

# Crave Cafe to give out secret soup recipes

Dana McMahan, Special to the Courier-Journal 7:07 a.m. ET Jan. 17, 2017



(Photo: Courtesy of Crave Cafe)

February marks 10 years that the little yellow house at 2250 Frankfort Ave. has been serving up homey favorites including soups, salads, and sandwiches.

"There was nothing here then," says Crave Cafe's owner Shannon McDonald-Foster. "There was Clifton Pizza, and Volare had just opened. Ginny's Diner was there. Then Bourbon's Bistro, Basa, places started popping up everywhere. It has evolved so much in the last, really eight years. I feel like I was in on the beginning of the revitalization down here. We're kind of the mom and pop, we know everybody who comes in, we know their kid's name. We're a heart and soul place."

McDonald-Foster goes on to say "we're kind of the best-kept secret on Frankfort Ave. We've never even been reviewed. We've created a great little thing down here and I'm very proud of it."

They recently expanded to open a food truck, Crave A Go Go, that often sets up downtown and will run through the winter, barring snow and ice on the ground.

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The cafe has made it 10 years, including through struggles with the economy and other big changes because they've hung on, McDonald-Foster says.

"A lot of people that open restaurants go in and think 'I pay my employees and I get paid and I'll make a lot of money.' That is not one bit true. I am here six days a week, 10 hours a day, sometimes 12, sometimes seven days a week. I'm the cook, I'm the accountant, I'm the order taker, I do everything. I have great employees, but I wear all the hats. Now my husband has come into it and he's doing the food truck. It's not fame and fortune but it's ours. You have to be dedicated."

So what drives her to work so hard?

"For the love of it," she says. "It's like a child. I don't know what else I'd be doing. I don't mind the long hours. It's been a family thing, all my kids have worked here."

The cafe is best known for their soups, McDonald-Foster says. "People freak out over them. They're good, homemade, made from scratch."

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With a rotation of about 40 different soups, she chooses three to feature every day. "By one o'clock they're sold out. I have to change out." There's no schedule, she says. "It's whatever I feel like making. But people can call and ask a few days in advance and I'll make sure I have it." Go-tos, she says, are any of their four or five tomato soup variations, and the single most requested is the portabella bisque. Also on the menu is a selection of sandwiches named for streets in the area including the Mellwood (BLT) and Stockyard (ham and Swiss).

To mark its 10 year anniversary, Crave Cafe will hold a week-long celebration beginning Feb. 6, McDonald-Foster says. A raffle to raise money for the Center for Women and Families will feature door prizes like lunch for a year and a catered event from the food truck. The first 10 people in the door each day get a free cup of soup, and everyone will get free birthday cake.

And because people ask so often for recipes, but she doesn't give them out, "you can pick your favorite and I'll give it to you."

More information: (502) 896-1488 or <http://cravecafeFrankfortave.com/> (<http://cravecafeFrankfortave.com/>).

Tell Dana! Send your restaurant "Dish" to Dana McMahan at [thecjdish@gmail.com](mailto:thecjdish@gmail.com) and follow @danamac on Twitter.

# Crave Cafe's Country Ham and Corn Chowder

*"Most soup recipes are in my head, not written," says Crave Cafe's owner Shannon McDonald-Foster. As part of the restaurants' 10 year anniversary, they will give soup recipes to customers on request. Here's one of their most popular soups to kick off the celebration.*

1 quart heavy whipping cream

1 quart half & half

1 cup flour

1/2 stick butter

1/2 pound or more diced country ham

2 cups sweet corn

2-3 cups diced, cooked red potatoes

1 Tbsp ea. onion powder, celery salt, black pepper

1 1/2 tbsp. ham base

In a large Dutch oven or double boiler, saute country ham in butter for a minute or two. Whisk together cream, half & half, flour, spices and ham base. Add corn and potatoes and whisk vigorously.

Cook on medium to medium-high heat, stirring frequently for about an hour or until it reaches a thick consistency.

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