

ON GARDENS AND PARKS

'WE ARE DETERMINED TO MAKE UNIQUE GARDENS AND PARK ONE OF THE BEST IN AFRICA'

Chief C.C Udebuani popularly known as the doyen of Tourism and Hospitality in Abuja is a personality with great disposition because of his humility and mien for excellence. Coming from the roots and a humble family background Chief Udebuani rose from a little beginning with home video rental services to a film producer and a doyen of the tourism and hospitality industry in Abuja. With hard work, commitment and integrity Chief Udebuani has rose to the enviable position of Chief Executive Officer of both Unique Gardens and Park and Next level Hotels all based in Abuja. He hosted our Editor-in Chief, Peter O. Emuekpere in Gardens where he spoke on his experiences in the Abuja Tourism and Hospitality industry.



and the services were superb. I made up my mind to replicate what I saw there in the capital city of Nigeria. You know there is a difference between Gardens and Garden. Gardens is a place where refreshments are served in the open. So, I decided to establish Gardens. When I came back, I started from the little piece of land behind my house which was a refuse dump and a transit way. It was a stretch of land of about 1.5 hectares. I took the lead and engaged laborers to clear the dump and removed over 52 trucks of refuse from the dump. I did the job myself with laborer's because my mother taught me how to lead a team if you want result, you lead, they follow. After the landscaping I named it Unique Gardens and Park and because of the beautiful work and scenery with grass carpet and well laid out lanes the place became the cynosure of all eyes and automatically became a rallying point for a lot of people to relax after the day's work. I had to invite the authority of the FCT to see what we are doing, and they got interested. In fact, as at that time there was no department of Parks and Recreation in Abuja. I invited the Director of Environment in FCT and he came to see what we are doing. He was so impressed, and he did a Memo to the then FCT Minister who approved it and

On how he ventured into the tourism and hospitality industry,

Chief Udebuani said 'I have been in this industry since 1999 when I established Unique Gardens and Parks. The idea

came when I travelled to Las Vegas in the United States of America in 1998 for an exhibition. While there I visited Escaribo Gardens for relaxation, and I got attracted by the beauty and ambience of the Garden. It was beautiful, the atmosphere was serene,



this gave birth to the Department of Parks and Recreation which we have today in FCT. So, it was Unique Gardens and Park that was instrumental to the creation of this department. As soon as the department was created and Tpl Luka Achi the Director and with the experience he got from us he was able to recover most of the recreation Parks in FCT with the support of the then Minister of FCT Mallam Nasiru EL-Rufai. In 2006 an advertisement was made in the Newspapers, we applied, filed in all our technical papers and we won the bid and got the garden here in Accra Street. So far so good This is where we are today. Development is still going on in the garden and we will get there someday.

On his challenges and constraints so far,

he said. 'There was interests and challenges from different angles when they saw the beauty of what we were doing. They want to wrestle the garden from me, but we went to court and through litigation that started in 2008 and by God's grace we won the case in 2018, Everything was restored to us. But during the litigation period all my facilities and equipment were vandalized, and we lost millions of Naira. Before the court case started, we had already concluded plans on how to transform the Garden to an amusement Park which is our major focus but because of the litigation all my foreign partners were scared and backed out. But glory be to God we are back fully on track and in a short while that dream will be fulfilled.'

On what makes Unique Garden and Parks one of the best in Abuja, Chief Udebuani has this to say

'Unique Garden is a household name in Abuja, we have hosted Ministers, Senators, Members of House of Representatives and a lot of captains of industries. Unique Gardens was declared opened by former President Olusegun Obasanjo shortly before he left office in May 7th, 2007. Many come here to enjoy the serene and beauty of nature which is prevalent here. Some come here to enjoy our delicacies. I learnt a lot of these delicacies from my mother when I was growing up in the village. I am a village brought up and had the advantage of learning from the

grassroots about all the rudiments of life. I am a Professor in Gardens and Parks now and most times I get invited by state governments and Organizations to train their staff, including youth and women group on how to prepare some of these delicacies as a form of empowerment to enable them stand on their own. In unique Gardens and Parks, you get the best grilled Chicken and foil catfish croaker or tilapia. Let me bring to your notice that Unique garden is the first to introduce foil catfish. I am the pioneer of Foil Catfish. I started it and have trained many people across the country and you can see it everywhere now, but we are still the best. Therefore, when you come here in the evenings you will see the human traffic coming to enjoy our foil catfish and other delicacies.'

On the facilities available in Unique Gardens and Parks,

'We have several Event Centres for different kinds of activities, we have a five-aside pitch where people can play games, we have amphitheater where people can hold drama presentations and sporting activities. We also have a place where we are constructing that will serve as drive through snatch pavilion. This section we are is called Picnic area where we serve all kinds of delicacies. We have bars, restaurants, fishponds, car wash with large car park to accommodate as many vehicles as possible. More facilities are still coming on board you can see construction work going on every corner. I was the president of Abuja Gardens and Park owners for eleven years and I have brought my experience to bear all these years. We are determined to make Unique Gardens and Park one of the best in Nigeria and by extension in Africa.'

On the secret of his success in life

'My passion for Gardens and Park is my motivation. For anyone to succeed in life you must be passionate about what you do. You must cherish hard work, honesty and integrity. These are my driving force. When I tell you, this is white go any where and find out it is white. But most importantly for anyone to succeed you must hold God and serve him with all your heart for without Him the equation is Zero. God is indeed my strength'.



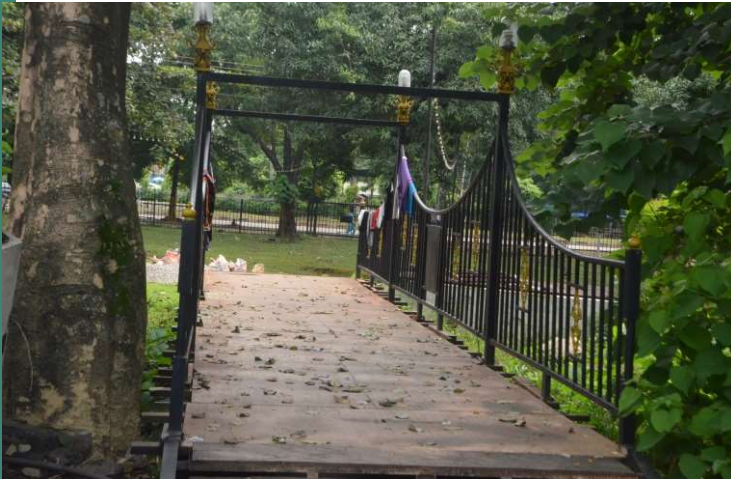


FACILITIES

Event Centers, Amphitheatre, Restaurant, Five-aside-Pitch, Expansive Car Park/Wash, Children Playground, Etc.

DELICACIES

Grilled Chicken, Foil Cat Fish, Tilapia, Croaker, Goat/Fish Peppersoup, Fruit cage, etc



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