

Spice it up!

by Sally Litchfield
sallylit@bellsouth.net
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Find quality home-cooked, authentic Cuban cuisine at Cuban Diner, located at 1484 Roswell Road in East Marietta Shopping Center near Harry's Farmers Market.

When restaurant owners Susy and Jose Ricardo came to Cobb County, it was difficult to find Cuban cuisine. The east Cobb couple that met in Miami, Fla., realized a lifelong dream when they opened Cuban Diner in 2009.

Jose - who was born in Holguin, Cuba, and came to the U.S. through a Visa lottery in 1996 - runs the day-to-day operations of Cuban Diner. Susy was born in New Jersey to Cuban parents who immigrated to the U.S. in 1960 after Castro took over. Susy's parents settled in New Jersey because of available work and lived in a predominately Cuban area, Union City. The family settled in Miami when Susy was a young child.

Jose moved to Marietta in early 1999 for work with Diaz Foods, a Latin food distribution company and Susy joined him later that year after the couple married. "During the time that (Jose) was up here without me, he lived in Marietta with very dear friends and that sealed the deal on Cobb County, which we knew was where we wanted to stay," Susy said.

When the couple could not find Cuban food in Atlanta, they decided to open their own restaurant. Cuban Diner offers authentic Cuban comfort food such as Cuban sandwiches, roast pork and mojito chicken. Susy explained that Cuban cuisine is derived from Spanish cuisine. "It is not spicy at all. We use spices to enhance the flavor of the food, not mask it," said Susy, a legal secretary at an intellectual property firm, Fish and Richardson in Atlanta. She also works at the restaurant at night and on the weekends.

"We bring in a bit of Cuba and a bit of Miami into the mix with the style of food and decor," Susy said.

"We are delivering a good product," Jose said. Food at Cuban Diner is made to order with fresh ingredients.

Customer service is also outstanding at Cuban Diner. "I believe the personal touch and being there is one of the most important things," Jose said. "I like the South. I'm a friendly guy. I like people."

"We truly give it a personal touch by making contact and talking to our customers. We have developed wonderful relationships with customers and the Marietta business community as well and we also have a partnership with Sedalia Park Elementary School," Susy said. At Cuban Diner, find quality authentic Cuban cuisine and personal service. Hours are Monday through Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Thursday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Call (770) 509-2576 or visit www.mariettacuban diner.com for more information



Jose and Susy Ricardo display a family sampler platter at their restaurant, Cuban Diner. The east Cobb couple opened the restaurant in 2009. It is located at 1482 Roswell Road in East Marietta Shopping Center.

Photo by Anthony Stalcup