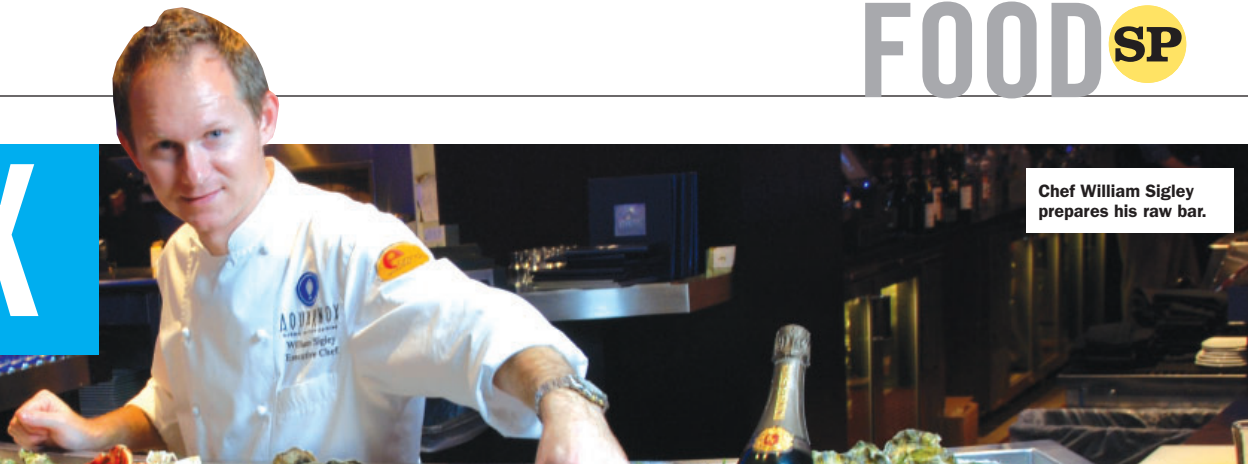


AQUAKNOX

Chef William Sigley
prepares his raw bar.



GLOBAL WATER CUISINE

BY HOPE S. PHILBRICK

PHOTOS/JOE HANS

Already home to BluePointe, the Oceanaire, Atlanta Fish Market, McCormick & Schmick's, Ray's on the River and others, does Atlanta need another seafood restaurant? With AquaKnox, which opened November 2007 in the Terminus Building, E-Brands Restaurants is betting the answer is yes.

The Orlando, Fla.-based company has a proven track record and boasts a portfolio of 15 restaurants in seven different concepts located in six states—AquaKnox is already a success in Las Vegas. But opening a restaurant is always a risk, and so the company considered many factors before jumping into the Atlanta Market. “Atlanta was the ideal location for our AquaKnox expansion,” says Charles Robinson, president of E-Brands Restaurants. “It came down to the city’s involvement in the hospitality industry over the last decade, its current push to develop an individual culinary style and the consumer interest in gastronomy. The restaurant scene is huge there, and with the combined factor of locals, conventions and tourist traffic, Atlanta was our overwhelming first choice.”

According to Robinson, what sets AquaKnox apart from its competitors is the restaurant’s “ultra-chic décor, lively environment and the freshness and style of preparation of the seafood.” The original restaurant was located on Knox Street in Dallas; while

IF YOU GO

AquaKnox

Terminus Building
3280 Peachtree Road NE
404-477-5600
www.aquaknox.net
www.e-brands.net

Hours: Lunch served Mon.–Fri., 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Dinner served nightly from 5:30 p.m. Lounge and bar open late night.

Reservations: Welcome but not required; call the restaurant or visit www.opentable.com.

Dress code: Upscale casual

Cuisine: Upscale seafood, steaks and chops

Alcohol: Full bar

Cost: Light fare starts at \$9, entrées from \$17

Credit cards: All major

Outdoor seating: No

Parking: Valet \$6, complimentary self-parking

that location has since closed, it did inspire the name AquaKnox.

To visually convey its ocean theme, the decor is based on cool colors dominated by blue. “The vibe is energetic with a modern, yet comfortable feel,” says Robinson. A unique water feature adds splashy sounds and encases the walk-in circular wine tower, which houses more than 400 selections, 50 of which are available by the glass. “The highly skilled staff is trained to pair special wines that complement the flavors of the cuisine,” he says.

“The menu sets a new standard of culinary excellence, boasting fresh seafood flown in daily from around the world, including stone crab claws and a superb raw



The wine tower at AquaKnox

bar,” says Robinson. “Chef William Sigley prepares something for everyone’s palette. Not just seafood, although that is what we are known for. We also have prime steaks, duck and chicken. The menu is inspired from cuisines all over the world. The method of cooking is the most basic and also the most difficult. Only by preparing dishes with the freshest ingredients, the highest quality products and in the most direct manner of cooking can you truly create a meal that is an experience, where the true essence of the food connects to the guests who are eating it.”

Originally from Colorado, Chef William Sigley headed to Las Vegas after graduating from Colorado William. His résumé

includes stints at chef Todd English’s Olives restaurant in the Bellagio, chef Wolfgang Puck’s Chinois in Caesar’s Palace and Postrino in the Venetian. He joined E-Brands Restaurants to work under chef Tom Moloney at AquaKnox in Las Vegas before moving to Atlanta to lead the kitchen.

Signature menu items include sautéed John Dory, day boat scallops, pan-roasted bass, whole grilled lobster, mesquite-grilled New Zealand king salmon and “shells of the sea,” which serves up oysters on the half shell, sweet shrimp cocktail and fresh stone crab claws. Steak options include filet mignon, dry aged prime New York strip and a 32-ounce porterhouse. “There is something to please any palate,” says Robinson. **SP**