

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Millennials Open New Restaurant On St. Croix With Convenience As Specialty

Business / **Published On December 14, 2018 11:55 AM /**

Ernice Gilbert **December 14, 2018**



ST. CROIX -- Millennials in the U.S. Virgin Islands believe their time has come. Not because they are being allowed to lead, open new businesses, or are being given top positions by the boomers -- who have led the territory for decades. But because they are deciding to force their way through by creating their own paths with new ideas and innovation.

Such is the case with the newest restaurant to open on St. Croix. Named Gas Lamp VI and located in La Grande Princesse adjacent to the old Manor School (currently Elena Christian Junior High School), the restaurant, which had a soft launch on Thursday night, is owned by two millennials whose aim is to provide convenience to its customers never

before offered in the territory.

Say you're hungry, it's midnight, and you don't want to leave your home, Gas Lamp -- whose name implies burning the midnight oil in order to serve customers -- will deliver your order at your door. Let's imagine that it is a group of you -- maybe a company's employees not able to leave the office on a given day because of deadlines, Gas Lamp's owners say the restaurant would prepare the meals and provide on-time delivery. You can order via phone or [Facebook](#) (the owners intend to make the company's Facebook page the go-to site to place orders, and have promised to be prompt with its responses.)



The Gas Lamp concept, the owners say, falls in line with what millennials have come to expect and are now demanding relative to service: the convenience to get what you want while continuing with your day uninterrupted. The owners believe it's a concept not only millennials, but every generation will appreciate.

Kadeem Pemberton, who co-owns Gas Lamp with Wendell Claxton, thanked established businesses on St. Croix for lending their support to Gas Lamp's successful opening.

"Honestly, I'm going to be real with everybody. We couldn't do it without the support of the older business heads. We could talk about [Kisha Christian](#), we could talk about [Kye Walker](#), we could talk about [Plaza West](#) -- I could keep going. A lot of people reached out to us and supported freely," he said.

Last night's soft launch was positive. The restaurant was filled with patrons throughout the night, and those who ordered meals expressed satisfaction with the food and customer service. "My experience was lovely. When I came in it was welcoming, and what I enjoyed the most about it is that while this was the opening, it felt like I've been here before," said Clemrick Bryan.

The Thursday night launch was a soft opening, Mr. Pemberton said, a strategy he said was utilized to get feedback from customers before the grand opening on December 21. Once fully open, Gas Lamp VI will operate from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. the next day, and will offer delivery service throughout. The menu, seen [here](#), offers a wide variety of meals, but the big rave so far appears to be chicken and waffles. The restaurant also intends to create tailored profiles for its customers by learning their ordering habits.



"It's all about convenience. There's no place in the Virgin Islands where you get conch and on the same hand continental breakfast. You know we have the Crucian breakfast, you have the McDonald's breakfast, but we also have people with careers who would like their breakfast on the go, so we do delivery as well," Mr. Pemberton said.

Upon entering the space, you meet the bar, a further walk inside through an arch takes you to the dinning area, which has five tables. On the north side of the same building is a game room where children can spend time while parents purchase meals or dine in. There are also cameras in the game room to monitor the children. "We really want that technology incorporated, Mr. Pemberton said, "we're really trying to go paperless."

Purchases can be made via Venmo and Paypal. Orders are taken on apple devices, and there's a live feed showing the kitchen, Mr. Pemberton said. Internet speed is also very strong at Gas Lamp, with 75 megabits per second for downloads.

Mr. Claxton explained how the vision for the restaurant came about. He had just turned 30 on August 23, and was looking for a place to eat late but could not find one. "I was mad. I was like, I'm going to open my own spot." Mr. Claxton said two weeks later he was approached by his cousin, who told Mr. Claxton that his grandmother was renting out her space in La Grande Princesse. "It wasn't the ideal location I wanted because I wanted town for the night crowd. But [Starlight](#) is right up the road, so I saw this as a blessing," he said.

Mr. Claxton then told Mr. Pemberton about the idea, who agreed to invest in the business. "I've been used to so many people just talking the talk, so I told him I'm going to get the lease on the first of September, so let me know," Mr. Claxton said.

The night before September 1, Mr. Pemberton called Mr. Claxton to inform him that the funding had been secured.



Mr. Claxton said the aim is to make the restaurant ubiquitous on St. Croix with all age groups, especially millennials and Generation Z. "We want people to say I'm hungry, Gas Lamp, I'm leaving the club, Gas Lamp, aye, it's lunchtime, Gas Lamp, hey, it's breakfast, Gas Lamp -- we want Gas Lamp to be on everybody's minds the whole of 2019 and beyond," he said.

From the looks of it, the partners are getting off to a great start.

"I had a salmon burger with fries, I kept it simple," said Craig Williams, a patron. "It was good, I really enjoyed it." He spoke of the environment as being unique and inviting."

"The food was really good and the atmosphere is great," said Daren Georges. Mr. Georges, a friend of Mr. Claxton's, said it was time for millennials to play a more dominant role in the future of the Virgin Islands. "It's our turn to do things in the community, so definitely supporting each other is a first step as we mark ourselves into society and leave our mark as a generation."

And Senator-elect Javan James, who stopped by the restaurant to show his support, said being an elected senator from the millennial generation served as an encouraging sign to others. "It is a good look," he said. "Just me winning a seat in the Senate, it makes younger people feel like there is hope, and I think it's needed because a lot of the older folks are now retiring, closing down businesses, so people within the age group of thirty, those are the new faces moving things right now."

All images by [Clemrick Bryan](#).