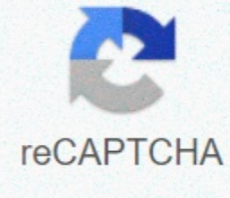




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Juju bag cafe restaurant impossible update



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And JuJu is back at JuJu Bag Cafe Over the years I have enjoyed and shared my enjoyment of this really special place that has brought soul and deliciousness to healthier dining. JuJu Bag Cafe is on my regular schedule, my special favorite dishes are Melted Chicken Salad and Grilled Salmon Salad... ok and on Fridays sometimes I split for Fried Catfish Plate which is fried in as healthy a way as possible. . . . and is actually the one of the executive owner, Tommye Myrick's concession to the New Orleans tradition. Reality TV Ain't Real Fortunately, and unfortunately the JuJu Bag Cafe owned by Phyllis Johnson and Tommye Myrick was the subject/victim of an episode of Robert Irvine's Restaurant: Impossible TELEVISION show, which provided some physical upgrades to the dining room and attached barber shop and advice to staff and management. In many ways it has turned into a nightmare for JuJu Bag, which started as a cool place to hang out with coffee after Katrina, which had turned over the years into a very special ethnocentric healthy fare dining room with culture and artifacts representing the African Diaspora. Over the years had built a loyal clientele who expected and accepted both who came with warm hospitality and a sense of being family, no matter who your mother was. So the place has a nicer look and the wires for the sound system no longer show, the walls have a new paint job and you can feel a sense of design, which originally had the place feeling very un-special and blah, like a fast food joint. To Ms. Myrick's horror, the makeover crew began throwing her collection of books and artifacts in the trash, rooted to the film crew, but an accumulation of history and culture for her. She managed to rescue some, but some were permanently damaged in the process. They took JuJu out of JuJu Bag! I said the subject/sacrifice of the show because of how the place was set up to look really bad so That Irvine could have heavy drama for his unreal reality show where he rides in on a white horse and saves the day. I know I was there the day of filming: First the place was filled with a crowd three times the normal lunch business, and they all came at the same time trying to and send orders to the small kitchen at exactly the same time. The proud young staff who wanted to do well were obviously overwhelmed and their upset fed the cameras needed chaos. (By the way the kitchen upgrade Myrick had hoped didn't happen, instead they reequipped the barber shop, which did just fine with larger space and older unmatched but better quality chairs they had before.) Second, an employee's reference to a five-second rule joke by Ms. Myrick was edited out of context that it was a joke, allowing viewers to believe that on the floor can be reused. And how water that condensed on thawing containers was called bacteria. Anyone who knows Tommye Myrick's standards of quality and concern for our health knows that both of these were blatant misrepresentations to improve the drama of the show. Third, a director who had been eating JuJu food all week and cleaning his plate, spits food out on camera, like it was ugly tasting, c'mon dude! Fourth, afterwards they pared her menu down in a few choices that you could get almost anywhere, and the really special things you could only get at JuJu Bag (like my melted chicken salad) were gone. They took JuJu out of JuJu Bag! Since then kinte cloth you cover back some of the art reinstalled and I must admit that I like the new more professional look, now that juju feel is back as expressed in these doves, diaspora art and books. Oh, yes, and JuJu is back on the menu as well. Oh hell, damn near the whole old menu is back. So JuJu is back at JuJu Bag, so I and I are sure they'd like to see you back as well. I hope you now know that the drama you saw on this reality TV show has nothing to do with reality. See you tonight! Lloyd Dennis(aka The Love Doctor) Chef Robert Irvine at the 2015 Food Network & Cooking Channel New York City Wine & Food Festival. Neilson Barnard/Getty Images Over the past five years, chef Robert Irvine has been trying to revive 135 failing restaurants across America for the Food Network show Restaurant: Impossible, now at the start of its 13th year. Of these, 82, or 61%, have closed after their makeovers, according to the blog Food Network Gossip.But it's actually not that bad of a statistic, since these restaurants were so poorly managed that Irvine and his team only took the job if there was essentially a 100% chance of imminent failure. In fact, according to a frequently cited study by Ohio State University on failed restaurants, 60% don't make it past the first year and 80% go under in five years. Irvine has noticed five recurring factors from his experience trying to whip those places back into shape. He shared with Business Insider his top five reasons why most restaurants fail. Photo - Food Network Tonight at Restaurant: Impossible, Robert Irvine and his crew are in New Orleans, Louisiana to makeover JuJu Bag Cafe. Following with this season's odd-themed locations, the location is actually half cafe and half barber salon. The café looks like a messy living room and has no commercial kitchenware, and the Restaurant Impossible team has to renovate both a restaurant and a barbershop. As I usually do with Restaurant: Impossible episodes, I searched the internet to read stories, comments and reviews about The JuJu Bag Cafe to get an idea of how the restaurant is doing since Robert visited, and here's what I found (note - all reviews are post Restaurant: Impossible): Positive reviews: I love food and people. I went in by chance and what a find! People are heartfelt in their kindness. They really care about your experience with them, not of them, because they make you feel welcome and relaxed, as if you were meant to be there. The food is delicious with large portions. Worth the drive from the Lower Garden District. Can't wait to go back!!!! We were very happy with this restaurant. The service was great, the owners are friendly and they have a salon attached to it. It's a small place but we still loved it. Negative reviews: Fish Fry Fridays... not the best. I went in for the special and the smell of hair chemicals was overwhelming. Smells like a perm kit factory inside. After marking the salon next door I felt a little better. I ordered the fish and I was fried just a little too hard for my taste. The sides offered were mac n' cheese and peas. Both were nothing to write home about. I will pass. Our hostess took us out back and told us that the place will be at Restaurant Impossible in May. She said: 'We have a full bar. Wine? Only moscato. Beer? Heineken. We ordered Heineken. She brought it out. Unopened. We don't have openers. I ordered a po' boy. They're not good here. Only six prawns. Ok. What about the mixed basket? It takes hours. Ok. What should we order? Salads. Bottom line: the food was edible, the price was right, and the owner, a former Southern U pro, she said, entertained us with stories on the way out. Surreal. That is, New Orleans. The place is very sweet!!!! Was not able to order food 2 different times, once due to problems with appliances!!!! The staff were disorganized and carefree!!! I stood there 15 minutes once picking different things to eat every time I tried to warn the waitress to let her know that I found something else because everything else I ordered was not available, she said the item was not available either... I finally got fed up with the cat and mouse with her and said what exactly have you!!!!!!!? Ended up getting okra and prawns with red sauce were not good! I use to go here a year ago the food was good and the service was quick, I don't know what happened!! Other news and links: The Restaurant Impossible makeover happened in March 2015. Here's the Ju-Ju Bag Facebook page, which isn't too active. Here is an old JuJu Bag website which seems to have expired and now has spammy links on the site. Here is another JuJu Bag website that does not work without www front. Here's the version that works. Here's a 5 minute documentary about JuJu Bag Cafe made in 2012, which is pretty well done. Some info from it: A Ju Ju Bag is a bag given to young men at the age of 13 in West Africa, where keep their precious items. Before Hurricane Katrina Katrina was half living room and half barber shop. After Katrina, they would make half of it a bookstore, but people kept asking if they would serve food or coffee, so they decided to make food. Random - There are Ju Ju Be Diaper Bags that kept showing up in search results, but there is no relation. Conclusion: Reviews of the restaurant are mixed since makeover with some people like food, people and atmosphere. There were a few complaints about the availability of items on the menu and the casual service. There wasn't too much publicity during the makeover, so there wasn't too much information out there, but it looks like locals will be crucial to making this restaurant succeed. A new season of Restaurant Impossible hasn't been given the green light yet, and Robert Irvine has said on social media that this season's reviews will determine whether they continue to produce episodes. Last week's episode had 1.1 million viewers, so I expect those ratings to be good enough to warrant more episodes, but only time will tell. Maybe they just want to slow down production as five different seasons span the years 2014 and 2015. (UPDATE - It's been renewed for a 12th season.) UPDATE - JuJu Bag Cafe closed some time in 2018, and a new restaurant is in its location. *Visit our Restaurant Impossible Update Page to see all Restaurant: Impossible updates and which restaurants are open, closed, or have been sold. Also like us on Facebook and Follow us on Twitter * Related to RI, but The Profit Updates is now live if you're a fan of CNBC's The Profit. Profit.

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