At Christine’s Café, Chef/Owner Keith Lowman (opposite) serves what he calls “American fusion,” or a combination of ethnicities combined into one inspired dish, like the Cedar Smoked Salmon (above) topped with ancho butter and served with wilted savoy spinach and rice pilaf.
For Chef/Owner Keith Lowman of Christine’s Café, Gettysburg, life has been a journey across America. That 35-year journey is reflected in his cooking, infusing his menu with America’s favorite and iconic regional flavors.

He describes the menu at Christine’s Café as “American fusion,” bringing culinary creativity to breakfast, lunch, and dinner. “American fusion is a combination or fusion of ethnicities combined into one workable dish,” Lowman explains. “Kind of like the way our country is, a melting pot...Having a sense of adventure about new flavors is what American fusion is all about.”

Mapping His Course
From his birth in Pensacola, Fla., Lowman spent much of his childhood in the south including Charleston, S.C., as the family moved with his Navy-based father. During his high school years, the family returned to their roots in Hagerstown, Md. After a short stint in the military himself, Lowman established an 18-year culinary career throughout the mid-Atlantic region, beginning with training under Chef Paul Suplee in Ocean City, Md. Lowman established himself in south-central Pennsylvania by spending six years as executive sous chef at Liberty Mountain Resort. Lowman was also presented with the opportunity to

By Karen Hendricks
Photography by Casey Martin
Chef Lowman prepares one of his signature dishes, Seafood Florentine Pappardelle. This hearty dinner item features a bed of broad, flat pasta covered with a sherry cream sauce, shrimp, scallops, lump crab, kale, and red pepper pesto.

help open a restaurant, Christine’s Café, Waynesboro, for owners Scott and Sheree Green.

Gettysburg’s location, five years later, came about after Lowman drove past the former Café St. Amand and realized the Baltimore Street location would be the perfect spot to begin his own franchise with the Greens’ blessing. Since opening Christine’s Café, Gettysburg, on June 21, 2016, Lowman says the most common compliment from customers is that he’s offering unique dishes “they can’t find anywhere else” due to their many layers of flavors.

Farmer’s Benedict, on the breakfast menu, is anything but a traditional layered Eggs Benedict. A potato pancake anchors the dish, featuring cornmeal for a touch of crispness. “Ham gives it a smoky flavor, with house-made bacon jam bringing the salty but sweet [flavors], then poached eggs are topped off with a house-made Hollandaise featuring sundried tomato pesto for a herbaceous element,” says Lowman. Served with a side of potatoes—a colorful blend of sweet, purple Peruvian and Yukon gold—and asparagus spears, the hearty breakfast provides incentive to rise and shine.

Lowman says the house-made bacon jam is so popular that customers often request it in other dishes, and he may look into selling it by the jar.

The breakfast menu wakes up the taste buds with a variety of crepes—including Mocha Crepes with expresso whipped cream—as well as Breakfast Tacos, or more traditional options.

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**BRAZILIAN INSPIRED HONEY GARLIC BUTTER SHRIMP IN COCONUT MILK**

**Marinade/Sauce:**
1 pound raw shrimp, 16-20 peeled, deveined, tail on
¼ c. olive oil
2 T. honey
4-6 cloves garlic, grated
1 T. fresh grated ginger
2 jalapeños, seeded and minced
1 tsp. cayenne
1 tsp. cumin
¼ c. chopped cilantro

**Additional ingredients:**
4 T. butter
¼ c. coconut milk

**Instructions**
Mix all marinade ingredients together and toss with shrimp. Cover and place in refrigerator overnight.

Sauté shrimp over medium/high heat, 2 minutes on each side until firm and opaque. Remove from pan and reserve.

Add marinade to pan and reduce for 2-3 minutes. Add coconut milk and cook until slightly thickened. Whisk in butter to finish. Season with salt and pepper as needed.

Serve with white rice, black beans, sliced avocado, fried plantains. Top with fresh cilantro, chopped.
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“Every Plate is Like a Blank Canvas”

For lunch, Lowman says one of the most popular items is the colorful Burrito Bowl, which includes a base of spiced tomato rice, covered with sections of sundried tomato-walnut “meat,” kale, pico de gallo, black beans, hummus, and green onion.

“Everybody loves Mexican flavors and flair…I wanted to come up with a vegan dish that didn’t only appeal to vegans or vegetarians. Coming up with a false meat was challenging, but cashews add a creamy richness to the walnut sundried tomatoes,” says Lowman.

“Creating a colorful dish is a high priority, because people eat with their eyes first. Every plate is like a blank canvas.”

Additional lunch options range from Bibimbap (Bee-beem-bap), a Korean dish, to New England Lobster Roll, Whiskey Chicken Lettuce Wraps, and traditional soup and salad choices.

Tasting the Love

Lowman says he hopes customers can taste the love that goes into his house-made pasta dishes. Seafood Florentine Pappardelle, on the dinner menu, features a bed of the broad, flat pasta covered with a sherry cream sauce, shrimp, scallops, lump crab, kale, and red pepper pesto.

“I had an old Italian chef tell me that you have to love your food or else it’s not going to taste good,” Lowman recalls. “It stuck with me…I worked on my pasta recipe for eight years. It feels like an accomplishment—it’s not easy to knead pasta dough, and you’ll give up if you don’t love it.”

Without giving away his secret pasta recipe, Lowman says the key lies in the ratio of semolina versus white flour, and the perfect number of eggs—six whole eggs plus two yolks.

Also in perfect harmony is the staff—
Lowman says he could not be prouder of his staff for helping him realize a dream. The team includes his fiancé Tiffany who manages the front of house, and her daughter and son whom Lowman has taken under his wing in the kitchen.

Lowman credits his mother with passing along her culinary wisdom. “She taught me how to cook with southern flair—soul food like red beans and rice, cornbread, healthy foods like collard greens,” he says. That southern influence is woven throughout the dinner menu, including Honey Bourbon Cajun Fried Chicken.

Lowman says several of the more adventurous dinner items are also the most popular—for example, Jamaican Jerk Wild Boar Chop and Bacon Wrapped Stuffed Bison Meatloaf, perfect examples of his American fusion theme.

“I like being an experimental style chef...meatloaf is familiar to everyone but the one on my menu is not. I like going for the familiar unfamiliar.” Sounds like food for thought.

CHEF IN THE HOUSE

Ever wonder what a chef prepares for his family at home? Chef Lowman has his work cut out for him: Between he and fiancé Tiffany, they have six children at home—two girls and four boys ranging in ages nine to 18.

“Sunday nights we have a family meal, and we’re off on Mondays, so I cook at home on those days. Enchiladas are one of our favorite meals. It’s no different than the restaurant—I make everything from scratch starting with the sauce. Food is my passion, whether at work or home.”