



Celebrity Chefs'

BRUNCH

SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2024

DUPONT COUNTRY CLUB

A MEALS ON WHEELS DELAWARE EVENT
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About Meals On Wheels Delaware

Meals On Wheels Delaware provides diverse opportunities for individuals, groups and organizations to make a financial or volunteer contribution that has a meaningful impact on the lives of homebound senior Delawareans.

We are focused on ensuring that everyone in Delaware who requests help with a home delivered meal is able to receive the nutritional support they need, when they need it.

We raise funds and awareness to support the five local Meals On Wheels programs. These programs are delivering a difference of over 853,000 meals to over 6,600 homebound neighbors each weekday.

Meals on Wheels recipients are women and men, aged 60 and over, who often live alone. Many are struggling to balance their needs on a fixed income, and are unable to shop or safely prepare a hot meal for themselves. Some require help when recovering from a hospital stay, but for most, the meals are a long term lifeline.



Pictured from left to right Back Row: Devashish Guha, Vaughn Hardin, John McMahon, Tom Hannum, Lyndon Yearick, Scott Baylis, Dan Dugan, Elizabeth Kipp-Stonebraker

Front Row: Pamela Scott, Debbie Smith, Nicole Ashton, Caitlin Custer-Hufe, Lanette Taylor-Sherman and Jan Waldauer

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Welcome from the Board Chair



Good Afternoon, and Welcome to Meals on Wheels Delaware's 27th Celebrity Chefs' Brunch. As Board Chair, I am grateful for your presence at the Meals On Wheels Delaware event this Sunday morning. We are delighted to have you here to indulge in a delicious gourmet brunch prepared by renowned chefs from across North America and Canada. In addition to the delicious food, you will delight in refreshing brunch cocktails, enjoy live entertainment, and browse a silent auction. While you delight in today's event please take a moment to reflect on why we have come together to support this great cause.

The senior population is growing and changing rapidly. They are living longer and with less money. Nearly 10,000 baby boomers are turning 65 in the US today, and every day, for the next 15 years.

Meals on Wheels aims to end senior hunger and isolation among eligible seniors 60 and over.

Here are some statistics for our great state from the Delaware Population Consortium.

- 29% of the population of Delaware are seniors over the age of 60.
- The number of Delaware residents 85 and over will increase by 51%, in the next 15 years.

Seniors 75 plus make up the largest percentage of those who need help with a home-delivered meal.

- Among seniors 65 and over, 26% are living alone and 24% of our seniors in Delaware are veterans, according to the latest census information.

Your attendance today allows us to supply the five partner meal delivery programs with essentials to provide warm, freshly prepared meals to seniors in their homes. In 2023, 853,000 meals were delivered to 6,600 elderly men and women.

We could only have accomplished this with the dedicated staff and thousands of volunteers throughout the state. As the Board Chair, I greatly value your efforts and perseverance. I, and the Board members, would like to thank you all personally. Without your dedication and endless support, we could not have accomplished what we have. I am so very proud that we can rely on your support as active and engaged citizens, committed to making our seniors, our communities, and our state a better place.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the staff, and myself, thank you for joining us today and for your unbelievable support. Meals on Wheels delivers much more than just a meal in Delaware. Together, we remain dedicated to addressing senior hunger and isolation.

Nicole Ashton
2024 Board Chair

Celebrity Chefs' Brunch Committee

Thank you to the planning team!! Your hard work and dedication made the Celebrity Chefs' Brunch a huge success. We couldn't have done it without all your efforts in planning, organizing, and executing every aspect of the event flawlessly. You all went above and beyond to make it a memorable experience for everyone who attended. We appreciate all your efforts!

HONORARY CHAIRS



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Message from the Honorary Chairs



PAMELYN J. MANOCCHIO DENISE D. NORDHEIMER

Good afternoon and welcome to the 27th annual Celebrity Chefs' Brunch to benefit Meals on Wheels Delaware! On behalf of everyone who has played a part in making this event come into being, thank you for your generous donations, your heartfelt support, and your presence here this afternoon.

We hope you enjoy everything that has been prepared for us today. Please know that for these top chefs, this is a labor of love. They come from all over to give their time and talents to this magnificent event, and we could not be more grateful for their delicious brunch bites - plus the fine wines, cocktails, entertainment, and auction!

Meals on Wheels Delaware is dedicated to raising funds and awareness to support the local programs that prepare and deliver nutritious meals to our homebound neighbors. Many are struggling to maintain their independence. Those who receive help from MOWD say a daily meal and the friendly volunteer visit makes them eat healthier, feel safer, and remain comfortable living at home. Although it seems far removed, what we do here this afternoon helps thousands of our beloved, senior Delawareans live a healthy and independent life with dignity.

