

The New Paltz Oracle

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Room Fits Town to a 'Tea'

By Lee Landor
COPY EDITOR

"I want to entice guests with the homey aroma of delicious food and old fashioned hospitality," said Agnes Devereux, owner of The Village Tea Room, which opened on Sept. 1. Offering breakfast, lunch and dinner, and a vast variety of teas and pastries, the Tea Room, located on Plattekill Avenue, is a family-oriented business.

In addition to two outdoor verandas, the Tea Room has two dining rooms and a family room with a chalkboard and toys. Despite the amount of space provided, Devereux worries about it.

"If it starts raining, and the inside dining rooms are full, where will I put the people who are sitting outside?" she said, laughing.

"The Village Tea Room will offer our guests sophisticated seasonal dishes, carefully executed from the finest ingredients," said Devereux. In the summer, when strawberries are plentiful "the Village Tea Room will celebrate the season with strawberry tarts and strawberry rhubarb pie, strawberry mousse and bowls of fresh strawberries. When fall arrives and the orchards are groaning with apples we will offer apple pies, apple crisps, apple cake and apple brown betty," said Devereux.

The winter will bring beef stews, lamb pies, gingerbread and hot chocolate with homemade marshmallows.

To Devereux, creating a "very rustic and simple but sophisticated" restaurant was a challenge but a good experience. "It's what I like to do," she said.

Devereux was born into the hospitality business, in the "golden vale" of Ireland where her parents owned a hotel.

"Our life revolved around our guests," Devereux said. "Many of my best childhood memories revolved around delicious meals and the memory of a house filled with the scent of stews and soups and cakes."

Twenty years ago, Devereux moved to New York to study and pursue a career in interior design. There she worked on many projects, including the Martin



Owned by Agnes Devereux, who grew up mastering the art of cooking, the new Village Tea Room offers seasonal dishes and a warm atmosphere. Photo by Melissa Gogo.

Beck Theater restoration, the home of Michael Douglas and an Irish pub. Devereux also worked at the Union Square Café in Manhattan, where she received "a remarkable education in food, wine and hospitality," she said.

Moving from Brooklyn to New Paltz in 2000,

Devereux feels that she is close to her roots once again.

"Now I am back in a small town at the foot of a beautiful mountain," she said, adding that she and her family were drawn to this community by what she calls its "diversity, its beauty and its history."