



Duke's  
SEAFOOD & CHOWDER



## **Innovation:**

First to put mussels on the menu in Puget Sound. “Back in 1977, nobody ate mussels. Peter Jeffords at Penn Cove Mussels brought me some to try one day. I was amazed at how tasty they were, and mussels been on the menu ever since.”



## Caper:

Ever sat down to dinner with a real bull weighing over two tons? For a photo for an advertisement we ran back in the 80s, I did. If you look closely, you can see the terror in my eyes and the fact that the bull is wearing a tablecloth around his neck instead of a napkin! The ad was a hit . . . and the bull (maybe not that one) was on the menu.





## Innovation:

First to offer varietal wines by the glass. Before then, it was only jug wines with menu names like house red, house white. (PHOTO) THIS COULD BE AUDIO

**Caper:** The summer of 1984 was insanely hot. Our guests were eating at waterfront restaurants instead of Duke's. I needed a way to bring them back, so we painted the sidewalk outside our entry to match our blue and white checked tablecloths. Not only did it drive in customers, the story of the small business having a little fun in the middle of a heat wave was picked up by the press. "Eventually, the city found out and made us sandblast it off. It's too bad, because it really did look great," says Duke. (PHOTO) THIS COULD BE AUDIO

**Innovation:** First to serve the now-famous Kamikaze cocktail. "On Pearl Harbor Day back in the late 1970s, one of our managers, Mark Kobayashi, dressed up like a WWII pilot and decorated the restaurant in bold Japanese war posters. It was a hit, and we invented the Kamikaze cocktail to accompany the festivities. (PHOTO)

**Caper:** Duke bought the first bar from a garage sale – a 24-foot antique structure from an old bar in Seattle for \$1,200, which led the start of the bar business at Duke's.

**Innovation:** First restaurant to team up with Woodford Reserve Distillery to craft our own special Bourbon that we blend ourselves in Kentucky with a master distiller. (PHOTO)

**Caper:** When Seafair Hydroplane Drivers had to take a pay cut in 2010 and threatened to not race, I stepped up with my friend Chip Hanauer and we paid the difference. After all, what is Seafair without the Hydroplane races? (PHOTO)

**Innovation:** 1984 Duke paid \$100 for a restaurant called Duke's 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and tried the white tablecloth approach. "We soon learned that was not our style and went back to our more casual dining approach."

**Caper:** When Herschel, a pesky sea lion was gorging on salmon near the Ballard Locks and the Fish & Game Department wanted to stop him with rubber bullets and deportation, Duke stepped in with a solution. He proposed that Duke's would feed Herschel all the salmon in exchange for the rights to sell his Award-Winning Clam Chowder at the locks. People could feed Herschel his salmon and eat some yummy chowder at the same time. The Fish & Game did not bite. (PHOTO)

**Innovation:** Duke's famous clam chowder won the Seattle Chowder Cook-Off three years in a row. In fact, Duke's won so often that the judges asked them not to compete again. (LOGO OF COOK OFF or CHOWDER) THIS COULD BE AUDIO

**Caper:** Back in the late 1980s, the Mariners were on the verge of being sold and leaving town. "So, I offered to 'Buy Out George' Argyros, the owner," says Duke. "I figured if 300,000 people could put up \$250 each, we could raise \$75 million. We could pay George \$48 million and build an outdoor baseball stadium with the remainder, so the Mariners could play baseball outdoors, the way it's meant to be played. We got a lot of takers, but ultimately Jeff Smulyan came along and snatched them up before we got the money together." (Let's Buy Out George Ad). THIS COULD BE AUDIO.

**Caper:** “In 1999 I tried to be a Seahawk’s Quarterback . . .not really, but it was a fun idea,” Duke adds. “Then in 2015 I offered to be the Seahawk’s 13<sup>th</sup> man and serve chowder to all the disappointed fans that season.”