



THE QUEEN of relaxation

Danette Lewis loves pampering her clients at The Spa on Marion

Story and photos by KAYLA LOKEINSKY



Danette mixes crushed herbs with Alaskan Glacier mud to infuse the mud with the scent. Danette crushes down herbs to create powders that can be infused into mud, and allows spa guests to choose which herbs they want used with their treatments. One of the services Danette offers at The Spa on Marion is Colon Hydrotherapy. Danette is a certified colon hydrotherapist and has a passion for the detoxifying treatment.

Danette Lewis wanted to make a difference. After going through serious back surgery and getting massage therapy treatments from her husband, Brian Lewis, Danette wanted to help others feel the same relief that she felt.

She wanted to create a place where people could come and have the weight of the world lifted off their shoulders. Thus, The Spa on Marion was born.

What started out as an idea scribbled down on a piece of paper has turned into Lake City's only five-star day spa. The Spa on Marion is where relaxation reigns, and Danette is the queen.

From Mom To Massage Therapist

Before deciding to go into the bodywork field, Danette spent her days raising her 10 children. Once her children were grown, Brian, who was already a licensed massage therapist and hydrotherapist, convinced her to go to school for massage therapy.

"I said it would be cool to work together," Brian said. "Then she went to school and they didn't think physically she could do it. That was the wrong thing to do because that was a challenge."

Danette was more than up for the challenge. She proved those who doubted her wrong when

she graduated from the Florida School of Massage, earning the school record for the most clinical sessions done. She also graduated from Tiller Mind & Body with a certification in advanced colon hydrotherapy

From there, Danette fell in love with bodywork and continued to earn licenses and certifications. She is currently a Florida state licensed massage therapist, a Florida state licensed hydrotherapist, a national board-certified colon hydrotherapist, a certified facial massage specialist, a board-certified body wrapper and a master salt blender.

"I love doing body work," Danette said. "Whether it be relaxation, deep tissue, couple's massage, hot stone, whatever service I'm doing, I always feel so honored to be able to work with our clients, and we have some of the most amazing clients in Lake City."

Danette and Brian moved to Lake City from Fernandina Beach in 2003, and nine years ago they opened their first massage thera-



ABOVE: Danette Lewis stands in front of The Spa on Marion, a luxury spa that she and her husband opened together. After raising her 10 children, Lewis got her massage therapy license and is also a licensed hydrotherapist, certified colon hydrotherapist, facial massage specialist and is a master salt blender.

py location, Integrated Body Work, in a small office off Main Boulevard. They eventually outgrew the space, and moved to their current location on Marion Avenue, where they turned the space into a relaxation destination.

“It was quite a labor of love but absolutely worth it,” Danette said. “We try to create that experience where it’s not just coming in to have a massage or coming to have a facial. You’re coming in for an experience.”

A Luxury Experience

When getting a treatment at The

Spa on Marion, you can always expect five-star service. Spa Finder International has given The Spa on Marion a five-star service rating, and when walking inside it’s easy to see why. The house-turned-spa is filled with the sweet smells of aromatherapy, relaxing music and an atmosphere that instantly makes you feel at peace.

The spa offers a wide variety of massages, including pre-natal, reflexology, couples, orthopedic, deep tissue and aqua massage, among others. The Spa on Marion also offers facials, colon hydrotherapy, body

gommage, wraps, spa parties and hair removal. Each treatment also comes with a complimentary foot soak, a feature that the Danette and Brian have been offering since they first opened their business.

“There’s just not a treatment that we do here at the spa that I don’t have a passion for, because it wouldn’t be on our menu if we didn’t like it,” Danette said. “I love it all.”

Private massage rooms decorated with peacock colors and warm salt lamps create the perfect spa atmosphere. The Spa on Marion also has a large massage room called “The Secret Garden,” where guests walk through a small hallway covered in draped fabric before coming to a large room big enough for six people to get treatments at one time.

Danette also makes sure that each



Danette Lewis poses with her husband, Brian Lewis, in the Secret Garden massage room at The Spa On Marion. Brian is a licensed massage therapist and hydrotherapist, and he and Danette have been married for 38 years.

experience is personal right down to the smell of the mud being put on your face.

“We custom blend and custom design all of our body treatments,” Danette said. “I have what I call my treasure box, and in it is about 50 different herbs that I’ve crushed down to a powder form to where they can infuse into the mud.”

Danette also creates all the sugar scrubs and salt scrubs used at the spa, making sure each guest experience is individualized.

“It’s not only a body treatment, but it’s customized and specialized for that client,” Danette said. “In other words, it’s an original masterpiece. I always like to say all of the work we do is original masterpieces. It’s never duplicated. We allow all our therapists to work freestyle here. We don’t do cookie-cutter massage. That’s very important to us.”

Although she loves all the treatments offered at The Spa on Marion, her favorite is the couples massage, because she gets to do them with her husband.

“I love working with my husband

and I love doing couple’s massages with him,” Danette said. “That way we get to be in the same room together and work together, so I love that.”

Some of their other children have also entered the family trade. Their oldest daughter, Chelsea, is an esthetician at The Spa on Marion and their daughters Destiny and Haley are also estheticians.

“My husband did prenatal massages on our daughters and our grandson had his first massage at seven minutes old,” Danette said. “All our grand babies have received massages from us.”

A Beautiful Journey

The philosophy at The Spa on Marion is if they can change someone’s pain level a little bit to the left, then they’ve had a good day.

“We don’t claim to fix anything,” Danette said. “All of my therapists are passionate about what they do, and I think that gives us a unique edge because you can’t do this work without having a passion for it and knowing that you’re helping someone.”

Danette feels that good body work is not a luxury anymore, but a necessity.

“We live in such a stressful world now, just so much stress that the body needs to destress,” Danette said. “It just needs to come back into balance, and we hope that we facilitate that a little bit.”

At 57 years old, Danette proves that it’s never too late to go after something you want.

“I’m so blessed every morning that I get paid for something I’m so passionate about,” Danette said. “Obstacles will come in the road, but it’s how you choose to go over them that makes a difference.”