Mni Dunes and Sean Josephs started to seriously consider leaving New York City five years ago. "Because of the couple’s second child triggered a reap- praisal of their two-bedroom, fourth-floor Manhattan walk-up. “You have to chuckle everything up and down those stairs, your kids, your groceries,” Josephs explained. “Eventually, we had a car, but you couldn’t park in front of our building.” Josephs paused. “I’m not saying any of this in a complaining way,” he said. “It’s just that it’s a challenge. And here, we have a dishwasher.”

Here, in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a stone’s throw from Dunes and Josephs’s restaurant, Kenton’s. Open for just a month and a half, Kenton’s belongs to a growing group of New Orleans restaurant members. Members of the tribe are unnerved by the custom trip but by owners who established themselves in other markets before deciding to open up shop here.

The restaurants range in style from Caribe- Comerio (Comerio, Puerto Rico) and punk-influenced authetically (Café de los Chiles) to Cal- ifornio (Paladar 51 D) and Southern-accented New American (Keto, etc.). Andy Ticer and Michael Hudman, successful chef restaurateurs from Memphis, will open an Italian-focused restaurant in the New Act Hotel in New Orleans. “New Orleans are always looking for a great meal or a great restaurant” said Ticer, a New Orleans native who built her professional career in New York with Tia Pol, a 12-year-old Massachusetts. And transplants are hardly strangers to the ranks of chefs and owners. “Everyone is getting sucked into the restaurant scene, those numbers don’t appear to compete with dishes locals have eaten all their lives.”

By Brett Anderson

Celebrity chefs have never been as attracted to New Orleans as they are to other tourist hubs, notably Las Vegas, and perhaps for good reason. Remember Emeril, the Tallad- ing chef that opened Emeril’s in New Orleans in 1993, and Emeril’s still is a launching pad for plenty of chefs who have become more famous Emeril Lagasse, a native of New Orleans, Massachusetts. And transplants are hardly strangers to the ranks of chefs and owners. “I don’t want people to think, ‘Here’s me and a salad,’ ” said Josephs. “I want to compete with dishes locals have eaten all their lives.”

Recipe from Patsy’s Italian Restaurant. Our only location is 236 W. 56th St. phone: 212-547-2491. www.patsys.com

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