Delaware is one of the few states in the country that does not have a waiting list for meal delivery to qualified homebound seniors. Together, we are improving the quality of life for those most in need, making a difference through sustenance and smiles.

Thank you ALL so very much,

Pamelyn J. Manocchio & Denise Nordheimer



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MEALS ON WHEELS DELAWARE

UPCOMING EVENTS

BATTLE OF THE PADDLES

Fall 2024 • 8:00 AM
Courtside Pickleball & Tennis Club • Dover

HATS & HEELS

Friday, September 20, 2024 • 6:00 PM-9:00 PM
Wild Quail Golf & Country Club • Camden-Wyoming

BEACH BRUNCH

Sunday, October 13, 2024 • 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM
Rehoboth Beach Country Club • Rehoboth Beach

ULTIMATE TAILGATE

Wednesday, October 23, 2024 • 6:00 PM-9:00 PM
The Grove at Delaware Park • Wilmington

CELLAR MASTERS' WINE AUCTION & DINNER

Friday, April 25, 2025 • Save the Date
Chase Center on the Riverfront • Wilmington

CELEBRITY CHEFS' BRUNCH

Sunday, April 27, 2025 • Save the Date
DuPont Country Club • Wilmington

[Visit MealsOnWheelsDE.org](https://www.MealsOnWheelsDE.org)

TOGETHER WE CAN END SENIOR HUNGER.

MEALS ON WHEELS DELAWARE TEAM



Pictured from left to right: Susan Dubb, Development Director, Regina Dodds, Director of Events, Evana Adams, Marketing Coordinator, Anne Love, Executive Director, Gen Drake, Administrative Assistance.



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WITH FOND REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WE ARE MISSING TODAY



Edgar S. Woolard, Jr. was a supporter of Meals On Wheels Delaware, and the Celebrity Chefs' Brunch from the beginning of the event. Known for his business prowess, Edgar was also a passionate philanthropist throughout his life, forming the Woolard Family Foundation. The foundation actively supported many causes to improve quality of life. Most importantly, Edgar was a proud family man and loved to help and support people in need. He was always approachable, and consistently willing to help with Meals

On Wheels. Thank you to the Woolard family, and The Woolard Family Foundation, for their recognition of the importance of caring for those in the community who are struggling.



Leon Silicki, of Leon's Garden World. Leon was an entrepreneur who personified the cliché, "He marched to a different drummer." Leon had a passion for food and connected with the mission of Meals On Wheels. Leon's Garden World filled a truck full of plants each April to share the joy of plants, and bring a breath of Spring from the outdoors into the Celebrity Chefs' Brunch and brighten the day.

WITH FOND REMEMBRANCE OF THOSE WE ARE MISSING TODAY



Joe Jyzeck enjoyed a long and successful career in the high-end home audio and video industry, beginning with Sound Studio and concluding with Overture. For many years, Joe and his wife Debbie were cheerleaders of the Auction at the Celebrity Chefs' Brunch. They arrived early in the morning excited to share the latest in TV technology and transform the donation into a boost for senior meals.



Brenda Wood was a passionate supporter of those less fortunate in the Wilmington community. Brenda connected with Meals On Wheels through the community engagement program at Capital One. We were fortunate to have Brenda as the volunteer coordinator for our fundraising efforts in New Castle County in the 2010's.

Thanks for the memories and the example of giving back from the heart.

Your life was a blessing; your memory a treasure;
you are loved beyond words and missed beyond
measure.

2023 PROGRAM SUPPORT

In 2023, the number of seniors asking for help rose again. Costs for food and medication continued to increase, while expanded assistance available during covid came to an end.

Requests for a home delivered meal are rising steadily as seniors are living longer and aging in place.

Thanks to your contributions today, and throughout the year, we were proud to be able to provide essentials to keep the nutritious, freshly prepared meals arriving at our neighbors doors.

Approximately 1,500 home-delivered senior meals are prepared, packaged and delivered in each county each weekday.

After all meals were covered, other needs met which ensured that everyone was able to keep pace with the increased demand for meals.

Commercial grade kitchen equipment was added, upgraded, repaired or replaced in five kitchens across the State.

Vehicles are needed to transport prepared meals from the central kitchens to convenient pickup points for local volunteers. Lookout for one of the four new Meals On Wheels branded vehicles on the road in your community.

Durable wheeled coolers and insulated soft carriers, which keep meals at safe temperatures, are used every day during deliveries in volunteer vehicles. As you can imagine they wear out over time. These supplies were replaced Statewide.

