

“Near the State Street entrance to Key Hall, Robin Brown of Schenectady’s Café Nola, pushes lemons through a press, adds sugar and shakes it up. “We make the lemonade right in front of folks,” Brown says. “This week, it was passion fruit. Sometimes it’s guava.” On a recent Sunday, her Cajun/New Orleans menu featured blackened catfish etouffee over dirty rice, mac and cheese and cheddar corn bread. “I have a different menu all the time,” says Brown, who makes the food with her husband, Chef Kevin, and daughter Rachel. One week, it’s short ribs slow-cooked in Louisiana’s Abita Turbodog beer and cinnamon, the next it might be crawfish jambalaya. Café Nola served food at the market last year, in the lower level under Robb Alley, where there was only a tiny, crowded dining area. “It’s better this year, and it’s a lot to do with the location. The Greenmarket has helped us promote our cafe. Where else are you going to get the opportunity to eat all these cuisines in one location?”