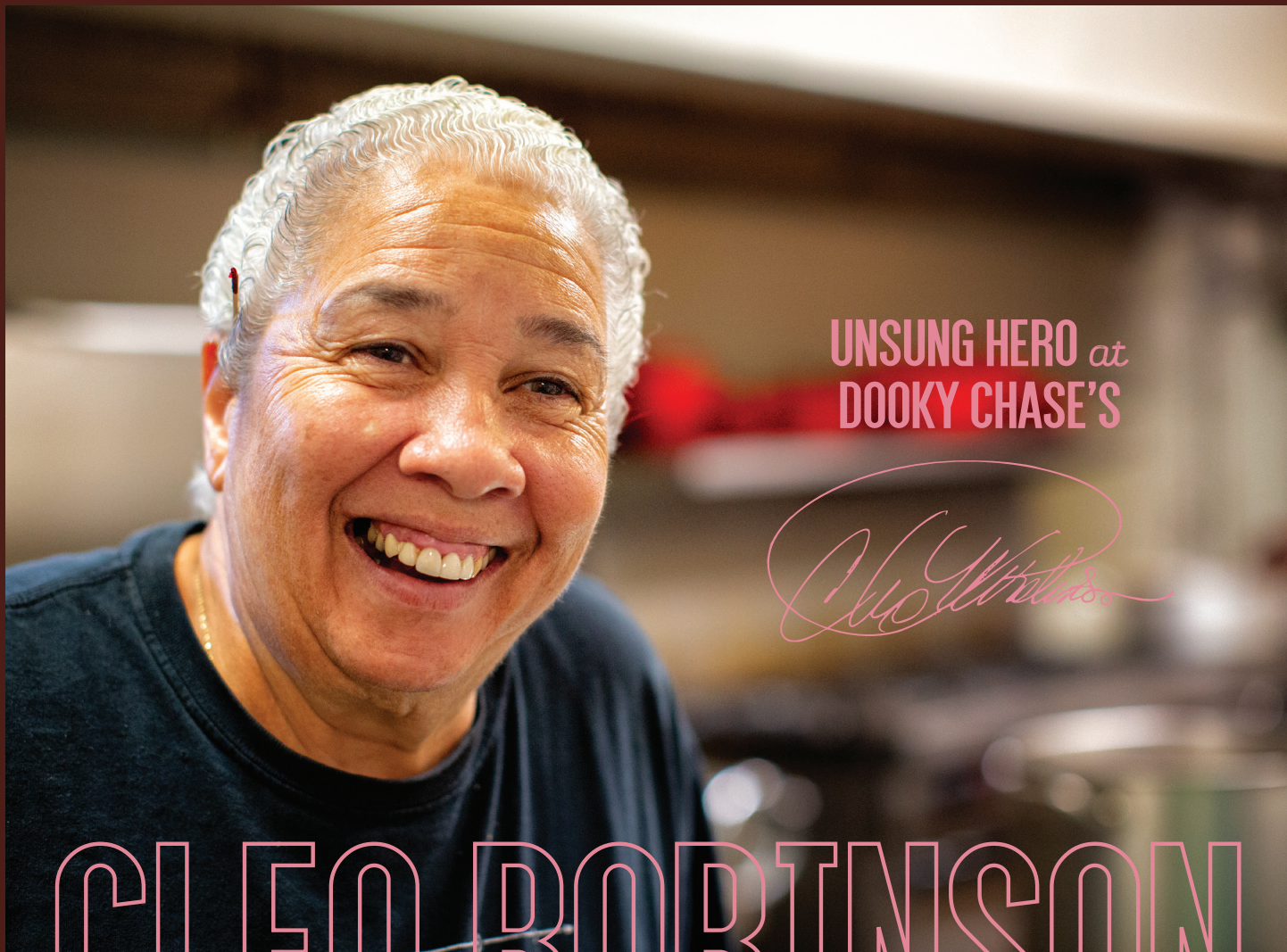




UNSUNG HERO *at*
DOOKY CHASE'S

Cleo Robinson

CLEO ROBINSON

Executive Sous Chef

45 YEARS AT DOOKY CHASE'S

WHAT DO YOU DO AS EXECUTIVE SOUS CHEF?

I work in the back kitchen, which we added in 1984, to prep a lot of things we use out front. After getting dishes ready for the next phase, I'll plate. I also do all the ordering.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR JOB?

It's just great taking part in all the ambitions my aunt had. As long as you get into the restaurant's kitchen and you make something that people really like and they are happy, that's all the reward you need.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED?

I started in take-out orders, and then I would fill in for people who couldn't come in. I started helping with prepping in 1984. One day Mrs. Leah Chase was sautéing and trying to do other things, which I didn't think was fair, so I came back to help her. After that, she told Uncle Dooky to put me in the kitchen with her. Now I'm working with our third family chef.

WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING IF NOT THIS?

I'd be fishing. I'd like to be sitting in the middle of a lake or the Gulf. I like to catch reds [red fish] and specs [speckled trout]. My grandmother loved fishing, and it is in my DNA.



COURT BOUILLON

by Chef Leah Chase

YIELDS: 4 to 6 servings | PREP TIME: 15 to 20 minutes | COOK TIME: 1 ½ hours

FISH STOCK

INGREDIENTS

- 4- to 5-lb. redfish (or any other firm fish)
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- ¼ cup carrots, chopped
- ½ cup yellow onions, chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, flattened

DIRECTIONS

1. Scale and gut fish. Remove fish from bones, saving head and bones. Cut each side of the fish in three pieces. (You may have the market clean and prepare fish. Ask for bones and head.)

2. In a large pot, add just the head and bones with bay leaf, celery, carrots, onions, and garlic. Bring to a boil for 30 minutes. Pour stock through a sieve and set aside to use later in this recipe.

TO SERVE

INGREDIENTS: Rice, cooked to your preference

DIRECTIONS: Remove the pieces of fish and place them on a bed of rice. Spoon the gravy over the fish and rice.

GRAVY

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 Tbl flour
- ½ cup yellow onions, chopped
- ½ cup bell peppers, chopped
- 1 Tbl garlic, chopped
- 3 cups canned whole tomatoes
- 1 tsp whole thyme leaves
- 1 Tbl salt
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 whole red pepper
- 1 Tbl parsley, chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. In a Dutch oven, heat oil over medium heat for 3 minutes.

2. Whisk in flour and cook to a light tan, approximately 15 minutes.

3. Add onions and cook until they are clear, approximately 5 minutes.

4. Add green pepper and garlic. Continue to stir, approximately 5 minutes.

DOOKY CHASE'S

Dooky Chase's Restaurant opened in 1941, evolving from a small sandwich shop and lottery outlet into a beloved family restaurant in Treme.

Founded by Emily and Dooky Chase, Sr., it quickly became a gathering place for music, culture, and the civil rights movement in New Orleans. Still family owned and operated, the restaurant remains a cornerstone of authentic Creole cuisine.



5. Add whole tomatoes and 3 cups of the fish stock. Stir well. Add thyme, salt, cayenne pepper, whole red pepper, and parsley. Let the gravy come to a boil, but no fast cooking.

6. Lower heat and add fish pieces. Simmer for 20 minutes until the fish flakes.