## Claresholm restaurant a stop for Food Network Canada's You Gotta Eat Here

## BY STEPHANIE LABBE CLARESHOLM

After being a runner-up on Chopped Canada chef Kieth Carlson, owner of Roy's Place in Claresholm, now will have his restaurant featured on another television show, You Gotta Eat Here.

Carlson says since his episode aired on Chopped Canada, his restaurant has received a lot more business and people are coming to try his food.

You Gotta Eat Here is a television show that showcases Canadian restaurants. The show can now be watched in the U.S., U.K., Italy and the Pacific Rim.

"We had You Gotta Eat Here call us a few months back. This was because of the increased twitter chatter about our place and the emails that they had received," explains Carlson. "We also had attention brought to us from the spring airing of Chopped Canada where I competed in Toronto. They said that they flag restaurants that have increased interest from customers and they like and then research them. I guess we fit the bill in the end."

The restaurant was closed for two days for filming at the end of July.

"The experience was great, we were closed for two days to film. The first day was myself and John cooking some of our most talked-about dishes. The second day we had a great group of customers and a few super fans of the restaurant that got to come out eat, talk to John, and get a chance to be on TV," adds Carlson.

"The crew they have is amazingly organized. This is their fourth season that they are taping. The producer and director keep it light, but keep everything flowing as it does take a lot of footage to make just a 15-minute section of the production. Overall, the shoot went really well."

Filming took place July 23 and July 24 and the episode will air sometime in 2015 as part of the show's fourth season.

Crew members of the show try and find the hidden gems of Canada and they believe that's just what they did with Rov's Place.

"We chose Roy's (Place), because it's a hidden gem — a true roadside diner doing exceptionally tasty comfort food classics, with a twist. The combination of chef Kieth's Red Seal credentials with his commitment to down-home, hearty meals is something to celebrate," says Rachel Horvath, supervising producer for You Gotta Eat Here.

Horvath explains they have a team of people that search for the best hidden gems of the country. These are places that people might not know exist, but should.

"We have a team of researchers who scour every possible resource — local papers, online reviews, travel guides and viewer tips — to find the best family-friendly restaurants across the country," adds Horvath.

"They are looking for the type of spots locals will regularly bring their out-of-town visitors. Once they find a location they like, the researcher does in-depth interviews with the owner and chef. We need to be sure that the restaurants feature homemade, hearty food we can recommend to our viewers. We look for diversity in food and locations across the country."

Carlson has always had a passion for cooking. He's ecstatic about the publicity the restaurant has been



Photos by Josh Henderson

John Catucci, host of You Gotta Eat Here works with Roy's Place owner and chef Kieth Carlson on one of the favourites, the homemade cinnamon bun. Below, John Catucci, host of You Gotta Eat Here, poses outside of Roy's Place in Claresholm. The restaurant will be featured in the new season of the popular Food Network television show.

receiving. He loves seeing people enjoy his food.

"I love to cook, to watching people's reaction to what we do both with the food, but more so with the service that my wife and partner Brandi helps take care of is the most important to me," says Carlson.

"We serve great food, but without the right

service staff and the way you're treated, would we ever be getting the national attention that we have received over the last year? We bought a run-down diner that needed a lot of love to make it look good inside and run well enough to serve the number of people we do and still leave those guests with a lasting enough impression that they would take the time to go online and write to the Food Network about us."

The best part about the experience for both Brandi and Kieth is the guests who enjoyed food for the filming, were able to do so for free. A donation box was set out to collect money for the Claresholm food bank and more than \$700 was raised.

"I am so passionate about my business, well ... because I worked with my dad when I was young with the family plumbing business," says Carlson. "He instilled in me that if you are going to do things 'do it right, make it look how it should be'."



Carlson explains when he was helping his father run copper water lines in a basement, if they were not six inches apart and perfectly straight the fulllength of the building, his father would comment. At the time Carlson didn't think it maitered since they would be covered up with drywall.

"My father looked at me and said,
"I will know, and if I know I did not do it
to my best how can I ask the customer
to pay for a half effort." I guess that has
stuck with me in life. When you just
want to call it in for the day, there is
something in the back of your head that
asked, 'did you do it the best that you
can? That is what I expect of myself,
my staff and my business," explains
Carlson.

"Everyone has different 'bests', but as long as you make sure your living up to yours every day, I believe good things will come from the effort. So far our 'bests' with the restaurant have been working for us."



Una Larsen talks about why she loves Roy's Place and the food, including the homemade cinnamon bun, with John Catucci, host of You Gotta Eat Here.