



BILLY RAY MACCAULEY GETS READY FOR BUSINESS

It's Natural All The Way

Eatery Caters To Ruidosoans

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RUIDOSO — In this bustling, commercial resort village, one of the most startling recent successes, paradoxically, is a small shop run by men who say they don't care to get rich.

"Sunrise Natural Foods" provides good ol' home cookin' — if your home is Alsace, or maybe southern Italy — to a growing number of tourists and Ruidosoans.

The green store with all the plants and flowers has become a lunchtime haven for Ruidoso's business community, mostly because of the superb quiche, crepes, egg-plant parmigiane, salads and sandwiches available at reasonable prices.

But its proponents say they frequent Sunrise Natural almost as much for its friendly ambience as for the food. Sunrise Natural is the brainchild of Jerry Campbell, Tom Scott and artist Billy Ray MacCauley. They met in Amsterdam several years ago, where MacCauley had a studio. The artist and Campbell designed a discotheque called The Toy Shop, which Campbell and Scott operated to reported success before selling out to return to the States.

"We're all into metaphysics," the irrepressible leave the coasts, and live in the mountains, to find a place, which would inspire other artists to come and be with natural things. We just believe Ruidoso is a very safe and good place to be."

The store/restaurant is a combination of everything. Cut flowers, plants, vitamins, produce, natural cosmetics, teas and whole-grain meals and pastas crowd the front. At back is the tiny restaurant, about tea room size, where MacCauley presides over quiche Alsace, egg plant

parmigiane and other delicacies made daily. Thursday, Friday and Saturday he makes manicotti or lasagne for the dinner crowd, with imported Italian tomatoes, homemade cheese and "lotsa garlic," the native Texan grins.

"We are not a health food store," MacCauley says firmly. "We sell natural food. I believe that natural food, without meat — we're not vegetarians, we just don't kill animals — does not have to be dull. At Sunrise Natural, it isn't."

The group also is beginning to cater parties around Ruidoso, with specially-designed miniaturized versions of its daily staples, including the cheesecake many connoisseurs drive miles for.

"We're all friends, so it works out, because God watches over us and protects us from negative people," MacCauley says blandly. "So long as we pay the bills, we're happy."

An internationally-known artist who sells through Collector's Guild, MacCauley has worked in New York and Europe for years. It is his large and small paintings and silkscreens of flowers and western scenes that hang on every wall. His revised version of Cinderella, featuring a delightful role reversal on the old fairy-tale, is available in book form at the store, featuring his inimitable illustrations. The book also is sold at Bretano's in Paris, Scribner's and Rivoli's in New York, and is about to become an animated film by Tiger West of "Mr. Magoo" and "Flintstones" fame. But the second-edition copies at Sunrise Natural can be had with a hand-drawn autograph by the author if he's in the store.

Despite MacCauley's prominence,

Sunrise Natural is a group venture, with each member contributing his or her share. Jerry Walker bakes the bread, whole wheat and rye, that is used in the restaurant and sold by the loaf. August Rothe handles the catering. Lee Ross supervises the vitamins and other nutrition products. Campbell, former owner of Planet Earth plant shop in Hobbs, selects the plants, while Jackie Brewer handles the flowers. The superb cheesecake is made by Deborah Davis.

The group, which inhabits two side-by-side large houses in Alto, runs the store and restaurant daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and from noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday. Sunrise Natural also is open until 9 p.m. Thursday through Saturday for dinner.

"We opened on Mother's Day and we haven't stopped running yet," MacCauley confesses. "We make our food fresh every day from the best ingredients we can find, organically-grown or raised if possible, but we don't claim all our food is organic. We're constantly searching for good local eggs, milk and produce."

Still, he says, "We try not to be elite. We believe in a natural sophistication. There are so many magnificent things you can eat without resorting to the white sugars and flours that are poisoning us," he says, his own ample girth the best testimony. "We get the prettiest people in the world here, because they want a good place to eat without booze or negativism."

The most important thing we're trying is not to be too serious about it," he adds. "When young artists ask me, I tell them the only thing in life I'm serious about is cornbread — and I've never made a good pan of cornbread."