Fish & Chips

By Kimberly Cooper // Photos by Tony Lewis, Jr.

Union Jack’s
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Unionjacksannapolis.com

Union Jack’s, Annapolis’ recently opened British-style pub, is a really fun mix of a place. The restaurant offers great, traditional-yet-modern British food. But it is also lively, entertaining, and full of activity. With lots of music and sports alongside dishes like fish and chips or bangers and mash, Union Jack’s is a destination for any Annapolitan eager for a night out. Gary Oulette, general manager, shares with us his love for providing delicious food and a rocking atmosphere, as well as the restaurant’s tasty recipe for fish and chips.

Tell us a little about Union Jack’s. Why did you decide on a location in Annapolis?
Union Jack’s has always been about the food and the entertainment. We wanted to find a venue that was large enough to accommodate our regular dinner crowds, plus late night live music and sports game-watching. Our menu would please a casual diner, as well as be enjoyable for a more discriminating foodie. Union Jack’s is one of the few venues around that has the flexibility and room sizes to handle a small happy hour group at the same time as a large 300-person private event.

How did you get your start in the culinary world?
I was raised in a large family. I learned the basics from my parents and grandparents. I started working in restaurants at 14 years old and kept going.
How often do you change the menu at Union Jack’s?
We change items two times a year. We have been open for six months and are adding items already, such as our Jameson chicken and our parmesan-crusted grouper.

What do you think is the most important rule in the kitchen?
Cleanliness and safety.

What is the most important tool in your kitchen arsenal?
First, your mind; then, your hands. You must constantly come up with new ideas and then convert those ideas to something tangible, real, and enjoyable.

What do you do to keep people coming back to Union Jack’s?
We strive for the best service possible, fair pricing, and unique menu items you can tell were made from scratch.

What makes you stand out as a restaurant?
Great food from scratch and always lively entertainment. Live music on weekends, DJ on Thursday, Trivia night on Monday, Craft beer nights on Tuesday, Sunday brunch, and a large outdoor beer garden.

How did this dish originate?
Fish and chips became a stock meal among the working classes in Great Britain as a consequence of the rapid development of trawl fishing in the North Sea and the development of railways, which connected the ports to major industrial cities during the second half of the 19th century. This meant fresh fish could be rapidly transported to the heavily populated areas. Deep-fried fish was first introduced in Britain during the 17th century by Jewish refugees from Portugal and Spain and is derived from pescado frito. In 1860, the first fish and chip shop was opened in London by Joseph Malin. Deep-fried chips (slices of pieces of potato) as a dish may have first appeared in Britain in about the same period.

What drink pairs best?
A chilled pint of Newcastle Ale.

What is the most important step when cooking it?
To keep the beer batter as close to ice cold as possible.

Recipe

**FISH & CHIPS**
Serves one

**Jack’s Fish Batter**
*Shelf life = 1.5 days*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 cup beer</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup soda water</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup flour</td>
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<td>1/3 teaspoon baking powder</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 tablespoon salt</td>
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<td>1/2 tablespoon black pepper</td>
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Combine beer and soda water in deep bowl. Slowly whisk in flour, baking powder, salt, and pepper. This batter is somewhat loose.

**Fish & Chips**

2 haddock filets  
Jack’s Fish Batter as needed  
Seasoned flour as needed

Verify fish fillets are cleaned and completely thawed. Using both hands, flour the fish, gently one at a time with 100-percent coverage. Place the fish one at a time in ice cold beer batter. Using a swirl motion, hold on to the end of the tender covering it with batter. Transfer fish to seafood fryer heated to 350 degrees, swirling it into fryer until the end starts to float. Fry for 4–6 minutes or until 155-degree internal temperature is reached. Plate with thick-cut fries and slaw.