Without the hundreds of volunteers who take time from their day to deliver the mid-day meal, the personal connection would be lost. We appreciate the volunteers and we were able to say thank you by supporting driver training, small value gift cards, and volunteer appreciation get-togethers.

2023 PROGRAM SUPPORT

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Tyler Akin

Le Cavalier
Wilmington, DE

Tyler Akin is a chef, restaurateur, and founder of Form-Function Hospitality. Akin is currently the chef-partner of Le Cavalier at the Green Room, a reimagined French brasserie at the iconic HOTEL DU PONT in Wilmington, DE opened in September, 2020. Opening in Spring, 2024, Akin will also serve as chef-partner of Bastia, a laid-back restaurant and leisurely all-day café drawing inspiration from the Mediterranean and coastal cuisine of neighboring islands Corsica and Sardinia at the forthcoming Hotel Anna & Bel in Philadelphia's Fishtown neighborhood.

Akin was the chef-owner of now-closed Res Ipsa in Philadelphia, which was named one of Bon Appetit's "Best New Restaurants in America," and two locations of Stock, all gracefully shuttered during the pandemic. Previously in his career, Akin worked in James Beard Foundation and Michelin-recognized kitchens including Zahav (Philadelphia) and Komi (Washington, D.C.) Akin is a founding board member of the Independent Restaurant Coalition, was a 2020 honoree of the Philadelphia Business Journal's "40 Under 40" Award and has been a featured speaker at SXSW (2023) and The Philly Chef Conference (2023).

Please join us in thanking Linda Collier for selecting and procuring the donation of such a fine array of wines from around the world.



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pear.
Delicate and fresh

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Sauvignon Blanc. Grass,
herbal notes, hints of citrus
and grapefruit

BERGER GRUNER

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Austria. Complex and fun.

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touch of minerality.

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Burgundian
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FRANCOISE LA ROCHE, TOURAINE

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SPIRITO D'ITALIA

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pear and stone fruit flavors.
Refreshing.

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Classic Oregon Pinot gris
Tangerine zest tart apple

Williams pear.

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Sauvignon blanc herbal, mineral, zesty, citrus.

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CHATEAU L'ESCARELLE ROSE

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Spicy fruit, rich plum, ripe cherry, cedar, fragrant.

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ROCCO DI FABRIA SAGRANTINO DE MONTEFALCO

Rich and well rounded, unique bouquet, spice.

EOLA PINOT NOIR

Oregon. Black current, cherry, toasted oak, allspice, vanilla, full bodied.

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Grenache, Syrah, Mouvedre, Tempranillo, Bosenberry, bramble, tobacco, earth, chocolate covered cherry

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Cabernet with a touch of Syrah and Malbec. Black cherry, ripe strawberry, loamy earth, sage.

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HONORARY CHEF CHAIRS



Michael & Jillian Blackie

All Things NeXt
Stittsville, Ontario

Jillian and Michael Blackie have been married for over 28 years. Their love of travel and the yearning to see the world were one of the major interests they shared together. They have lived and visited many countries exploring the cuisines everywhere they went. Street food, they quickly discovered, was where you really got to experience the true cuisines of each destination. Jillian is an avid cook herself and is always making new dishes which has at times inspired Michael in his menu development.

In August of 1997, they left Canada for Mexico where Michael became the Executive Chef of the Pierre Marques Hotel in Acapulco. In September of 1998 and 1999 their two children, Annabel and Liam were born in Acapulco. In May of 2000, they left for Hong Kong where Michael became the Executive Sous Chef of the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. In 2002, they made the move to Bali, Indonesia. Michael became the Executive Chef of the Oberoi Hotel in Seminiak on the Island of Bali. After the Bali bombing in October of 2002, they decided to move back to Canada where Michael became the opening Executive Chef of the brand new Brookstreet Hotel in Ottawa, Ontario. They have resided there ever since.

Michael made the big leap to the partnership of NeXT in February of 2013. NeXT is a restaurant and event facility where weddings, corporate events and social events are hosted. Jillian joined Michael at NeXT in March of 2015 as the Sales and Events Director. It was her first experience in food and beverage and hospitality! They have worked together ever since!

Jillian & Michael continue to travel extensively around the world where they explore different cultures and most especially food! This world travel has shaped Michael's cuisine and has made NeXT a premiere restaurant and event space in the Ottawa region.

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Organizations like **Meals on Wheels Delaware** fuel the heartbeat of our Community. It's a privilege to help inspiring causes like theirs gain new momentum.

