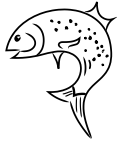


# From Eddie's to Lil Dizzy's

## A FAMILY LEGACY IN RESTAURANTS



By Terry Baquet

My brother Wayne Baquet Sr. recently announced that he is closing Lil Dizzy's, ending my family's long history in the restaurant business.

I can't remember a time when my family wasn't operating a restaurant. I was a toddler in 1966 when my mail-carrier dad, Eddie, decided to cash in his retirement and sell our house in Treme to buy a bar in the 7th Ward. I can only imagine how my mother felt giving up her neat little house to move her family into the back of a bar filled with rowdy drunks, loud jukebox music, and the sounds of men slamming their open palms into pinball machines. The four rooms in the back became our bedrooms. The bar's kitchen was the family kitchen. We shared our meals at a table in the bar.

My dad had some experience in the business. After delivering mail, he would earn extra money helping to manage his uncle's small restaurant in Treme. But Eddie's was his. And he had a secret weapon: My mother, Myrtle, was one helluva cook. She had learned the craft from her mother, Eva Romano.

Word got out that the little bar was serving daily Creole specials. One day there'd be gumbo; the next day, stuffed crabs. The specials expanded to crawfish bisque and fried chicken as well as shrimp, oyster, and roast beef poboyos. Soon, more people were showing up for the food than for the Jax beer on tap.

My brothers Eddie Jr. and Wayne helped transform the bar into a restaurant with a full daily menu of Creole masterpieces cooked by my mother and grandmother. *The States-Item*



Photo by Kenny Morrison

restaurant critic Richard Collin gave it 3 beans in a review, quite an honor for a small, black neighborhood spot.

Then the unimaginable happened: Bill Cosby (then only famous for his comedy and acting) came to eat at Eddie's and a few days later, while appearing on Johnny Carson's *The Tonight Show*, declared it the best food he'd ever tasted. Lines formed around the block with folks wanting to taste what all the fuss was about.

The family business soon expanded. There was Eddie Baquet's on Claiborne Avenue and Eddie's at Krauss. Wayne opened a breakfast and lunch spot called Café Baquet in Central City. The Baquets had become a restaurant family.

My dad retired in 1984 but visited Eddie's daily until he died in 1993. Eddie Jr. and his family moved to Houston in 1986. He died there in 1994.

Wayne has kept the family business thriving. He and his wife, Janet, operated Zachary's in the Riverbend from 1992 until 2004 before opening Lil Dizzy's in 2005. His restaurants drew crowds from all across the world, and his Trout Baquet and gumbo are among the most celebrated dishes at Jazz Fest.

---

*Terry Baquet was a 29-year newsroom veteran at NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune. He served as Sunday editor and Page 1 editor during The Times-Picayune's Pulitzer Prize-winning Katrina coverage. He was named Director of Print in 2012, in charge of running The Times-Picayune's newspaper operations. He now serves on the boards of Spaceship Media and Lede New Orleans.*



# Trout *Baquet*



Photo by Kenny Morrison

## INGREDIENTS

1 stick of butter  
6 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 pound fresh lump crab meat  
¼ cup lemon juice  
¼ cup dry white wine  
8 (4 to 5 ounces each) trout fillets  
½ cup flour for dusting  
Parsley for garnish (optional)

## HOW TO PREPARE

Melt half stick of butter in a saucepan over low heat. Sauté garlic and onion until translucent. Add remaining half stick of butter, lemon juice, and white wine. Add crab meat, stir to warm through. Remove from heat.

Broil or grill trout fillets (lightly dusted with flour) in a lightly buttered pan, about 5 to 6 minutes or until done.

Place 2 fillets on each plate. Spoon crab meat mixture over trout fillets and serve immediately, garnished with fresh parsley if desired.