



The Trading Post

An Islamorada Landmark Updates for 2020

Michael Mooney's family has owned a staple of Islamorada for many years. Locals know it. Tourists know it. The Trading Post has been in the family since 1966, when Michael's family purchased it. "The community was different then. It was just commercial fishing, and no real recreational fishing to speak of. Over the years that industry developed, and commercial fishing wasn't the only industry the community depended on," says Michael.

Betsy, Michael's mother, can remember all the transitions and transformations that took place. "Up until the 80s, there were very few grocery stores that had delis. Meat, produce, and dairy --those were the departments. You went home and made your own sandwich, but customers tastes slowly changes," says Betsy of the clientele of the store. "We didn't install the deli until 1982. Before that, we had a meat department, which did make one sandwich, roast beef, and we had a hot case with them in it in the late 70s. When the deli came along, it opened up a lot of options, and really coincided with an increase in recreational fishing."

Many locals, besides knowing the Trading

Post for the delicious deli sandwiches, know it for the convenience of having a store open 24 hours a day. "My father started that in 1972," says Michael. "The hours began when tourists started arriving into town late at night, and couldn't even get a cup of coffee. Opening 24 hours a day turned out to be quite a viable option, especially with captains and fisherman showing up at 4:30-5am."

Michael practically grew up in the store, with their family home being right behind it. "The bus dropped us off right in front," he says with a laugh. He left the Keys to get a degree after high school, and when he finished in 2012, the job market was hard, so he joined the family business. "I started off in the kitchen. Then we opened up our sister project, Village Square, and I worked to get the property where it is today, and I ran the gift shop. And once the property became self-sustaining, I decided to move back to the Trading Post and focus on that."



cludes all the classics, but new sandwiches were added, perfect for the boat or car. Michael's new favorite is the Twisted Cuban, a Cuban sandwich that comes with Cuban pork, bacon, deep fried pickles and a secret house sauce. Served hot and ready to go!

Another new favorite is the Fisherman's Friend - Homemade roast beef, a secret horseradish sauce, onion marmalade, and hand cut fries ON TOP of the sandwich.

"Of course, the classic Italian is still the favorite. I can remember that from when I was a kid," says Michael with a fond laugh.

Michael wants to stress that Trading Post isn't looking at other grocery stores as competitors, and that Trading Post is still doing great! "We are just trying to focus on new foods, and bring in some new people. There is always room for growth!"

For more information about The Trading Post, an Islamorada staple and landmark, you can visit their website at www.trading-postfloridakeys.com or visit the store 24/7 at MM 81.5 Bayside.

Sarah Gagliardo - Angler, Writer, Cook,
& Florida Keys Enthusiast



Michael returned to the store a year and a half ago with the goal of reprioritizing things on the grocery side. "We've decided to do a bit of rebranding. We've revamped the grab and go, and the deli, to show we have great food to share. Four months ago we hired a new, fulltime chef Cheryl, who wrote a whole new menu."

The new menu in-