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Patrick Bradley

Tonic Seafood & Steak
Wilmington, DE

Pat has worked in the field of culinary arts for over 30 years, honing his skills at several fine-dining establishments. He started at DiNardo's Famous Crab House in Wilmington, Delaware, followed by Hartefeld National where he worked his way up to executive sous chef. Pat is a graduate of Delaware Technical & Community College's culinary school. After graduation, he became the executive chef at Buckley's Tavern.

In 2008, he joined the BigChefGuy Group as a sous chef for Deep Blue, and then later at Piccolina Toscana. He returned to Deep Blue as executive chef in 2010. Pat led the Deep Blue kitchen to 2014 and 2015 Best of Delaware Awards. When Deep Blue changed to Tonic Bar & Grille, he remained the executive chef.

Pat Bradley is now the culinary director for Jamestown Hospitality Group where he oversees a staff of more than 40, spanning 5 entities, including Tonic Seafood & Steak, Park Café, Jamestown Catering, Deep Blue at Kitty Knight, and Braeloch Brewing.

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Hari Cameron

The Chef's Table at Touch of Italy
Rehoboth Beach, DE

Chef Hari Cameron is a renowned culinary consultant, and a celebrated chef recognized for his innovative approach and numerous accolades in the culinary world. His journey, beginning with a passion for diverse cuisines, has led him to become a leader and an inspiration in the culinary arts.

Chef Cameron's impressive career is marked by significant achievements, including opening his acclaimed restaurant a(MUSE.) in Rehoboth Beach. This venture received national attention and earned him several prestigious nominations, such as James Beard's "Rising Star Chef" in 2013 and "Best Chef, Mid-Atlantic" in 2015 and 2016, as well as the StarChefs Rising Stars Award in 2018. In addition to his restaurant success, Chef Cameron has showcased his culinary skills on national television. He competed on Netflix's "Snack vs. Chef" and Food Network's "Beat Bobby Flay," further establishing his reputation as a talented and versatile chef.

Chef Cameron excels as a culinary consultant, engaging in food and equipment research and development for various brands and companies. His expertise in creating content, writing, and developing innovative concepts and menus is highly sought after in the restaurant and start-up space. Moreover, his commitment to education is evident in his passion for teaching and nurturing the next generation of culinary professionals.

Eat. Drink. Read. Think.
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Britney Cochran

Stagioni
Charlotte, NC

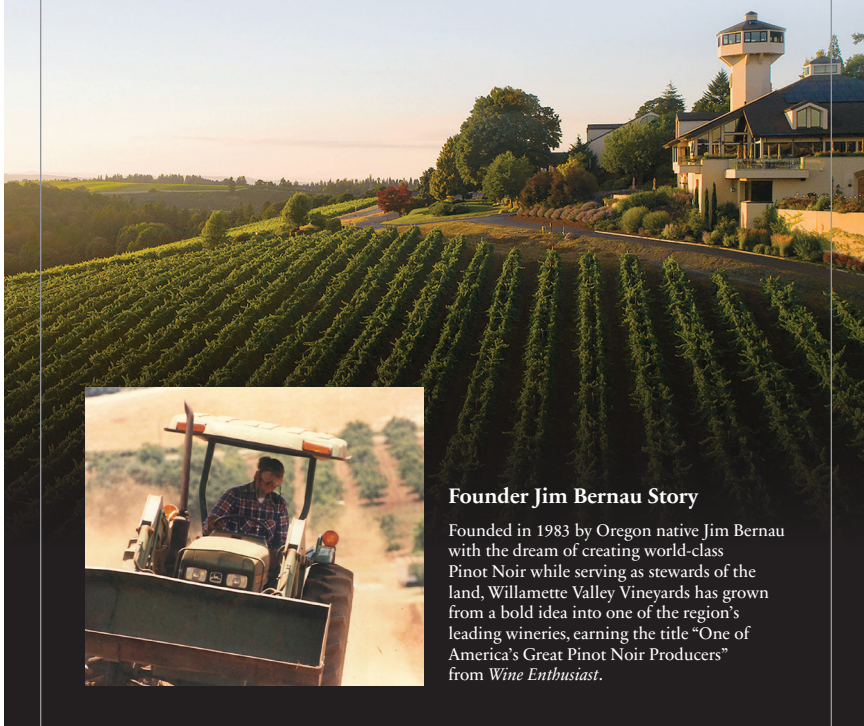
Brittany Cochran discovered her passion for food at a young age. Beside her grandparents in rural Ohio, she learned to “plow, plant and pick” the ingredients-for most of the family meals. “I call it cooking from the heart; caring about the food you serve and the people you’re feeding. Brittany’s culinary skills and talent were recognized early on in the form of a scholarship to Johnson & Wales University in Charlotte, NC.

