

From Frixia to Florida

This family's famous olive oil and a recipe for success make this Greek restaurant worth a visit.

Tipping a bottle of Frixia over the steaming stove, George Chryssaidis coats his kabobs with a layer of flavor. That's not all he adds. George pours his rich heritage with each generous drop of the family's famous olive oil, served and sold from his popular St. Augustine restaurant. Named for the Greek village where he—and the olives—grew, Frixia sets a high bar, turning extra virgin into an extra delicacy.

Home Away From Home

After moving across the ocean in 1981, George first lived in New York and North Carolina before settling in St. Augustine 20 years later. "I was raised in a historical place where everybody knew everyone, so I wanted a similar small town to bring up a family," George says. "St. Augustine feels like home."

George met his wife, Paula, when

Athena Restaurant hosts weekly Greek nights, complete with fellowship, dance, and (of course) food.



PHOTOGRAPHS: MARY MARGARET CHAMBLISS

The Chryssaidis clan proves that families who cook together stay together. "It's in our blood; it's what we love," George says, here with daughter Rosalina and wife Paula.

he cooked and she served tables at Buffalo, New York, diners. Once they married, the couple—he's Greek, she's Italian—created a recipe for culinary success. With dreams of running a restaurant by the ocean, George and Paula moved to St. Augustine and set up shop just a block away from the Atlantic. An instant success, Athena Restaurant attracts locals, regulars, and tourists for three meals a day.

Their 13-year-old daughter often joins them. Rosalina says she's proud of her parents and their hard work. "They're good at what they do, and you can tell they really love it," explains the vivacious cheerleader.

Well-oiled Machine

Whether orders call for kabobs, spinach pie, or omelets the Athena Restaurant uses olive oil in bulk. In fact, George estimates the kitchen uses



Small Village, Big Heart

Settled atop rolling hills and the Alpheus River of Olympia, many generations of the Chryssaidis family found joy in tending Frixia's olive groves. The result: exceptionally rich and pure oil. "We started our restaurant to make a living," Paula reflects. "We started selling Frixia because it's a passion, a great love, and a tribute to the town."

The story of
Frixa Olive Oil
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George turns olive oil from an everyday ingredient into a truly delightful delicacy.

more than 20 liters each day. The Chrysaidis family specializes in the best. "I wanted to share my ancestors' most important gift with others," George says. "Why not start here?"

After frequent trips to Greece last year, George brought his plan to fruition in August when he and Yeorgios Kostopoulos, an old friend, welcomed the first shipment of Frixa to the United States.

In many ways, the product sells itself. Unfiltered, unrefined, cold-pressed, and fresh from Koroneiki olives, Frixa's flavorful thickness makes it both economical and tasty.

A true people-person, the charming entrepreneur makes fast friends with his customers and invites folks for oil samplings, weekly Greek nights, or just to sit and chat. If you have a minute, he'll share Frixa's health benefits and the secret behind its success. Of course, if you have a taste, you'll see for yourself.

LAUREN RIPPEY

Frixa and Athena Restaurant: 14 Cathedral Place, St. Augustine, FL 32084; (904) 823-9076; www.frixaoliveoil.com or www.athenacafe.com.