

Mango Mangeaux owners expand with venue and boutique hotel

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By Alexis Baldwin

HAMPTON, VA--The owners of the avant garde restaurant, **Mango Mangeaux**, have expanded their business in Phoebus with a new event space called "**Simply Panache**."

The entrepreneurial trio – Lakesha Brown, Tanecia Willis and Nzinga Teule-Hekima – had been running events out of their award-winning restaurant on East Mellen Street, but were having to close early and were concerned about the impact on regular customers.

The new event space is directly across the street.

"Our goal is for our guests to have an entertaining experience. We don't provide just food. It is an experience that our customers get and it is one of a kind," said Danielle Goodman, event manager.

The new venue can seat up to 100 people seated or up to 150 at standing events such as cocktail parties. The decor and furnishings are white, but color can easily be added with furniture or decorations. A stage is also available for rental.

The venue attracts mainly wedding receptions, art shows and fashion shows.

The menu will be similar to the restaurant's, including the "House Favorites" Quiche Florentine, Chesapeake Benedict and Magnolia Shrimp and Grits. It will also include one of their best sellers, gumbo with seafood, sausage and chicken.

"I attended a wedding reception, and it felt really good to have comfort food that makes me feel like I am back at home in New Orleans," said Anthony Johnson, a guest having lunch at Mango Mangeaux.

The owners first hit the national scene on **Shark Tank** with their mango preserves. It can be spread on toast, croissants and bagels or paired with red wine vinegar and olive oil. The chefs combine it with another one of their products "Jammin Ginger Party Mix" to make their signature dish "Mango Ginger Shrimp."

"It was literally the best food I have had since visiting from my home in Georgia," said Kelly Wright after lunch at the restaurant.

Event Manager Johnson says the new venue serves the same quality of food and customers have been pleased with the choices and services.