Cochran points out, “So many things about authentic Italian cuisine clicked for me; the tradition of cooking with the seasons to utilize the freshest ingredients the idea of making everything by hand - it’s really what cooking from the heart means to me. She accepted a position at New York City’s famed Italian spot Restaurant Marc Forgione, working under Forgione himself. “ The restaurant taught me how to cook at the highest level, under intense pressure. But it was Chef Marc who taught me how to be a leader.” Chef Brittany draws on those leadership skills every day as Executive Chef at Charlotte’s Stagioni.

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Jim Bernau, Founder/CEO





Amber Croom

Beye Beignets
Baltimore, MD

Amber Croom, a classically-trained culinary artist hailing from Birmingham, Alabama, embarked on her epicurean journey after a detour from Naval Architecture & Marine Engineering. Over her 13-year culinary odyssey, Amber honed her skills and embraced the extraordinary alongside renowned chefs.

Her sweet saga unfolded with an internship at Rimini Gelato and Chocolates in Vail, Colorado, where she dove into the world of artisan gelato and chocolates. A confectioner role at the opulent Silver Sea cruise line followed, showcasing her talents in luxury desserts. Returning to Birmingham in 2014, she led the pastry department at Bellini's Ristorante and Bar.

Amber's televised feats began in 2016 on Food Network's Holiday Baking Championship, paving the way for her pastry role at the Sagamore Pendry Hotel in Baltimore. Subsequently, she seized the position of Head Chocolatier at Washington, D.C.'s premier catering company.

Now the force behind And 4 Dessert and Co-Owner of Beye Beignets, Amber captivates with decadent visuals and inventive flavors. Her triumphs include a championship on Chopped Sweets and victory on Fox's Crime Scene Kitchen Season 2 with partner Yass. Her confectionery studio, And 4 Dessert, stands as a testament to her passion for pushing the boundaries of pastry artistry.

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Don Drake

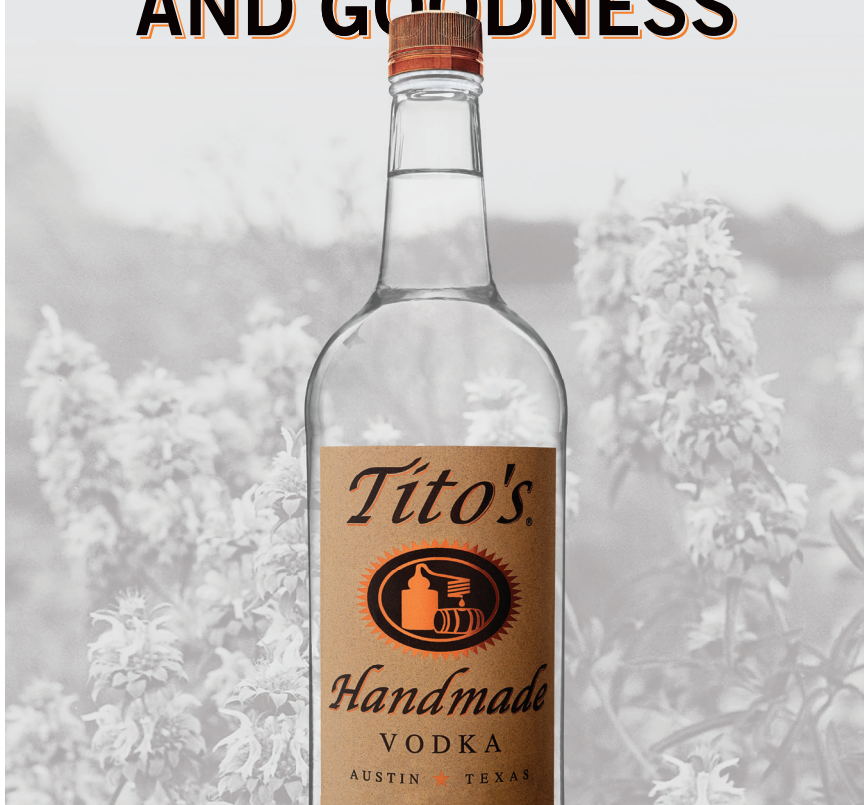
Magnolias
Charleston, SC

Donald Drake joined Magnolias as a sous chef in 1991 and he continues to be the forces who keeps Magnolias at the top of the nation's list for exceptional Southern food. Drake attended the Culinary Institute of America and trained under Chef Barry Wine at the critically acclaimed, four-star Quilted Giraffe in New York City. With a passion for traveling, Drake embarked on a culinary world tour after receiving his degree. While working as a chef and partner for Caps on the Water in South Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, Drake won back-to-back Florida Trends Golden Spoon Awards.

