

SOUTHERN COMFORT

New Orleans bistro keeps it all in the family by Rachel Lane

CONTEMPORARY ORIGINALS



The Real Mother Goose
Fine American Craft

Portland Airport 503.284.9929	Downtown Portland 901 SW Yamhill 503.223.9510	Washington Square 503.620.2243
----------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------

www.therealmothergoose.com

Mechanics that fix everything. Including your conscience.



PDX Automotive is a certified Eco-Logical Business.

(503) 282-3315



AAA approved repair shop
Oregon certified DEO repair facility ASE Certified Mechanics

Gerard Lillie • 5934 N.E. Halsey

PISTILS NURSERY

10% off vines during August



sustainably grown flora

3811 N. Mississippi Ave.
Portland, Oregon
503-288-4889

WED-SAT 10-6 SUN 10-5

A well-stocked rosewood bar divides the room into roughly equal halves. Artwork mounted on the walls suggests the bitter-sweet piquancy of New Orleans life. Welcome to Acadia, the latest in a series of restaurants opened by Rob Adams and Bud Deslatte.

Adams, co-owner, floor manager, bookkeeper and Webmaster, grew up in Michigan and Illinois and earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Rice University in Texas. He spent 10 years in retail before a friend introduced him to New Orleans chef-entrepreneur Deslatte in 1989.

Deslatte recently had opened the Bayou Bar and Grill in San Diego's burgeoning Gaslamp Quarter. The two became friends, lovers and business partners—more or less in that order—and now have envisioned, built and, in time, bequeathed two still-flourishing California restaurants to former employees. Acadia: A New Orleans Bistro, which opened in October 2001, is their third restaurant together and Deslatte's seventh.

Deslatte's art d'cuisine is self-taught. He grew up in New Orleans and worked in the corporate sector for years. He threw dinner parties for friends and family, and soon these devotees encouraged him to open his first restaurant, Feelings Café, in the early '80s.

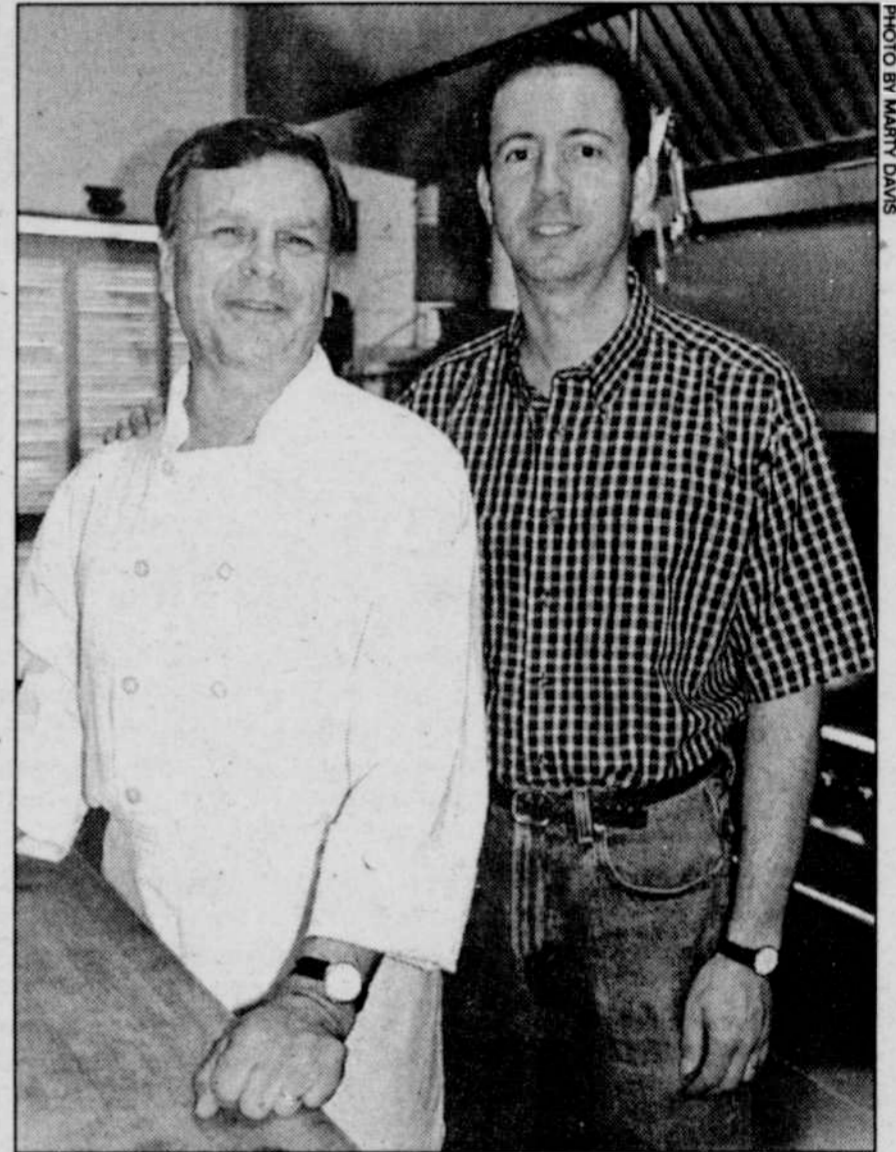
In short order, the eatery won attention as one of the city's top restaurants. Deslatte's authentic Creole/Cajun fare garnered praise from fans including *Bon Appetit* magazine and singer Johnny Mathis, who raved, "It's not just a restaurant, it's a Moment!"

