

CHAT 'N' CHILL

No Shoes. Kick Back. Just Relax!

BIO FOR KB - FULL LENGTH

Kenneth "KB" Bowe, creator and owner of Chat 'N' Chill, Stocking Island and Exuma's hot spot for relaxing and fun, is not your average beach bum. He was born into an old established Exumian family that were merchants and held large land holdings who settled in Exuma in 1765. KB attended primary school at Roker's Point on the island (Great Exuma) before moving on to Nassau where he attended St. Augustine Preparatory College, a private all boys' Catholic school. He remembers that discipline was the order of the day. KB also excelled athletics and was a national track champion.

College and graduate schools were at Fisk University in Nashville, TN and the University Of Chicago Graduate School Of Business respectively. With degrees in Mathematics and Economics undergrad and an MBA in Finance, KB worked as an Economist for a major bank in Chicago where he gained work experience in international capital markets. After six years in corporate America, he decided to quit banking to see and experience the world. It was during this time, that his travels to Asia to quaint beach bars on stilts drew Kenneth's attention because they were simple and laid back.

After his retirement and travels, he returned home to take care of his aging mother. Kenneth, the youngest child, was honored to keep this promise that he made during childhood. In 1980, he purchased land on Stocking Island to be home to the future Chat 'N' Chill. In 1997 with all of his ideas in action, he built the Chat 'N' Chill and opened on March 12, 1998. Immediately it became a hit with the boating and cruising community. The Chat 'N' Chill became the meeting place as well as the activity venue for volleyball, card games, beach golf, beach church along with various other events and competitions for the annual George Town Cruising Regatta. In other words, Chat 'N' Chill became the "day camp" for adults.

KB says that Chat 'N' Chill is no "walk on the beach"; in other words it is no "overnight" success. Although it may look as though KB is kicked back and relaxed greeting his many guests, there are many obstacles daily that KB has had to overcome to successfully deliver a dependable and consistent product.

First, having a restaurant on a little island away from the main port of the larger island is a hefty task for anyone, especially since you have to transport everything yourself because there are no trucks for delivery. Imagine loading your truck when you pick up your supplies, unloading them onto the boat, offloading them from the boat and then transporting everything from the shoreline to the restaurant, whereas a typically located restaurant could simply back the truck up to the back door and offload.

Furthermore, there are challenges that the average customer does not see, nor experience, thankfully! But those that are the behind-the-scenes operations like breakdowns with the generator, (Bahamas Electric Corporation service is not available on Stocking Island), water and ice maker, grill, boat engine, beer cooler, ice cooler, deep freezer, walk-in deep freeze, rotisserie engine, did I mention boat, boat hull, refrigerator, toilets, plumbing, etc. Then getting qualified professional technicians to show (meaning commit to a small job or fly from Nassau) is another hurdle to leap if he cannot fix it himself. However, KB does not view these as problems, but as I mentioned above, as challenges. The challenge is in the opportunity to overcome it in order to deliver his vision of giving an out-island experience to each and every visitor to Exuma and Stocking Island.

Not your average menu, KB focuses on healthy fare. Everything on the menu is grilled except the French Fries to satisfy today's health conscious (and rightfully so) customer. KB's mission is to provide quality food that represents a "taste of the island", give courteous and prompt service in a natural setting that is like no other experience of the Exumas. Regardless of weather conditions, Chat 'N' Chill is open daily from 12 PM to 7 PM, 365 days a year, except Christmas and Good Friday.

Of course, as when anyone is out to do something different, there were many naysayers along the way. But if KB had listened to the critics instead of maintaining his focus and sticking to his plan, Chat 'N' Chill would not be in existence today. Today, KB is married to Kwanza Clay Bowe, a Certified Wedding Specialist and Certified Travel Counselor, who has assisted him in expanding his business to group, corporate, weddings and special events. KB lives on Great Exuma with his wife, Kwanza, and their son, KB, Jr.

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