



“This restaurant was a dream that I didn’t think I would ever have.

I worked for the state for many years, and it was there that I met a co-worker that drank hot tea all the time. We started going to tea rooms together and she was the one who got me interested in tea.

I had been working for the state for a long, long time by then and I decided it was time to make a change. Because I worked with children at my job, I thought I could do a tea room for children’s tea parties and combine that with catering which I had been doing for years on the side, and maybe even offer a lunch menu.

Then this location, by the grace of God, dropped into my lap. And I knew, without a doubt, that I was supposed to be in this restaurant.

We got this location in 1999 and after I left my job with the state, we opened the restaurant in May of 2000.

It took a lot of time for Florence to understand what an actual tea room was and that it doesn’t mean you’re just drinking tea. We offer an afternoon tea with either the four-course traditional tea or six-course Victorian tea. With those you get your hot or iced tea, and you also get food like scones and quiches that we make as you order so they come out of the oven hot.

Along with our tea we also serve a regular lunch menu every day along with weekly specials. Most of our lunch menu items are things that I grew up with that my mom or grandmother made me. In fact, our buttermilk pie dessert is made using my grandmother’s recipe.

I also normally like to cook things that I think are intriguing, different, or are just things that I would want to eat.

But I don’t consider myself a chef. I just am a person that loves to cook and loves, loves, loves to feed people.

If I didn’t have to make money, I would not, I would just feed people. That’s what makes my heart smile.”

- **Laurie Crouse, owner of Top Hat Special-Teas**