He later sold the restaurant to continue his culinary travels and immersed himself in global cooking techniques, spending a majority of his time in London, Australia and Hawaii. Notably, Drake worked in Honolulu's celebrated Roy's, mastering his culinary skills under famed Chef Roy Yamaguchi. He also apprenticed under French-Canadian chef Serge Dansereau while working as the chef de partie at Kables Restaurant in Sydney, Australia. In 1991, Drake and his wife, Martha, relocated to Isle of Palms, S.C. with their sons Marshall and Travis, and he began his career with Magnolias. Integrating his international culinary background into Magnolias' distinctive Southern meals, Drake prepares dishes with worldly flavors that remain true to the history and culture of their Lowcountry beginnings.

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Francois Gagnon

PittNik

Bromont, Quebec

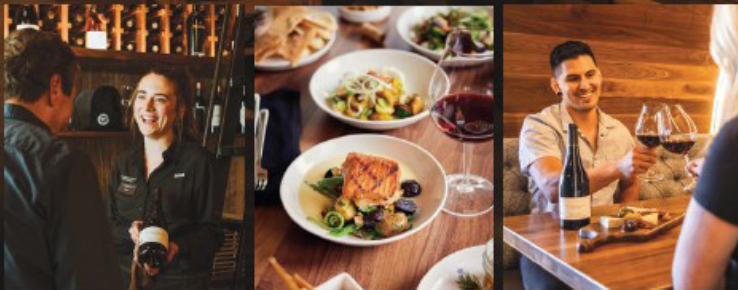
François Gagnon, who has appeared on Top Chef Canada on Food Network, is a chef whose journey is marked by prominent addresses in the restaurant scene of Quebec, Vancouver, and France. He first stirs pots in the heart of France, on the Côte d'Azur, in two Michelin-starred restaurants. Then he brings back his chef's hat to Vancouver, where he develops a passion for seafood, local artisans, and organic produce. Gagnon refines his style there and is named executive chef of Cincin Ristorante, a popular spot in Vancouver. With this experience under his belt and intrigued by the riches of Quebec's terroir, Gagnon prepares for his return to his homeland, but not before making a notable stop on Top Chef Canada in 2011, before tantalizing the taste buds of Montrealers with his catering and gourmet counter, Lunch Insolite. His path then leads him to the wine region of Dunham in Quebec, where he becomes the executive chef of the renowned Vignoble du Ruisseau. Since then, he has opened his bistro-style café, in addition to offering catering services and a comprehensive range of ready-to-eat dishes.

His style is inspired by a contemporary cuisine that reflects his personality, generous and authentic, with hints of the West Coast and France, leveraging the riches of Quebec's terroir.

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Yassmeen Haskins

Beye Beignets
Baltimore, MD

Yassmeen Haskins-Jackson is the Owner and Pastry Chef of Cocoa and Nuts Pastries. An on-line boutique, creating custom designed cakes, cookies and other confections. Co-Founder and Chef of Beye Beignets, Coffee and Tea Company. She is a native of Baltimore City and a graduate of Johnson & Wales University. Her career path has led her on a journey to work at several 5-star hotels and catering companies, whipping up pastries for intimate private dinners, weddings, campaign fundraisers, and restaurant openings. Chef Yassmeen, the triumphant competitor of FOX- Crime Scene Kitchen season 2 and notable participant on Food Networks- Best Baker in America, season 4, proudly representing the State of Maryland. Local media has hailed her as a rising force among Chefs. Her works include the 141st Preakness Cake, Barack Obama's birthday cake, recipe in Women's Health Magazine and THE CUT podcast. Her proudest moment to date is the work she has done and continues to do with the inner-city youth in partnership with Enoch Pratt Free Library. You can find her in the kitchen creating cakes, teaching classes to our youth, restaurants or testing new desserts.



Dana Herbert

Desserts by Dana
Newark, DE

Dana Herbert, owner of Desserts by Dana, lives and breathes in the sweet and artistic world of pastry art. Dana is a 1998 graduate of the University of Delaware with a Bachelor's degree in Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management. Chef Herbert continued his education at Johnson and Wales University (JWU), where he completed a second Bachelor's Degree in Culinary Arts and an additional Associates of Arts in Pastry. Dana also had the unique opportunity of being the Pastry Chef for the 2006 American Culinary Federation National Convention, and cooking for the Philadelphia Chapter of the Chaine Des Rotisseurs.

