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BARDSTOWN ROAD

Salsa is hot, hot, hot

Lessons, dances turn up heat at Big Dave's

By Martha Elson

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The Courier-Journal

Learning to salsa begins with basic counting skills.

"One-two-three-four-five-six-seven-eight," instructor Angela Bartley repeated hypnotically to a beginners' class recently at Big Dave's Outpost on Bardstown Road.

Bartley, who lives in Deer Park near the bar and restaurant, was clicking out the salsa rhythm in high heels on the hardwood dance floor upstairs.

"That's all there is to it," Bartley told the class. "It's that simple."



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Students practiced their techniques during a salsa class at Big Dave's Outpost. It plans a regular salsa dance the first Friday night of each month, starting Aug. 3. (By Michael Clevenger, The Courier-Journal)

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IF YOU GO

What: Salsa dances with live band.

When: 9:30 p.m. on the first Friday of each month, starting Aug. 3.

Where: Big Dave's Outpost, 1801 Bardstown Road.

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only live once. I'm hoping it doesn't take much skill."

Big Dave's has become a hot spot for salsa since the lessons began last fall. It has held salsa dances, and a regular salsa dance with a live band is planned the first Friday night of each month, starting Aug. 3.

Bartley, who also is a freelance flight instructor, actress and bugler for the Kentucky Derby Museum, will be managing the dance events.

She said the classes, which have been attracting 25 to 30 people a week, came about after she ran into Big Dave's co-owner Dave Klein at Kroger and he invited her to move her classes there.

She had been teaching at a studio in Lyndon. She now also teaches ballroom and other Latin dances at Big Dave's. While traveling about 10 years ago to Argentina and elsewhere, Bartley fell in love with Caribbean-style dancing.

The men and women in the recent classes formed lines and shifted regularly to different partners. Dressed in a red-and-white-flowered sundress, Bartley clipped on a portable microphone and played recorded music.

"I'm doing it strictly for my girlfriend," said Chris Markert of Hillview in Bullitt County. He previously had tried line dancing. "Line dancing is one thing. This is completely different."

His girlfriend, Christy Edlin, 26, said it was a chance to dance together, rather than separately.

Brian Batdorf, 44, an anesthesiologist who lives in the Poplar Level Road area,

Later in an intermediate class, she demonstrated turning and pivoting, and told the students to lead with their shoulder blades. "Get a little spin on it," she said.

It was a new experience for Kelly Kubala, 26, of Lyndon, a Louisville Zoo employee who said she had always been interested in learning salsa. "Why not?" said Kubala, who also had tried belly dancing. "You

Cost: \$8.

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Also:

What: Salsa lessons.

When: Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Where: Big Dave's Outpost, 1801 Bardstown Road.

Cost: \$10 per session.

Information: 387-6680 or www.salsadancelouisville.com.
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said he had checked out a DVD on salsa dancing at the library and then saw an ad at Big Dave's for the lessons. "I just love the music," he said. "It's very, very upbeat, happy music."

Melissa Wessell, who was dressed in a long, patterned skirt, and her husband, Chuck, of the St. Joseph neighborhood, have been taking lessons since February. They're in their 50s.

"Really, it's just a fun way to exercise," Melissa Wessell said. She said they went to the first salsa dance event at Big Dave's "and had a blast."

Gamal and Tillie Monem of Prospect, who are more experienced dancers, were helping Bartley and practicing some moves on the side.

"It's a wonderful workout," Gamal Monem said.

It's also a way "to become reacquainted with your mate," his wife said.

Their daughter and son had taken salsa lessons at North Oldham Middle, and Bartley also taught salsa to adults after school at North Oldham this past year. "A lot of kids really take to it," Bartley said.

Reporter Martha Elson can be reached at (502) 582-7061.

COVER PHOTO: Susan Borders and her husband, Dan Borders, participated in the intermediate salsa class.

STORYCHAT 

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