

Food truck finds winter home in NOLA

February 23, 2015 8:45 AM Samah Ahmed
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The Fat Shallot food truck serves up gourmet sandwiches and other dishes outside the Tulane Medical Center in New Orleans. Owner Sam Barron said the BLT is his most popular sandwich down South. (Photo by Ryan Rivet)

Birds aren't the only ones that fly south for winter. Sam Barron and his food truck, the [Fat Shallot](#), also have migrated down to the warmth of New Orleans.

With its stacked BLTs and other gourmet-style sandwiches, the Fat Shallot has nested in and around the city's Central Business District, an area that Barron said is "much more enjoyable" to serve in the frigid winter months than Chicago, where both Barron and the food truck call home.

“Food truck life is kind of stressful, but kind of fun in the summer,” Barron said, “But the winter just took all the fun out of it, because the water freezes and the propane freezes.”

For Barron, a 2005 Tulane University graduate, coming to New Orleans feels like second nature. “I have split my time since I was 18 between New Orleans and Chicago,” he said.

Standing in the ample shade of the truck, immersed in the smells of grilled cheeses and braised pork, Barron reminisced on his time at Tulane.

He was an art history major known as “the cook” among friends, who would grill pork tenderloins instead of frozen burgers at backyard dinner parties. After graduation, Barron attended culinary school and then went on to work for three- and four-star restaurants before partnering with his wife Sarah Weitz in the food truck business.

While in New Orleans with the Fat Shallot, Barron finds that it's “great to be a Tulane alumnus” because his customers see him as a part of the local community. With a 60 percent customer return rate, Barron is solidifying his relationship with New Orleans as his kind of home away from home.

“There are a lot of similarities between eaters in Chicago and New Orleans: they're both heavy-duty, serious-eater cities,” he said. “People aren't afraid of something hardy and spicy and flavorful.”

Samah Ahmed is a first-year student majoring in public health and political science at Tulane University.

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