

The More You NOLA: Meet Miss Ella

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Tulane University alumna and restaurateur Ti Adelaide Martin traded her hectic schedule behind the scenes of restaurants like Commander's Palace and SoBou to document the life of her mother Ella Brennan in a new book, *Miss Ella of Commander's Palace*.

Martin started the process by compiling stories from family and friends. It was this collection that ultimately transformed into the book, which includes deeply personal experiences that traverse the entire Brennan family landscape.

"I can't believe it," said Martin. "My dream was to do this book, and I was going to get it done somehow. For 20 years I've said I had to do it, and other people said I had to do it."

When Martin reflects back to her early days as a young student, she said, "everything I learned from getting an MBA at Tulane, much of it I'd also learned from Mom." Martin said it was a chore to persuade her mother to participate in both the book and documentary, but they were both ecstatic about the results.

Apart from the cookbooks and cocktail books that Martin has previously authored, this book differs because it involves the entire Brennan family and their work behind the scenes of these restaurants. It documents Ella Brennan's journey to success.

"It's a strong woman story. It's not tragic; it's a triumphant American story," said Martin. "There are low points in everybody's life, but this is not a tragedy."

Martin celebrates the accomplishments of not only her mother, but the countless lives that she inspires every day.

A documentary on the same subject will show at the New Orleans Film Festival on Friday (Oct. 14) at the Orpheum Theater.

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— Ti Adelaide Martin, Tulane alumna