

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Bon Manjer, A New Restaurant In Sion Farm Next To Frame Up, Is The Hottest Buzz On St. Croix

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ST. CROIX -- A lot of St. Croix restaurants -- and the island is famous for its restaurants -- are located in downtown Christiansted and further down east. No problem, St. Croix residents love to eat out, and therefore the drive long or short is never considered an issue.

Until, however, you realize that someone actually solved the problem by opening up a restaurant -- with food just as good, an inclusive ambience, and great customer service from the gorgeous and friendly women who are seemingly constantly going -- somewhere midpoint on the island. Suddenly you realize you need not go further than the Sion Farm Shopping Center, next to Frame Up, to experience a night out with that

special someone, or have a singular time at the bar.

Enter Bon Manjer, the restaurant that opened its doors just Monday and the buzz now following it is unbelievable. The restaurant is booked through next week, and every single person that this reporter has spoken to, calls Bon Manjer -- which means good food in Dominican, St. Lucian and Haitian Creole -- their new favorite restaurant. And with good reason.



When this reporter first visited the restaurant Thursday night, I was taken by surprise. Upon entering, you feel an atmosphere of warmth and inclusiveness. Then you immediately notice the 22-foot long bar that is accompanied by sitting on the right side. There's also sitting on the left side of the restaurant upon entering.

At first, the space seemed a bit small, but after my second stop Friday night, I concluded that the size of the restaurant is part of what makes it special.

A tour of the stainless steel kitchen showed a new world of chefs preparing orders. Their moods were jubilant, too, with all giving a warm reception to this reporter.

On the restaurant's walls are large TV screens showing different programming. There's a sports screen, of course, and there's another that shows the music softly encompassing the restaurant as patrons eat, talk and laugh. It was the first time this reporter had entered a restaurant that did its best to cater to all crowds. To back up this point, when I visited on Thursday, my ears were greeted by what is called Groovy Soca music. [Here's](#) an example. On Friday night, the welcome was [this](#). The volume is never overbearing; just good enough to set the right atmosphere.

I spoke to founder MacGarvey Henry about his new, exciting place.

"I got the location in July 2018 and started working on it in November" of the same year, he said. Mr. Henry spoke of a painstaking process of getting the space just right, and he said as he continued with construction, the vision became even clearer.

BON MANJER

RESTAURANT & ULTRA LOUNGE ST. CROIX, VI

340.713.5588

**MONDAY - SATURDAY 11AM - UNTIL
SUNDAY 4PM - 10PM**

APPETIZERS

AHI TUNA SERVED \$14

with Rice Noodles and Asian Veggies

CRAB CAKES SERVED \$12

with Vidalia Onion Drizzle

FRIED TOSTONES \$10

served with Corn and Black Bean Salsa

FRIED SHRIMP \$13

served with Smoked Chipotle Remoulade

SOUP OF THE DAY - \$8

From the material used for the tables to the length of the bar, the local businessman, who also runs a company at Limetree Bay, spent a lot of money to create what is Bon Manjer today. The results? Almost surreal.

"I didn't know what I was getting into. We're literally booked out all the way through next week. And you could see, I need more space," he said.

On feedback, Mr. Henry said, "The reception has been awesome. I've had senators come in. The Chamber of Commerce came in. People are just hearing about the buzz and want to see what it's all about. Everybody loves the food, everybody loves the vibe and the atmosphere."

The employees at the restaurant appear perennially pleasant. "The first night, I told my staff that I don't hire employees, I hire people to be my family and I treat everybody as family, and everyone here loves it," he said.

Mr. Henry also said he was intentional with the location. "You want to go somewhere nice with your significant other and sit down in a nice place with a nice vibe. Where do you go? You go downtown Christiansted. My whole picture behind what I did here was to find a midpoint location to have something."



The restaurant intends on becoming better and learning what its customers want. To that end, a comment card is given to customers for feedback. "Tell me what's wrong, tell me what I can do better. Tell me what you love. Give me your name, email address and information," Mr. Henry said. The restaurant intends to provide meals on the house to past guests on their birthday. Also planned in the future is live entertainment.

The restaurant opens seven days a week: From Monday through Sat. from 11:00 a.m. until. "Since we opened on Monday, we've been here until midnight every night," Mr. Henry said. On Sundays, Bon Manjer is open from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.