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Ken Hodanics

DuPont Country Club
Wilmington, DE

Chef Ken Hodanics is a Culinary Arts Graduate of Delaware Technical and Community College. He started his career with the DuPont Country Club in 2000 as an intern assisting in the Banquet Kitchen. During this time, he also had the privilege of being the Executive Sous Chef of the Hotel DuPont working in the Greenroom and Banquet departments. His dedication and love for working with weddings and special events has helped him grow into his current role as the Executive Banquet Chef at the DuPont Country Club.



Victoria Jeker

Sweet Somethings
Wilmington, DE

Victoria started out with dreams to become a party planner. While planning a party in 2008 she needed a cake and decided to make and decorate it herself. It was then that she discovered her true passion, baking and decorating cakes and pastries. Completely self-taught, Victoria strives for perfection and loves to take on new challenges. Working in bakeries throughout Delaware and the Philadelphia area has given her the tools that she uses today as Pastry Chef and Head Cake Decorator at Sweet Somethings Dessert Shoppe.

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Matt Kern

One Coastal
Fenwick Island, DE

Raised in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Matt grew up surrounded by food—from homemade Italian pastas to big family dinner. His passion for food started early and eventually led to his first restaurant job at age 14. Having spent the last fourteen years in our coastal area, he has taken the helm as Chef/Owner of One Coastal for the past two years. Through his extensive connections with local farmers, Matt is able to gather and create beautiful food at One Coastal that is hyper seasonal, and locally sourced from oysters to foraged mushrooms, Chef is thrilled by unique ingredients that allow him to tell a humble story. Matt was recently nominated as a semifinalist for “Best Chef Mid-Atlantic” by the James Beard Foundation 2024, as well as 2019 and 2020. When not at One Coastal surrounded by his amazing team, you may find him with his beautiful family or fly fishing some secret waterway along Delaware’s coast.

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Robert Lhulier

Snuff Mill
Wilmington, DE


A celebrated career that spans 35 years. After running a successful personal chef and catering business, Robert Lhulier Cuisine, Chef is excited to take things to the next level. With partners Bill Irvin, David and Joanne Govatos, Snuff Mill Restaurant, Butchery and Wine Bar is a marriage of creativity, industry knowledge and deep experience of operations and trends.

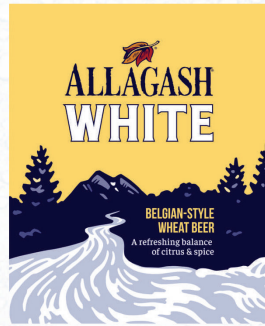
A lauded graduate of The Culinary Institute, Chef Robert's cumulative experiences at home and abroad led him to ownership of his first restaurant, The Chef's Table at the David Finney Inn.

Chef Robert's distinguished experiences, such as stagiaire at Charlie Trotter's in Chicago, ownership of The Chef's Table, Talula's Table (Kennett, PA) as well as implementing a successful gourmet club (The Chef's Table at the University and Whist Club) lead his way to specializing in the highly sought after and popular style of experiential dining: pop-ups.

"Snuff Mill is one of the first restaurants in our area to open in a post-pandemic world. A father and community leader, Robert volunteers annually for The March of Dimes, Meals on Wheels Delaware, The Crop Foundation and local food-driven charities. Robert is a native of Wilmington, Delaware.

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Bruce Moffett

Barrington's
Charlotte, NC

Chef Bruce Moffett walked into an interview for a chef position in Charlotte, NC and walked out as the owner of the restaurant.

Barrington's, is now nearing its 25th anniversary and still makes the shortlist of Charlotte's best restaurants every year. A list that has grown to include two more of Moffett's restaurants: Good Food on Montford and Stagioni. Together with Barrington's, these concepts illustrate how Moffett cannot be pigeon-holed in terms of his cuisine. He effortlessly steps from modern American to elevated Italian, to global flavors, including Asian ramen and bao.

Such culinary dexterity doesn't go unnoticed, and National recognition came his way early, via The James Beard Foundation. Chef Bruce was twice nominated for the organization's prestigious award; once for Best Chef, Southeast and once for Best New Restaurant (Good Food on Montford). In addition, his dishes continue to grace the pages of the country's top culinary magazines.

How does he manage to keep so many restaurants on the city's "must visit" list? Moffett credits his education at Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park and his time in the kitchen of Boston's fine-dining icon, L'Espalier.



