

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

Do you ever hear a cliché and wonder if there is really any truth in it? Well, when you hear the two simple words, *southern hospitality*, you can be assured there is a world of truth in them. On a recent trip to Savannah, Georgia, my mother and I saw the words put into action.

Everywhere we turned people were showing random acts of kindness. Okay, maybe there isn't anything random when a server does a fantastic job and makes you feel like you are a special customer. Like what Carrie Jane did at the *Lady and Sons* restaurant on the corner of College and Whitaker Streets. Yes, we knew it was more than a server doing her job. Carrie Jane loves her job and the people she meets doing it. Her smile isn't artificial and it is infectious.



Then there are the people you meet who are just like you, tourists on vacation. We found that the words *southern hospitality* also extended to so many of them. While seated at *Lady and Sons* a woman at the table beside ours asked if we'd like to share some of her delicious fried green tomatoes. We learned her name was Kim Jackson and she was from Jacksonville, Florida. That's south, and she was certainly showing the same graciousness we were quickly growing used to.

On the Gospel Dinner Cruise run by the River Street Riverboat Company, we found ourselves sharing a table with two more Floridians, Nathaniel and Mary Forbes, from Tampa. Once again, we were treated more like old friends than strangers that probably will never meet again. It was a great cruise, but all the more so for having such friendly table mates.



On the *Old Town Trolley* we were treated to a tour of some of Savannah's history. We have to say our driver, tour guide, "Pooky", not only educated us, but entertained us while she told us about the city's history. She shared text book history with stories about some of the famous and infamous people who have been visited the city, not to mention a few ghost stories, which seem to abound in Savannah.

Our return flight brought us into the *City of Brotherly Love*, Philadelphia, which has a rich history of its own. Yes, this northern city also has great food, riverboat cruises and tour guides that share their city's history. And they all know how to show hospitality.

Still, I think there's something special about the way they show their hospitality in the south. Whatever it is, it's contagious. And I can't wait to someday go back for more.

MOMMY AND ME

For many people when they hear the words “Mommy and Me” they picture young mothers taking their infant or toddler to play time with their friends. They sing songs, play games or just spend time sharing the joy of motherhood.

Well, for me, the words hold a different meaning. I don’t remember there being such a group of mothers and children when I was a little tike. Of course, that was a very, very long time ago. Wait a minute! That makes me sound old. I feel anything but old. I feel refreshed. Rejuvenated.

That wasn’t the case a year ago when I suffered an injury that required surgery. My dear mother was right there caring for me. I admit, I was a bit hesitant to have her do that, since Mom and I don’t always see eye to eye. But it went quite well.

So well, in fact, that when I required another surgery by the end of that year, I agreed to let my mother help me once again. Actually, there wasn’t a whole lot of letting involved. I was given very little choice, by my mother and my condition.

Once again, Mom and I got along fabulously. I can never express how grateful I am to her for what she did. And to God, for not only helping me with my recovery, but giving me such a kind, gracious mother.

Now our “Mommy and Me” time during my recovery was pretty much spent with her doing light housework and taking breaks to watch Food TV with me. We enjoyed watching the shows, in particular “Paula’s Home Cooking”.

After my recovery I told my husband I wanted to do something special for my mother. Ken, is a sweetheart himself, and quickly agreed when I suggested a trip to Savannah, Georgia, to attend Paula Deen’s Cooking School.

So, last week, Mommy and me, more or less had our play date. We sang songs on the Gospel Riverboat Dinner Cruise. Spent one morning lazing on the beach in nearby Tybee Island. Took a trolley and learned about Savannah’s history. Checked out all the shops along the river front. And ate some of the best southern cooking we’d ever had.



One of the restaurants we went to was the “Lady and Sons” restaurant, owned by Paula Deen and run by her sons, Bobby and Jamie. Our advice to anyone wanting to go is to get there early to make reservations, then enjoy some of what Savannah has to offer until it’s time to eat. We got there at 9:30 am for the Sunday morning brunch and there was already a line. Standing in the hot Georgia sun was tough, but we got reservations for the first seating. The food was well worth the wait.

On our last day we attended Paula's cooking school, held at her second restaurant, where she's partners with her brother, Bubba, and appropriately named "Uncle Bubba's Oyster House". The class was everything we expected and more. Paula is a delight and truly is the "lady" as the name of her restaurant implies.

That evening we concluded our day with a meal at "Uncle Bubba's". If you love seafood, this is the place to go. But even if you don't, there's something on the menu for everyone. Our only regret was that we couldn't eat it all, and staying in a hotel, taking the leftovers was out of the question.

Actually, maybe there was another regret. The regret that our trip was almost over. Mommy and me had a great time! It was a time to forget about our differences and just live in the love we each have for the other.