



Martin and Tamika Dunkley

‘Let’s bottle this stuff’

Seasoned Delicious expands beyond farmers’ market

A 74-YEAR-OLD JAMAICAN CHEF WHO goes by the name “Momma Blossom” has inspired her self-proclaimed “tasteologist” son and daughter-in-law, a critical-care nurse, to produce Old-World West Indian recipes with health-conscious ingredients. Seasoned Delicious, Saugerties couple Martin and Tamika Dunkley’s line of Carib-

bean foods, started out as a local catering company, maintaining a stand at the Saugerties Farmers’ Market. It has now expanded, selling its products in 15 local grocery stores.

“I tasted one of her products, cucumber juice, and went bananas,” said Nigel Redman, the pair’s business consultant. “I literally said, ‘Let’s bottle this stuff.’”

Among their wares are seven hot sauces, including “Crazy Cranberry” sauce, “Orchard Delight,” which contains locally-grown apples, and “Garlicious,” which contains a mixture of garlic and avocado. The pair also sells a slew of spice mixes, relishes and cooking oils.

“My mother was born in Kingston, Jamaica,” explained Martin. “She came to this country in the early ’70s [and] touched down in the Bronx, where we were since we left high school. She is the hard-cut copy of what the traditional West Indian mother could be. She was adamant that all of her boys cook.

She felt that a man should be able to do everything a woman could do.”

Martin gives his mother full credit for what he knows. “From when I was as young as I can remember, I was her taster,” he said. “The biggest challenge was to put [her] recipes in her mind on paper. One of the most impressive things about how we cooked [was] she never used a measurement. We needed to figure all of that out.”

Tamika Dunkley spent five years as a nurse working primarily in a cardiac unit. Often providing dietary guidance to patients and their families, she began researching good substitutes for common unhealthy seasonings and condiments, like salt and ketchup.

“We want to put our spin of health and wellness [on Momma Blossom’s food],” said Tamika. “We wanted to make something that is good and also healthy. For example, if mom’s recipe called for iodized salt, we would use Himalayan. There isn’t an ingredient in any of our products that doesn’t do something for your body.”

For example, each of the 15 ingredients in the couple’s Hot Hawaii sauce adds a health element. The fresh pineapple contains vitamins C and B12, which can improve circulation and help with hypertension and blood pressure. The habanero and scorpion peppers in the mix are good for the circulatory system and the immune system. Onions and garlic increase white blood-cell count and the health of red blood cells. Ginger is thought to be an antiseptic probiotic and coconut oil, a recognized superfood, is good for the mucous membrane and stomach lining, say the Dunkleys.

“For us, it’s about inspiration,” said Martin Dunkley. “Somewhere in Kingston or out there, there’s some young kid or adult who doesn’t think they can do it. We want to inspire others – if we can do it, there’s no reason they can’t.”

Currently, the couple’s products can be found at Adams and Mother Earth in Kingston, My Market in Rosendale, Sunflower in Woodstock and Rhinebeck, the Boiceville Market, the High Falls food co-op, Emmanuel’s Market in Stone Ridge and a handful of restaurants in Manhattan and the Bronx. Products can be purchased and researched at the website, seasonedelicious.com.

“You’ve got to trust your ideas are good and stay with it,” said Redman. “I tell all the people I work with here [that].”

- Christina Coulter

Totally original

Saugerties artist is taking her unique clothing line national

STRIKING PAINTINGS DEPICTING religious figures of assorted faiths adorn the walls of multimedia artist Kelli Bickman’s studio on Partition Street. Those images are reprinted onto cotton clothing smattered on racks throughout the space. After gaining notoriety in private art collections worldwide, Bickman hopes to take her clothing line, 11:11 Style, national. Thus far, she estimates, she’s sewn together 1000 garments.

“My art is the key element, and I stand out as a product because it’s totally original,” said Bickman. “For the general public, my price points might be a little higher, but that will change.”

Recently, Bickman and a slew of local schoolchildren graced the side of the Odd Fellows Temple building with a mural via her youth mural arts program, an element of Shout Out Saugerties. She made the murals in conjunction with Hudson Valley schoolchildren. They can be found in Woodstock, Phoenicia and Peekskill.

“My pieces of Kelli Bickman art are my pride and joy,” said writer Neil Gaiman expansively. “If I were rich enough, and had a house large enough, I would have nothing but Kelli Bickman art.”

Bickman’s style of apparel is distinctive: bright, tattoo-like designs on comfortable clothing with exposed, overlapped stitches at the seam. A friend from her college years at the University of Wisconsin Stout campus felt that 11:11 was “a magic time.” Bickman adopted that concept as her brand.

Before getting her BFA in painting, Bickman took -- and -- abhorred two courses in apparel design. She found a traditional sewing machine clumsy to use. She now uses a piece of medical equipment called a surger, a gift from her mother. It cuts the edges of cloth and sews them together all in one step.

“There’s so much more available to clothing designers now,” said Bickman. “I started designing fabrics, and now I’m addicted. I also started because I hated shopping and wanted to design my own clothes. I don’t want to sell anything I don’t want to wear. Above all else, I like to be comfortable. That’s why I like knits – things that are versatile in both the yoga studio and on the street.”

BICKMAN’S CLOTHING CAN BE PURCHASED AT the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, Menla Mountain Retreat in Phoenicia, Pondicherry in Woodstock, Kaatskill Lodge at Hunter Mountain, Heart and



Kelli Bickman.

CHRIS HALLMAN/VELIC PHOTOGRAPHY

Soul in Beacon, Heart of Woodstock, and O2Living in Cross River, and from retailers in Arizona, Minnesota and Canada. The majority of her sales have been through her website, www.1111style.com. For more information on Bickman and her artistic endeavors, visit www.kellibickman.net.

- Christina Coulter