



A Slab and More

Five years ago, Stephanie Braxton opened the doors to her barbecue restaurant with a clear focus. She looked at the neighborhood around her and wanted to provide an affordable, quality dining experience to those lacking the means to easily access such a luxury.

“By that time, Kora’s Place restaurant had moved to Highway 43,” Braxton recalled. “I was thinking the neighborhood needed somewhere other than just the convenience store that offered food. That was my purpose for wanting to open something here on this side of town. Everything had moved to 80. Many of the people across the street do not have vehicles to drive to get food, real food. That was my purpose for offering something in the neighborhood where people can at least come in and get a meal if they wanted it.”

The building that now houses A Slab and More long held appeal for Braxton, who previously worked in real estate. She saw in the structure an appealing location with a growing flow of nearby traffic.

“I did real estate for a while, so I tried to sell this building. I’m from Demopolis, and this building was empty for a long time. Kora’s was in the back then. I saw how the traffic had picked up on Pettus Street. Many people divert from 80 to travel Pettus,” Braxton said. “I would say to myself when I was doing real estate, ‘Why is no one really interested in this?’ After I got out of real estate and was working with an attorney’s office for a while, I went back and talked to Edward Hughes who owned the building. We worked out the details. I gave myself a year to save money and come up with a plan.”

In piecing together her business plan, Braxton had a series of decisions to make. What would she serve? What would be her pricing structure? “The biggest challenge was not knowing if it was going to work,” she said. “This is a mom and pop type of business. You have to start everything from scratch. You have to make your own plan. You have to create your own menu with pricing and the things that you want to have on your menu.”

Five years later, Braxton’s barbecue joint sits in the same location despite overtures to move to the highway. She still believes in her original vision. And she still believes in the necessity of consistent, quality service.

“I think it’s consistency. That’s a biggie that I had in my experience in restaurant and hospitality,” she said. “As far as who makes my sides, who cooks my food, I wanted that to kind of stay the same. I have people come in and help me prepare the food, but I basically make my own food. That way, if people come and go, the food still stays the same. That was my thing.”

Her commitment to consistent quality and service is not only an expectation she carries as a business owner, but one she maintains as a customer. That makes Robertson Banking Company the perfect fit for Stephanie as she continues to evolve her little barbecue restaurant that draws patrons from well outside of Demopolis.

“When I go to Allen Bishop for advice or ask ‘What do you think about this?’, he has been very helpful,” she said. “They have been here in the community for years providing quality service and support. You get that service from everyone at Robertson Banking Company every time.”