His next venture took him to Atlanta, where he opened A Taste of New Orleans to critical praise. The *Journal-Constitution* named it one of the city's top 10 of 1987, and *Esquire* magazine rated it as one of the country's 50 finest new restaurants.

"We have been nomadic by choice," Deslatte says. The pair, who are quite fond of Oregon, also have a plan on the boards to open a luncheonette in Portland.

Deslatte says he finds the greatest pleasure in starting and developing restaurants, working to make them successful, then moving on. All of his six previous establishments continue to thrive in the hands of former employees. In September 2000, waitress Robin Simmons and sous-chef Edwin Caba bought Creola, his highly successful restaurant in San Carlos, Calif.

"Bud could have sold our restaurant to other people for a lot more money," she says. "Bud and Rob went out of their way to help my partner, Edwin, and I to find the funding and other necessary resources to not only buy this restaurant but to maintain the high standards that Bud always advocated. Two words describe Bud and Rob," she concludes, "generosity and love."



Bud Deslatte (left) cooks the beans while Rob Adams counts them

Acadia cuisine is based on tried-and-true classic recipes Deslatte has developed during the past 20 years. Signature entrees include seafood gumbo; barbecued fresh-flown Gulf shrimp in a light, zesty sauce of butter, rosemary lemon juice and pepper; and "The Big Easy," which is Louisiana drum (aka redfish) complemented with a touch of Dijon mustard and hollandaise sauce.

There are two keys to Deslatte's success. First, his recipes are personal and authentic and have found fans in his native Louisiana, Georgia, California—north and south—and now Portland. Second, a good recipe is only as good as the experience, skill and Zen-like nonattachment of its creator.

"Chef de Cuisine" Adam Higgs, formerly of Portland's L'Auberge, came to Acadia with little previous experience in New Orleans cooking. But that didn't matter to the owners, who were impressed with his openness and enthusiasm to learn a new style.

"I brought Adam on board not just because he had the ability and professionalism that I require," Deslatte explains, "but because of what I believed that Adam himself could eventually bring to my recipes, our menu."

Simmons adds: "Deslatte and Adams never let ego get in the way of creativity, of quality and good working relationships. Working for Bud and Rob was like family."

Now, if that is not a secret for success in any business—much less one of the most risky around—who knows what is. **JR**

ACADIA: A NEW ORLEANS BISTRO is open from 5 to 10 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday at 1303 N.E. Fremont St. For more information call 503-249-5001 or visit www.creolapdx.com.

RACHEL LANE is an actress, director and writer who can be seen daily at Portland parks accompanied by Mac, her handsome German shorthaired pointer.

PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS