



FOOD & DRINK | CHEF'S TABLE 04.13.05

No fuss, just Muss (& Turner)

BY SUZANNE WRIGHT

In December, I started receiving colorful e-mails announcing a new gourmet shop in ... Smyrna? I was intrigued. The owners, Todd Mussman (formerly of the Fifth Group) and Ryan Turner (of the East Lake Golf Club) are boyish, exuberant and dedicated to their venture, which reminds me of NYC's Dean & DeLuca.

Creative Loafing: Why here? **Mussman:** We are part of the Ivy Walk at Vinings development, a live/work/play community. This is a playground for our neighborhood. We did this for selfish reasons.

What's the concept? **Mussman:** It's old-world deli meats with contemporary specialty foods. I grew up in a Boston Jewish deli.

Turner: We are owner-operated - we are here to meet and greet our customers. I live in the development, above another store. We hire people who are really passionate about food and give great customer service; we have seven culinary students and four chefs on staff.

You've got sandwiches that top \$10. Anyone have sticker shock?

Mussman: Sandwiches are the backbone of our business right now. At first, people said, 'Where's the Boar's Head?' I am in here at 6 a.m., roasting my own meats, making mayonnaise and au jus. I serve what I eat.

Turner: We're carving out a niche and taking a quality stance. Our sandwiches cost more, but our margins are less than a typical deli's. We really haven't heard anyone say, 'This is not worth it.'

Who's eating the Chocolate Elvis, with peanut butter and sliced banana on chocolate challah bread.

Mussman: More adults than kids!

I see you have vacuum-packed entrees to take home.

Mussman: My Cryovac machine is great. It preserves freshness and flavor by removing air. You just drop it in boiling water - there's no smell, no mess. My wife and I ate the chicken and collards last night. (*Author's note: the chicken was delicious.*)

*Muss & Turner's, 1675 Cumberland Parkway, Suite 309. 770-434-1114.
www.mussandturners.com.*