

# lunch counter



## Tropical Toast at Diana's

**ADDRESS:** 155 Meeting St.  
**PHONE:** 534-0043  
**HOURS:** 6 a.m.-10 p.m., Sun.-  
Thurs., 6 a.m.-11 p.m. Fri.-Sat.

Sam Mustafa started with a pushcart, hawking falafel to Southern Illinois students.

By 19, he owned his first restaurant, Sam's Cafe, also in Carbondale, Ill.

Warmer climes called, and eventually Mustafa moved to Charleston with his wife. A pair of corporate restaurant gigs followed before Mustafa's entrepreneur spirit returned. About three years ago, he bought downtown establishments Cafe Cafe and

Diana's.

Just this year, Mustafa changed the latter restaurant's name to Tropical Toast at Diana's. A trip to the islands influenced his choice.

"Visiting the Caribbean, it stays with you for months afterward," he says.

He's brought a taste of the tropics to Charleston, though he'll keep Diana's famous breakfast menu.

Good call.

The New York Times recently heaped praise on two dishes, The Eggs Meeting Street (\$11.99) – fried green tomatoes, poached eggs, crab cakes, remoulade sauce – and Tropical French Toast (\$9.50), another clever concoction, Warm hand-cut currant bread is filled with delectable cinnamon apples or peaches, then topped by apple cider syrup.

The new menu, recently introduced, features a few "sandy-wiches," such as the crabby patty,

Caribbean chicken sandwich and jerkburger, all \$8.99. Specials include some island favorites, jerk or teriyaki chicken (\$10.99) and butcher cut bearnaise (\$15.99), steak smothered in bearnaise sauce, plus a variety of fish dishes (\$12.99-\$15.99).

In the next two months, look for a redone interior, bamboo hardwood floors and new awnings, changes that mesh with the tropical theme.

– Rob Young