

Family, Friends and Food

Find it All at Blue Surf Arboretum West

BY EMILY ANDRES, PHOTOS COURTESY OF BLUE SURF RESTAURANTS

Wilmington is home to many great places to eat, but there's nothing like the warmth and charm of Blue Surf Arboretum West. This popular restaurant is more than just a place to grab a bite—it's a vibrant community where family and friends gather to enjoy great food, share stories, and create lasting memories. Blue Surf Arboretum West is locally owned by two families who live in Wilmington and actively participate in the community in many ways.

Blue Surf Arboretum West hires local staff, like sisters Anika and Emerson Seward. The Seward family has been an integral part of the Blue Surf journey. The Sewards met owners, Colleen Kochanek and Stephanie Norris, while living in the same neighborhood. The family has been regulars at the restaurant that has now become a place for the two sisters to earn some money and gain experience in the restaurant industry.

Anika, the oldest of the Seward daughters, has been working at Blue Surf Arboretum West for three years. She started as a hostess and food runner and is now transitioning into a server. "Our co-workers and managers are the best, everyone here is very meticulous and really cares and knows about what they are doing," Anika says enthusiastically. This sense of camaraderie and attention to detail is a key ingredient in the restaurant's success.

Emerson, or Emmy, the younger of the Seward sisters, has recently joined the team as a hostess, and she's already embraced the welcoming atmosphere. "Definitely the people," she says when asked about her favorite part of her job. "Everyone's so nice. There's never any tension here. Everyone's friends, we're all pretty close, and the owners are easy-going and really helpful if you need help or time off," says Emmy. Emmy plans to continue working at Blue Surf during the summers, following in her sister's footsteps and continuing the family's legacy at Blue Surf.

Jasmine LeMaire, a bartender at Blue Surf, has worked closely with the Seward sisters and praises their dedication. "Aww, they are just the best family. Emerson is just the best. She is great at keeping her composure when it's busy



Emerson (Emmy) Seward enjoys working as a hostess while her older sister Anika works as a server at the restaurant.



It's a family affair for the Sewards at Blue Surf Arboretum West, who are regular diners - in addition to their daughters holding part-time jobs there.

and hectic, and Anika is great, too. Their parents come here and eat all the time, and they are just the sweetest family,” Jasmine says.

The entire Seward family is very active in Wilmington. Greg is serving as chief risk officer and general counsel at Live Oak Bank, and Katy is working as a real estate broker with the Lanier Property Group at Intracoastal Realty. The busy family of five enjoys quick meals when running to and from events and practices to long enjoyable family dinners where they catch up on all the day’s activities. And now, of course, they may have one of the daughters as a server or hostess which makes dining at Blue Surf Arboretum West even more fun for them.

The friendly environment at Blue Surf Arboretum West isn’t just reserved for the staff. Blue Surf has created an environment where everyone feels welcome, whether they’re staff or customers. The warmth and friendliness that permeates the restaurant is a true reflection of the Wilmington community. The restaurant is designed to be a place where families can come together to enjoy a meal without feeling out of place. From the casual decor to the wide-ranging menu, there’s something for everyone. The vibe is laid-back, and the staff go out of their way to make every guest feel at home.

The menu at Blue Surf caters to a variety of tastes and preferences. Whether you’re looking for a casual breakfast, a leisurely lunch, or a relaxed dinner, Blue Surf Arboretum West has it all.

Blue Surf Arboretum West stands out as the ultimate locally-owned family-friendly restaurant, thanks to the dedication of the Blue Surf family and commitment to the community. It’s a must-visit spot for delicious food, great vibes, and a true sense of community for locals and visitors alike.

Dinner is Back at the Blue Surf Cafe

250 Racine Drive

Exciting news, foodies. Dinner is finally back at Blue Surf Cafe, and it’s better than ever! Located at 250 Racine Drive, this Wilmington hotspot is now serving up mouthwatering evening delights like Mojo Pork, Mushroom Chicken, and Mahi & Shrimp Crema, alongside their beloved lunch favorites 5-9 p.m. Don’t miss out on this culinary adventure – bring the whole gang, there’s something for everyone and your taste buds will thank you!

Now Open

8:30 a.m. - 9 p.m., Tues-Sat

8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Sun-Mon



BLUE SURF Arboretum West

BLUESURFRESTAURANTS.COM



Modern American Cuisine

(910)406-5050

414 Arboretum Drive - Suite #130
Wilmington, NC 28405

Join us at Blue Surf Tuesday - Sunday for:

- Weekly Food & Drink Specials
- Friendly Local Staff
- Live Music & Monthly 5-Course Wine Dinners
- Seasonal Menu Rotations from co-owner & head chef - Jon Webb.