Chef Anthony Bradley: Let The Good Times Roll



He had once thought Cajun food to be mundane; however it was when he had moved away from New Orleans that Chef Bradley realised how much he was missing the good old Southern comfort food he had grown up with.

Although, originally from Belize, Anthony Bradley, was raised in Morgan City, a few miles out from New Orleans. He says he couldn’t have been more acquainted with the usual southern staples; crawfish dishes, andouille sausage and Gumbo, as he had been raised around home grown spreads whilst spending time with his

grandparents. “I didn’t really appreciate the food that was there too much because to me it was too familiar until I moved away and I didn’t have or wasn’t around the staple ingredients, that’s when I wanted it more and wanted to learn how to cook it at the same time.”

After shifting to Pennsylvania, Bradley became increasingly diligent in reconnecting with his southern roots and what better way to do this than by bringing back the flavours that warmed him with memories of being home in New Orleans, around family and friends. Even though Bradley esteemed cooking in various genres, Cajun cuisine, for him, was gastronomically refreshing, with their ‘bold and rustic style of flavour.’ I found a couple of restaurants and started working with them. There were chefs who were from New Orleans and they taught me a lot, as far as cuisine goes and Cajun was something that hit more at home,” he adds.

On Cajun style fine dining, Chef Bradley believes that just because the food is “simple” it doesn’t mean that it cannot be presented in fine dining quality and not stay true to its origins. “For example,” he continues, “I would make a Bourbon Crawfish tail, if I was doing it in a restaurant and I would maybe do like a saffron risotto as opposed to just regular rice and put it in a tin ball and just present it in more of a fine dining manner.”

Being invited to cook for Mount Lavinia Hotel in Sri Lanka was a great privilege says Bradley, and although finding some of the main ingredients for Cajun cuisine was a task, “there are so many different types of foods here so it wasn’t too hard to find the substitution.” Since Cajun-Creole is big on seafood dishes and you can always count â€¨on mouthfuls of shell-fish, prawns and fish, Sri Lanka according to Bradley, “just fits in perfectly”, with its abundantly available fruits from the ocean.

Reminiscing on his time spent in Sri Lanka and at Mount Lavinia Hotel, “I’ve loved it here, I could have been sleeping a lot more, but I’ve been walking around the hotel grounds and I am just amazed by this hotel, the beauty of it, the history of it…” he deems. More recently, Chef was invited to the German Embassy to experience how functions of certain events were being conducted. He had also travelled around Colombo on a city tour and exclaims that he didn’t realise how much history Sri Lanka had with foreign nations, many years ago. “It reminded me of Belize, because it too was once a British territory,” he relates.

Chef Bradley brought forth his signature Cajun-Creole dishes at the Spice Food Festival; hearty meat pies, stuffed with beef, succulent peppers and tomato sauce,

fresh-from-the-ocean seafood in his scrumptious gumbo, plump Po’ boy sandwiches with juicy chicken and a creamy sauce that sets off a delightful dream in the mouth. There’s a saying, he recounts that’s very popular down in New Orleans, “Let the good times roll,” and with the spread of food from the heart of Bayou, who wouldn’t say â€¨the same…





