

NIGHT AND DAY



CHRIS SHELDON / The Sun

The Equinox Diner, at the former Bickford's location in Mystic, offers breakfast, lunch and dinner all day and most of the night.

Equinox Diner joins the Mystic scene

By CHRIS SHELDON
Sun Staff Writer

MYSTIC — An equinox is defined as the two times of the year when the sun crosses the equator and night and day are of equal length.

At the Equinox Diner at 253 Greenmanville Ave., customers can enjoy great food every day, at almost any time.

The restaurant is open from 7 a.m. to 1 a.m. and serves breakfast all day. Owner Jimmy Doukas said it will be open for 24 hours on the weekends in the summer.

Doukas, of Westchester, N.Y., bought the property and put up a new building on a lot where a Bickford's Restaurant once stood. "I picked this spot because of the location and also because the Mystic community is made up of the nicest and most supportive people I've ever met in my life," said Doukas. "They've been very receptive to what we've done and the most important thing is to have loyal customers."

Construction took one and a half years and the diner opened on March 17.

Doukas owned three restaurants in New York from 1989 to 2005 and opened his first Equinox Diner in Orange, Conn., in 2007.

"My dad was in the diner business and I started off as a cook and dishwasher, so I appreciate learning from the bottom up," he said.

Breakfast is one of Head Chef Matt Cavallo's many specialties. Doukas said the stuffed French toast has been popular. It is dipped in egg batter, stuffed with blueberry filling and rolled in Corn Flakes. He also said the diner is known for its omelets made with organic eggs and fixings, such as spinach, mushrooms, Canadian bacon and several different



Equinox Diner owner Jimmy Doukas, Head Chef Matt Cavallo and General Manager Kevin O'Connor.

cheeses.

The diner also has burgers, sandwiches, paninis, steaks and salads. There are 140 items on the menu. Doukas said he only buys the freshest ingredients, such as Black Angus beef and seafood from New York and Boston markets.

One of the most popular items on the menu has been the entrée salads, which the menu describes as a meal in itself.

All baking is done on the premises and the kitchen churns out several delicious desserts such as cheesecake and cupcakes.

It also has some features that

are not commonly associated with diners, such as Wi-fi capabilities, a fully-stocked bar and 10 plasma TV screens so that people can come in and enjoy a ballgame while they have a meal.

"Our motto is that we're more than just a diner. We have upscale food with great presentation at diner prices," Doukas said.

Doukas is also happy to see a lot of different people are coming in to enjoy everything the diner has to offer.

"We have a diverse customer base; families with children, businessmen, senior citizens and college students," he said. "That's the

beauty of a diner, it works for everyone."

He is hoping that the diner will continue to grow in popularity and that its diversity will keep people coming back and finding a new favorite place to eat.

"My favorite thing is day in and day out giving 100 percent effort to make customers happy. When they leave and thank you for a great meal and great service, it's the most rewarding comment," he said.

For more information contact the Equinox Diner at (860) 415-4625 or visit www.equinoxdiner.com.