





Great Food,
Wine,
and Views at

the Galley restaurant

Story by
Ruth Townsend Story

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Photographs by
Brandon McAlister

That battleship gray facade of the Galley Restaurant doesn't prepare you for the appealing ambiance that awaits within. Step across the threshold onto the ochre hued Mediterranean floor of the foyer, the walls hung with stunning Audubon prints, and you are in another dimension. The friendly hostess greets you and invites you into a spacious high-ceiled room featuring an imposing carved oak bar, its granite top set for informal dining as are several small tables. But it is the view from the west wall of large windows that captures your attention. Beyond a stone terrace surrounding a fountain pool is Lake Hartwell, shimmering in the late afternoon sun. The beauty of the scene will hold your attention until your hostess reminds you that your table in the main dining room is ready, and you remember that you've come to The Galley for more than the view. The food is also worth the trip, but that was not always the case.

In 1984, David Freeman took a big gamble to fulfill a dream and bought the lots, some docks, and a couple of non-descript buildings that had been constructed by the Corps of Engineers when Portman Marina was under development. Freeman improved the docks, now numbering 17, then turned his attention to the snack bar in the larger of the two buildings. He describes it as "an ordinary little stand for boaters to grab a quick breakfast or lunch and maybe some

snacks for their boats...nothing more.” Freeman expanded the snack bar, added tables and chairs, and began to serve breakfast



and lunches worth attention. His initial success evolved into the popular dining establishment he oversees today. Beside the bar and grill rooms and the large dining room, The Galley has two private banquet/party rooms, one downstairs, the other upstairs that is a popular site for wedding parties as the room overlooks the lake and is connected via an outside stairway to the terrace, the dockside gardens, and the gazebo, a romantic setting for wedding ceremonies. Freeman speaks enthusiastically as he describes the transformation of the 2,000 square foot snack bar into the gracious 12,000 square foot restaurant and catering business that today attracts patrons from four counties in the South Carolina upstate and from parts of Georgia.

The Galley menu reflects Freeman’s restaurant philosophy “to use nothing

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but high quality ingredients carefully prepared.” For him that means “the finest beef, chops, roasts, and seafood... and only the freshest seasonal vegetables and fruits, all prepared on the premises.” This includes many of the desserts as well, most notably the Crème Brûlée. The entrees are served with freshly baked bread; salad; vegetable; and stone-ground grits, rice, french-fried potatoes or onion rings. Among the most popular entrees are the slow roasted prime rib, herb crusted flame broiled rack of lamb, and flame roasted chicken, a selection Freeman retired from the menu once, but returned because he said, “My regular customers insisted!” Other favorites include hand-battered fried gulf shrimp (and it really is hand-battered with a mixture of soft bread crumbs and parmesan made fresh daily), blackened or grilled fillet of salmon, and flounder stuffed with crab meat.

Of course you have a choice of appetizers, including the local favorite fried dill pickles with ranch dressing. You’ll always find on the menu French onion soup, made on site, and a soup of the day, determined by what’s seasonally fresh. Greek and mixed green salads are staples, but for a special treat, enjoy the poached pear salad, developed by Freeman and his staff: fresh field greens tossed in an orange vinaigrette and topped with walnuts, a generous slice of blue cheese, and wedges of wine poached pears--a delight for the eye and the palette.



The surprise on the menu is a listing of appealing offerings called Small Dishes From Our Hearth Oven. The special dishes are the brainchild of David Freeman and chef Jason Parish. Their inspiration is the large Wood Stone hearth oven made in Bellingham, in Washington mastering the use of this open flame oven and another seven months with chef Parish developing recipes to take advantage of the oven's unique features. So popular are the hearth dishes that a wing off the bar area is devoted to hearth oven cooking. You can even sit at the granite topped hearth bar to watch chef Parish prepare your small dishes and serve them to you may be so intrigued by the small dish menu that you'll order several and share them with companions, or, if you have a small appetite, find that one small meal and a salad are just right. Particularly delicious are the roasted duck breast with Grand Marnier cranberry glaze served on a polenta cake, hearth oven quail with sautéed cabbage, roasted pork tenderloin served with jasmine rice and black bean salsa, and mushroom crusted lamb chops with cabernet demi-glaze and roasted new potatoes. By the way, chef Parish hydrates fresh mushrooms and then prepares them into a crust. Delicious.

You may want to enhance such fine dining with wine. Freeman has made the selection a pleasure. Each wine, personally selected by him and regularly updated after trips to the vineyards in Napa and Sonoma, California, has a page in the small but choice carte du vins. The label of each bottle is reproduced, a line or two of description below that and then the price, most of which, domestic or imported, are affordable. Of course, for a very special occasion, Dom Perignon is available.

After dessert, if you've left room for one of those house-made specialties, and coffee, served hot with refills at the ready, you may chose to walk out onto the terrace, catch the evening breeze off the lake, and enjoy the fragrance of herbs recently planted in the large terra cotta pots. Walk along the waterside, savoring the cool of the evening, the gentle lapping of the water along the lake front, and perhaps be reminded of writer Virginia Wolf's observation that "One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well." You will dine well at The Galley.

The Galley Restaurant at Portman Marina is located at 1629 Marino Road in Anderson, and is open year-round. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 5

P.M. to 10 P.M. Soups and salads run between \$1.95 and \$6.95, appetizers between \$3.75 and \$7.25, entrees between \$13.50 and 19.95, small dishes from the hearth oven between \$3.95 and \$7.95. Desserts are \$3.75 and \$4.75. Reservations are recommended. 864-287-3215. Visit the Galley's website at

www.portmanmarina.com