

Butchering — cutting down an animal for food — is an art, a calling, a passion. But for Mikey Lawrence from wildly popular food truck Buck Buck, it's his life. "It's all I have," Lawrence says.

In fact, he's so dedicated, Lawrence has a small meat cleaver tattooed next to his right eye. After working for years in Japanese food and most recently at Belly in downtown Eugene, Lawrence took steps to fulfill the dream of owning his own place.

Last winter he opened Southern-style Buck Buck with business partner Edgar Arrellano in the parking lot of Oakshire Brewing in the Whiteaker neighborhood.

Lawrence grew up "an Army brat" and, while living in Turkey as a boy, he remembers an old woman, after butchering a chicken, saying: "Buck Buck die!" Lawrence felt the name was perfect for his chicken-centric food cart.

Lawrence calls opening a food truck in winter a little crazy, but during warm summer months, being partnered with Oakshire allows patrons to enjoy Southern-style cooking and Northwest beer in Oakshire's plentiful outdoor seating.

While he is from Montana, Lawrence's grandma grew up in North Carolina, and he uses many of her recipes for everything from his fried chicken to his light, fluffy biscuits. Chicken is the star on Buck Buck's small, manageable menu, as well as kale, mashed potatoes (so creamy they're almost like warm potato ice cream) and chicken and waffles.

But the undisputed champion dish is Buck Buck's chicken biscuit, a mouthwatering piece of fried chicken served between two fluffy biscuits with creamy sauce packing a hint of heat and (the dish's true stroke of genius) sweet, caramelized onions.

When presented (like much of Buck Buck's hungry person's portions) the chicken biscuit can be intimidating.



PHOTOS BY TRASK BEDORTHA

But commit to the chicken biscuit, and the first thing that hits your senses is the crunch.

And if you're a crunch addict like me, you might lose some sense of reality as you go back in for more, slurping the tender chicken from its breaded armor. The sandwich does fall apart, but you'll have no trouble mopping up the scraps of onion, gathering up the last bits of breading and licking your fingers while wondering if, despite the size and against your better judgment, you could handle another serving.

And Lawrence says that, due mainly to social media raves, Buck Buck's business has taken off. Back in April, Lawrence and Arrellano served chicken to Snoop Dogg when the rapper was in town for a show the Cuthbert.

Snoop said, "This is really good chicken," Lawrence recalls in a dead-on, stoned Snoop impression.

Buck Buck is open 12:30 - 10 pm Tuesday to Saturday at 207 Madison. For more information find Buck Buck on Facebook.

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