



Captain Woody's

An Island Institution Sets Sail

BY ALLISON JONES • PHOTOS BY ROB KAUFMAN

Celebrating 30 years as a local favorite, Captain Woody's Bar & Grill has a spacious new Hilton Head Island location, expansive outdoor deck bar and a new retail store accompanied by the familiar staff, signature menu and distinctive atmosphere.

"It was just time for a change," explains owner Russell Anderson. "It's a new opportunity. A door opened and we took it."

Spending just a month preparing for the move, the longtime Palmetto Bay Marina restaurant closed on a Saturday evening in early March and reopened the following Tuesday at 6

Target Road in the space formerly occupied by The Big Chill and Riders Lounge.

Taking advantage of the all the freestanding building has to offer, Captain Woody's hosted their final oyster roast of the season at the new site on March 9.

Established in 1982 by Woody Collins, Russell and his wife Shannon purchased Captain Woody's in 1999. Five years ago, the University of Kentucky graduates opened a second restaurant in Bluffton's Calhoun Street Promenade.

Both casual neighborhood pubs

offer the basics necessities of Island life – fresh seafood, cold beer and good conversation. Serving identical menus lunch through dinner, an eclectic crowd of fishermen, golfers, F&B professionals, residents and visitors can be found exchanging tall tales over He Crab soup, Grouper Melt sandwiches, fried oysters, shrimp and clams, Po-Boys, burgers and buckets of beer.

With the move to Target Road, an additional 10 seats were added inside the restaurant and bar area. However, Russell is especially excited about the extra space and entertainment opportunities provided by the new outdoor deck and bar.

Open daily starting at 4 p.m., follow the navigational markers to Bar 6, "Where the Land Meets the Water," for its special menu, Happy Hour deals and live music featuring Mike Kobar on Saturday.

A sail overhead provides protection from the elements so patrons can chill out with a frozen drink, sample new menu items such as Kentucky Beer Cheese served with pretzels (a.k.a. Bull Moose Beer Cheese, a staple of Russell's college years), fish tacos, ultimate nachos or steamed shrimp while catching the game on one of several flat-screen TVs.

Dogs on leashes are also welcome outside and the deck bar is a great place to order a pre-dinner drink while waiting for a table.

Upstairs, a new retail store offers a wide selection of logoed Captain Woody's and Bar 6 T-shirts, visors, backpacks, as well as unique, locally-made merchandise like wine-scented candles.

If you forget to pick up something while you're there, just visit captainwoodys.com to purchase what you need online.

Proudly serving 100% Wild Caught & Sustainable Seafood, the menu showcases freshly shucked, raw or steamed shrimp, clams and oysters; grilled or blackened saltwater fish; fried seafood platters; Fish & Chips; Shrimp n' Grits; crab cakes; and Low Country Boil.



Filet mignon is now a permanent addition to the "landfood" portion of the menu, which also includes fried pickles and blackened beef fingers appetizers, a bone-in ribeye entrée, prime rib sandwiches, hamburgers, grilled sirloin salads, chicken melts, Reubens and chili. Both restaurants offer daily lunch and dinner specials and prime rib served with garlic mashed potatoes and the chef's choice of fresh vegetables is available on Sundays.

One of the Island's most kid-friendly establishments, the children's menu comes with crayons so the little ones can color while waiting for their orders of cheese stix, peanut butter and jelly, fried shrimp, grilled cheese, hot dog or chicken fingers.

Another thing that hasn't changed at Captain Woody's is the eclectic collection of memorabilia decorating the walls, from autographed UK basketballs and other sports paraphernalia to fishing gear, nautical charts and local restaurant signage. In fact, even the restaurant's captain chairs were brought over from Palmetto Bay.

In addition to winter oyster roasts, other special scheduled events include the Annual Captain Woody's Fishing Tournament in May and the return of the Golf Tournament this summer.

Crediting the smooth transition to the new location and longtime success of Captain Woody's to hard work and a strong local following, Russell is quick to

acknowledge the importance of his dedicated employees.

"For the most part, it's the family that we have in here," he says. "You're only as good as your staff and they make Shannon and I look good. They're the ones who keep the great local crowd coming back and the vacationers coming back."

"The change is good, it's really good," Russell adds. "This was truly a blessing in my eyes. I heard a quote a long time ago, 'change is the process to survival,' and that really stuck with me. If you don't change it up, I think you get left behind."

Of course, it is also said that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

"We're the same Captain Woody's as we were down at the marina – all you're doing is walking in a different front door. We're just going to keep it simple."

On Hilton Head Island, Captain Woody's and Bar 6 can be found at 6 Target Road. Call (843) 785-2400 for details. The Bluffton restaurant is located at 17 State of Mind Street and can be reached at (843) 757-6222. Lunch and dinner are served continuously from 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Take-out and a kid's menu are available with live music on select evenings. For the menu, maps, directions or to check out the online store, visit captainwoodys.com. **T**