

Uglesich's

RESTAURANT
COOKBOOK



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COOKBOOK

BY JOHN UGLESICH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NEIL ALEXANDER



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*Dedicated
in loving memory to
Tweety Uglesich
Thank you for twenty-two years of happiness.*

*And to
Edward F. Flettrich
I love you, Daddy.
The world does not seem right without you.*

*And to
Sam M. Uglesich
My best friend*



Anthony and Gail Uglesich

An Open Letter

This cookbook has been created through over seventy years of hard work and an appreciation of each and every customer that has ever patronized Uglesich's restaurant. We have always prided ourselves in serving each and every customer with a quality product. The following pages will provide a history of the restaurant, its owners, special customers, vendors, and of course recipes. We hope you enjoy the cookbook, as much as we have enjoyed your support.

Anthony Uglesich

Gail Uglesich





The staff of Uglesich's

Acknowledgments

A huge thanks to my parents, Anthony and Gail. Without their years in hard work of making Uglesich's a national success, I would not have had the opportunity to write this cookbook. You both have been the best parents, in providing me with an education and supporting me in making my own decisions. Your belief in my ability to write and organize this cookbook was extraordinary. I hope I have made you both proud of me.

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Thanks to Alba, Todd, Tina, Don, Linda, Lou, Gretchen, Monte, Patty, David, Nissa, and Donna: you truly are my brothers and sisters.

Elvis, sing me some songs.

And finally, to photographer Neil Alexander: thank you for all of your photographs, including the cover shot, all the food plate items, and my personal portrait. Your work and dedication are extraordinary. I hope to work with you again.

Introduction

Both local and out of town visitors have had an attraction to this small neighborhood restaurant. Uglesich's (pronounced U-GUL-SICH's) seafood restaurant is a family-owned business that has never expanded and has been in the same location since the 1920s. Sam Uglesich started the restaurant and today it is owned and operated by Sam's son Anthony and his wife, Gail. Tony and Miss Gail, as the customers like to call them, have taken a restaurant once known only for fried seafood plates or sandwiches to a restaurant offering appetizers and specialty dishes that have been featured on *Emeril Lagasse's Super Bowl Bash* special and *Martha Stewart Weekday Living* shows. The restaurant has never advertised, and has prospered because of numerous articles that have appeared in newspapers and magazines that have propelled customers to try this New Orleans tradition.

Located on the corner of Baronne and Erato, the old tan wood building trimmed in light blue is surrounded by brick sidewalks. A large Uglesich's sign hangs above the canopy surrounded by an image of a shrimp, crab, oyster, and fish. The original double, wood French doors provide entrance at the front and side of the building, while the name Uglesich's is painted on the three glass windows. Next to the restaurant is the free, open gravel parking lot providing ample space.

The restaurant is open for lunch only Monday through Friday, as well as the two Saturdays during Jazz Fest, which is the last weekend in April and the first weekend in May. The doors open at 10:30 A.M. and with a first-come-first-served policy, a line usually develops fast outside the door. No reservations are accepted, and the small restaurant has only ten tables inside. Eight years ago six tables were added outside along the building. Customers arrive by car or taxi, or

have walked the two blocks from the streetcar line on St. Charles Avenue. It is not uncommon for customers to arrive directly from the airport—or before their departing flight—with their luggage still in their possession, to eat at the restaurant.

When entering the building, a two-sided laminated menu is provided, and customers approach Anthony and Gail, who are located behind the long, stainless steel counter with marble top, to place their order. Anthony, a stout man with very short gray hair and glasses, feels most comfortable wearing his traditional T-shirt and Bermuda shorts, while Gail is often compared to Nancy Reagan, because of her slender build and short red hair. Behind Anthony and Gail is another counter displaying all the drinks available for purchase. Those include red and white wine, a service provided following the request of customers about ten years ago, both imported and exported beers, only Coca-Cola soft-drink products, tea, and water.

Once the order is received, it is brought to the kitchen, and each customer receives a number written on a small yellow paper, while waiting for the next available table. Cash or travel-check payments only are accepted before proceeding to the end of the counter or oyster bar. At the bar, Michael Rogers is shucking oysters and placing them on the half shell. The wall behind Mr. Rogers proudly displays his first-place plaque for being the fastest oyster opener in the city. Customers can view the open kitchen while Anthony Rogers is washing all silverware and plates, Zena Cooper is frying or sautéing the seafood items in the old black pots and pans, Cynthia Mack is preparing all main entries, and Michelle Rogers is preparing the appetizers.

When your number is called, one of the tables with wooden chairs is now available. Shortly, John Rea will serve your appetizers first, and later the main entries will arrive with fresh French bread. Coffee was served but discontinued sometime in the late 1950s. Dessert has never been offered.

New Orleans is one of the top tourist destinations in the world, so it is no wonder today that 80 percent of the restaurant's clientele consist of tourists. This unique cookbook contains old, current, and new recipes that have been and will be offered in the restaurant, as well as a complete history of the restaurant, from its founder, Sam Uglesich, to the current owners, Anthony and Gail Uglesich. Readers will discover

interesting stories about George Fisher, the “Singing Bread Man,” Ding Ding, the “King of the Hawkers,” who made deliveries for the restaurant, and the very first private party thrown by Ahmet and Mica Ertegun, then head of Atlantic Records, for Sid Bass and his wife. The experience of Uglesich’s restaurant as well as the awesome food have made this small family restaurant a New Orleans tradition since 1924.



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