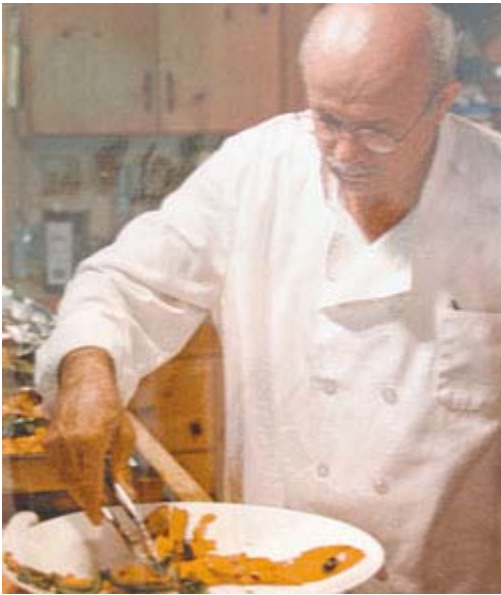


## Weddings at Willow Creek Inn one of a kind

by: Sarah Grano  
(9/14/2007)

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**Mansour Zand, owner of the Willow Creek Inn, arranges food on a platter. Zand prides himself on creating unique, personalized weddings for his clients. Chris Dean / LTN Photo**

Those wishing to get married at Willow Creek Inn in Vale must be ready for intense, personal preparation.

“You have to talk to me: ‘What do you like? What do you want? What are your favorite colors?’” said Mansour Zand, owner of the Inn.

Weddings and wedding receptions have been held at the inn for the past 12 years, and Zand prides himself on always presenting something unique.

“The strength of Willow Creek Inn is the size of imagination and creation,” he said. “Anyone can offer a steak.”

What Zand offers is a completely personalized experience where “there’s no limit.”

He’s made lobster hushpuppies and 2-and-a-half-foot pecan pies. He has no problem tackling incredibly formal affairs or casual weddings where guests sit outside on blankets. He’s even prepared a wedding devoted to “Gone with the Wind.”

Most people who marry at the Willow Creek Inn choose to do so outside on Zand’s 3,500-square-foot wedding deck.

“Anybody who loves nature – you don’t have a choice except to say ‘Ah, this is where I will get married,’” Zand said.

No matter where the wedding is or what theme it has, Zand believes it his knowledge of the couple that makes the event a success.

“I know their weaknesses. I know their strengths,” Zand said. “I know their budgets, and I know their dreams.”

Once he learns all these things “the rest is a piece of cake.”

Zand, a well-known chef, takes care of all aspects of the occasion including food, music and flowers.

“Unless you want your Aunt Peggy to do your flowers – that’s

fine,” he said.

What isn't fine is rejecting flowers all together.

“It's very important,” he said. “You can't live without flowers.”

After being married at Willow Creek Inn, many couples return to dine there for their anniversaries. Others mail him pictures of their newborn children.

He's happy to have been a part of such a special time in their lives.

“I enjoy doing what I'm doing – just to participate, create that, be a part of that,” he said.

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*The Willow Creek Inn is located at 3083 Wyant Road in Vale. For more information call (704) 276-1111, e-mail [info@thewillowcreekinn.com](mailto:info@thewillowcreekinn.com) or visit [www.thewillowcreekinn.com](http://www.thewillowcreekinn.com).*