

June 28, 2010
New Orleans, Louisiana

Bayona Corporation brought a class action lawsuit on behalf of restaurants in New Orleans who are impacted by the ongoing oil spill. The lawsuit is more about the restaurant industry in New Orleans than about Susan Spicer and Bayona. Spicer said, "It is not as if the situation is under control and we are in the process of recovery. We still don't know how long it will continue and how drastic the effects will be on our industry and our culture.

In spite of the oil spill, Bayona and many New Orleans restaurants are able to put out amazing food and meet their customers' needs. "It is important for people to realize that all of great reasons to come to New Orleans still exist," Spicer said. Although this lawsuit encompasses current damages, prospective damages to the New Orleans restaurant industry are the primary focus. Spicer said, "Just as after Katrina certain restaurants were able to survive, we are now losing many of the smaller restaurants and seafood related businesses that make up the fabric of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast.

Access to local Gulf seafood is diminishing and more expensive than it was before the oil spill. Despite stringent safety measures being taken to ensure that no tainted seafood is sold, customers --- both locally and nationwide --- are beginning to avoid Gulf seafood products.

"I have great confidence in my local vendors and the local products that I am serving, but I know my suppliers are suffering from the reality of a diminished supply and the misperception that all Gulf seafood is unsafe," said Spicer. "I'm proud to be a part of such a resilient community. I also feel strongly that British Petroleum needs to be held accountable for its negligence," Spicer said.

Susan Spicer is the chef/owner of Bayona, Mondo, and Wild Flour Breads. Spicer also sits on the Board of the Gulf Restoration Network, an organization in which she has been active for several years. (www.healthygulf.org) The Gulf Restoration Network's mission is uniting and empowering people to protect and restore the natural resources of the Gulf Region for future generations. Spicer is also a long-standing member of the Chef's Collaborative, which focuses on sustainability issues, including seafood.

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