prominent media food critic once described Dotson's spareribs as the best on the East Coast.

The menu features barbecue of all kinds, collard greens, Potatoe salad, corn on the cob and other palate satisfying dishes. In the summer, food is served outside the tavern.

Hours are from 10 a.m. until 11 p.m., Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Average meal price is from $4 for dinner to $10 for rib Plates.

Riggs Lounge - at Appleton St. and Riggs AVe. is a combination tavern, restaurant.

Featured is an excellent soul food menu and the crowd you may encounter at Riggs is a combination of professional people and blue collar collar workers, who enjoy lively surroundings.

Good food is in the offing and average meal price is from $4 to $6. The hours are from 10 a.m. until 12 midnight daily except for Sundays.

Five Mile House - at 5300 Reisterstown Rd., attracts a large crowd of professional folks as well as blue collar workers, who enjoy American cuisine.

The restaurants specialty, drawing raves, is "Five-Mile Chicken Wings," barbecued or fried.

In the past two weeks, the restaurant has added soul food to the menu for Thursday, Friday and Saturday. There also is a delectable chef's salad and a Five-Mile Steak Sandwich.

Open from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. Monday through Wednesday; 11 a.m. until 12 midnight Thursday through Saturday.

Average price of a meal is between $5 and $6.

Palmer House - near Eutaw and Fayette is a favorite hangout for hungry diners in search of excellent Italian food, especially the savory veal dishes.

Politicians, such as Clarence "Du" Burns and lawman, William Swisher, as well as visiting actors performing at the Morris Mechanic Theatre and almost everyone else can be glimpse there. You can also get your fortune told by card readers.

Open daily until about midnight, meals begin at about $4.50.

ROOTING FOR THEIR FAVORITE BOWLERS are Ruby Jones, left and Barbara Hill, both of Jamaica, N.Y., who are among thousands of out-of-towners in Baltimore to attend the bowling congress.

# —Soul Shack

(Continued from Page 18)

rise apartments have taken less time," Bryant said.

The result is a fashionable 150-seat capacity restaurant with a self-service steam counter containing the soul food cuisine the Shack built its reputation in its modest Monroe Street operation.

Glendora Cox supervises the cooking. So esteemed is her Southern cuisine that upon opening, food critics for the city's media, black and white, were reaching for new adjectives to describe the wonders of barbecue, collard greens, smothered pork chops, chitterlings and other mouth watering staples of black cooking artistry.

With all this praise, a shrewd location, Bryant and Cox turned down a chance to open in Harborplace, "we felt it just wasn't the right place for blacks" most observers find it difficult to hear Bryant report how rough things were for Soul Shack II that first year, 1980.

"We were used to hearing experts saying our project would never work," Bryant recalled, smiling at the way he and his associates have proven the experts wrong.

What the Soul Shack owners and businesses in general had not anticipated was just how broke most Americans would be as ?he Eighties began and Reaganomics took hold.

"We had to adjust, good food just wasn't enough, what has turned things around for us is our change to a live entertainment policy on the weekends."

He said in the back of the Soul Shack leadership's collective business planning always had been a phase when they would add a jazz club to the basic restaurant operation.

With a downturn in the economy, Bryant said they had to speed up their plans for entertainment.

Soul Shack One had built its giant reputation on good food at modest prices.

To lure people to the larger Soul Shack II Bryant and company reasoned that to keep growing they would have to add good music to the good food.

"All restaurants are hurting now. What has made the difference with us is that we've brought in live jazz. People have to be much more discerning when they go out. They need assurances of a decent meal at affordable prices and when they know they can get quality music along with their food, they appreciate you even more," Bryant said.

Bryant credits Baltimore-based musician Carlos Johnson with helping Soul Shack II quicken its pace.

"When Carlos came back from his last world tour and agreed to work with us, he turned the ballgame around for us.

# —Advice

(Continued from Page 18)

bring your coats and packages into the restaurant with you.

If folks in the neighborhood look a might rough, do not be hesitant to ask the manager if he or she will have someone escort you to your car.

Folks in the restaurant industry are just as concerned about your safety as you are so they will keep an eye on you. You are a paying customer.

If the management does not seem overly concerned about your safety, then you can scratch them off your dining out list for good.

SENDING FOOD BACK:

Discretion always is the watchword. Do not tell the waiter this fish is lousy. Ask him or her if they would mind asking the chef if he could come up with a less dry piece of fish or another vegetable.

MONEY SAVING TIPS:

Even the toniest restaurants have specials. In slow periods in the afternoons between lunch and dinner and on some weekends you may be able to get choice delicacies at less the the ususal rates.

The wise restaurant goer knows the telephone is the solution to most problems. Restaurant owners are willing to give you their price ranges, the hours they are open, proper attire and all other particulars. All you have to do is use the yellow pages and pick up the telephone.

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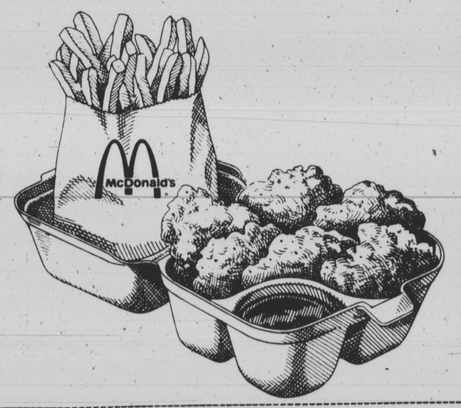

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