

Spotlight on Mother Shucker's Original Cocktail Sauce

From the first glance at a jar of Mother Shucker's Original Cocktail sauce, one can tell that this sauce is anything but ordinary. Mary Sparrow, the Mother Shucker herself, created the sauce barely two years ago. With a name like this, and a taste to match, its popularity grows daily.

Mary Sparrow, and her son, John, grew up in a small town a few hours north of the South Carolina border and a short distance from the coast. Their story begins with a lasting impression from a local oyster bar and restaurant, which led John to open his own oyster bar ten years ago in the Vista downtown area of Columbia. The Oyster Bar is best described as a coastal experience, where shuckers work just on the other side of the bar to shuck fresh oysters for diners.



From the very beginning, Sparrow said everyone loved the cocktail sauce, served warm and made by The Oyster Bar. After years of dinner patrons taking the sauce home in small plastic cups, the mother and son pair decided to produce the sauce to take home. A simple glass jar and the restaurant's logo adorned its face for a while. However, Mary's nickname of the "Mother Shucker," a term of endearment from the shuckers working at the oyster bar, added a humorous twist to the product.

"The name is what people remember," Mary said. A sketch from John's sister gave a face to the sauce as well.

Mary and John were lead through the process by the South Carolina Specialty Food Association. The product is packaged by Creative Foods of Hanahan. They were introduced to the Specialty Food program through a contact at a foods course. From labeling to production to distribution, Mary says that the SC Specialty Food Association was an essential asset.

"The only way we could have done this was with their help [the Specialty Food Association]. We could not have done it without them," Mary said.

Mid-summer of this year, Mother Shucker's revealed their new, all natural cocktail sauce. It kept the same award winning flavor that won the 2010 Best Condiment Award in Atlanta's AmericasMart for the "Best Condiment." However, it now is completely natural with no high-fructose corn syrup. It remains gluten free, with no additives, and no fat! The

transition will hopefully allow the product to be available in the natural and organic foods markets.

Along with the all natural recipe came an updated, lighter plastic bottle. The plastic container allows easier distribution. The sauce got its start at wholesale food shows, and is now available in the Piggly Wiggly of the Carolina's. On both a consumer's and retailer's level, word of mouth helps hook people on the sauce.

The serving recommendations go beyond seafood, but the sauce is at its best served warm with freshly steamed shrimp or oysters. For a different treat, try the sauce poured over cream cheese with whole wheat crackers for dipping. To find a bottle of their award-winning cocktail sauce, go to <http://www.oysterbarcolumbia.com>