

# Bud & Alley's Celebrating 29 Years of Good Food, Good People and Good Times in Seaside, Florida

BY SUSAN BENTON

For decades, the Florida Panhandle has been known for its extraordinary white sand beaches, its Emerald green Gulf waters, and since the early 80's, Seaside; a model town that introduced thoughtful urban planning, not only to the South Walton community, but to the nation. Located in the forefront at the heart of the new urbanism community along the Gulf of Mexico's edge is Bud & Alley's restaurant, embarking on its 29th anniversary.

Owner Dave Rauschkolb, a pioneer and continually active participant in the community-building phase of Seaside and Scenic 30-A says, "We supported each other when in need, and that was smart business." With those thoughts, Rauschkolb helped found the Merchants of Seaside, where businesses with a common thread came together helping each other grow, and says, "There is something to say about a business community that acts as cheerleaders for its neighboring businesses."

Today, Seaside and Scenic 30-A are known for their growing number of quality eateries, with Rauschkolb helping to set the bar of culinary standards high.

Rauschkolb says, "It is a rare opportunity, honor and privilege to be in a position on the ground floor of a budding community. There were only five restaurants in the area when we first opened and from the beginning we made a conscious decision to create amazing, locally sourced food in an unpretentious setting. So many great restaurants have followed over the years and really made this area a culinary destination to behold."

Through the years Bud & Alley's has become a beloved place for family and friends to come together, share a great meal, and catch a sunset while ringing the iconic bell as it dips below the horizon. As South Walton's longest established restaurant it goes without saying that the people who work at Bud & Alley's make it special. Rauschkolb says, "A restaurant is not a one-man operation and I often get more credit than I deserve. I am privileged to have an amazing staff of wonderful, talented people working with me. We have very low turnover and high staff loyalty. Many have been with us a very long time, like server Paul Ferguson (14 years), server Tommy O'Drain (14 years), server Brent Sheffield (11 years), bartender Mo Mosley (14 years), manager Grant Hill (11 years), and sous-chef Derek Porter (15 years)."

General Manager Kirk Williams does an outstanding job keeping the restaurant on course, while Chef Dave

Bishop is at the kitchen's helm sharing his talent and creating spectacular dishes in the comfortable, casual fine dining atmosphere. Both oversee the operations of sister restaurants Taco Bar and Pizza Bar as well. Though the menu changes seasonally, the most popular dishes remain the baked whole fish with capers and lemon, barbeque shrimp with andouille



Crab cakes

sausage, and the plump, moist jumbo lump crab cakes. It is no wonder that Bud & Alley's has garnered numerous awards, including Florida Trend Magazine's Golden Spoon Hall of Fame Award, an honor reserved for only 30 Florida restaurants.

What's Bud & Alley's secret of success? Rauschkolb says, "It is all about serving a consistent high quality of food, showcased in the finest location for a restaurant I know of anywhere, with genuine, attentive and caring service. It is the DNA of Bud & Alley's." The motto from the day Bud & Alley's opened has been "Good Food, Good People, Good Times", and 29 years later it still rings true.

Shrimp with andouille sausage



*Bud & Alley's is located in Seaside, Florida at 2236 East Highway 30-A. For more information call (850) 231-5900, or email [info@budandalleys.com](mailto:info@budandalleys.com). Visit their website [www.budandalleys.com](http://www.budandalleys.com) to make reservations, or to view the live webcam of Seaside beach and Bud & Alley's Rooftop Deck. Diners can choose to eat in the restaurant's main level dining room or porch area, the Gulf-side herb garden courtyard or gazebo, or on the open air Rooftop Deck.*

*Lunch is available from 11:30 am to 3 pm daily; dinner is served 5:30 pm to 10 pm. The Rooftop Deck is open from 11:30 am into the late night. In winter months closing times may vary.*

*Susan Benton is the owner of 30AEATS.com where she shares her passion for food and travel, and her commitment to promoting local farmers, fishermen, chefs, artisans and restaurants along the Gulf Coast.*