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Deb Paquette

Etch Restaurant
Nashville, TN

For more than thirty years, Deb Paquette has been a fixture in Nashville's ever-growing food scene. As a trailblazing chef, dedicated mentor and community advocate, her adventurous cuisine and tenacious personality have made their mark on the Music City. Now chef-owner of Etch (downtown) and etc. (Green Hills), Paquette has won countless awards and accolades. From her time at the Culinary Institute of America to her 13-year run at Gourmet magazine "Top 60" winning Zola to today, diners have flocked to her big, bold flavors and return time and again for her next globally-inspired dish.

Nashville has been home to Paquette and her family for many years. After closing Zola and travelling to the beaches of Turks and Caicos, the Bahamas and Mexico, she was drawn back to the Music City to create Etch with her with 4Top Hospitality partners. Designed with her dream kitchen and every creative luxury, Paquette's Etch opened in 2012 in the heart of downtown and was quickly embraced by locals and destination diners alike. Ranked #1 in the city by Zagat and with a long list of "best of" mentions, Etch endures as one of the essential restaurants of the Southern city.

Success led to a new concept in Nashville's Green Hills neighborhood with the opening of etc. in 2016. A smaller, more intimate version of Etch, etc. boasted a swanky vibe with the signature bright flavors and layered dishes that made Paquette a household name. The heavily local crowd enjoys the addition of culinary-minded cocktails, a thoughtful wine and beer menu, and an intriguing brunch menu at the fresh suburban venue

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Ted Reader

“The Joint” at the Eldorado Golf Club
Ontario, Canada

“Grilling over live fire involves all your senses. The sounds, smell, look and above all, the taste. It has the power to bring people together.”

Known as the “Godfather of the Grill”, his charm and fearless culinary spirit has led Ted to become an award-winning chef, author, food and product innovator. Ted has parlayed his passion for food into a culinary tour de force that includes more than a dozen cookbooks, food products, live culinary performances, TV and Radio cooking shows and appearances, a catering company, teacher and his newest venture: BBQ restaurant owner of “The Joint” at the Eldorado Golf Club.

Known for his love of pyrotechnics and fearless culinary spirit, it’s no surprise that GQ Magazine labeled him the “crazy Canuck barbecue kingpin.” The dude just loves to cook! Ted’s quest for creating “real food for real people” has seen this high-profile culinary barbecue guru demonstrate his flair for grilling in all venues from swanky ball rooms to the Pacific Ocean to a downtown Toronto parking lot.

He is the author of several cookbooks including Gastro Grilling which was awarded the Gold Medal in the Cuisine Canada 2014 Taste Canada Cookbook Awards.[2] Other cookbooks include: Beerlicious, The Complete Idiots Guide to Smoking Foods, Napoleon’s Everyday Gourmet Grilling, Napoleon’s Everyday Gourmet Plank Grilling,[1]and Napoleon’s Everyday Gourmet Burgers which are Canadian best sellers.

Reader also has a line of sauces and products, called Ted Reader BBQ, featuring his signature spice Bone Dust and his Crazy Canuck BBQ Sauce Today, he owns more than 75 barbecues, grills and smokers in all shapes and sizes and never goes anywhere without one in the back of his truck.



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Paul Reilly

Coperta
Denver, CO

Paul C Reilly grew up in New York's Hudson Valley and has been working in kitchens since he was fourteen. Paul is the culinary director and proprietor of beast + bottle group with two award winning concepts in Denver, Colorado along with his two business partners, Aileen Reilly and JP Taylor, Jr. beast + bottle group began in 2013, and has since become Denver's premier farm to table restaurant experience serving relentlessly seasonal cuisine at 2 downtown restaurants. Coperta, opened in 2016, and celebrates the food and wine of Rome and southern Italy. In late 2021, Paul and team opened Apple Blossom in the Hyatt Centric Downtown Denver, featuring American regional fare for three meal periods a day. Both restaurants are no strangers to accolades and have been featured in numerous top of the city lists. Paul also works as the consulting chef for the New Belgium Brewery sports pub at Denver International Airport.

Paul is an ambassador of the good food movement working closely with Boulder County Farmers Markets, Good Food 100, Slow Food USA, and JBF Smart Catch. He is a James Beard Foundation Scholarship Winner and an alumnus of the James Beard Boot Camp for Policy and Change.

Paul lives in Arvada, Colorado with his wife Shannon and their three children. When not cooking at his award winning restaurants, he enjoys skiing, baseball, camping, fishing, and cooking outdoors at home.

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Jarred Russell

Fruition Restaurant and Mercantile
Denver, CO

Chef Jarred Russell's culinary journey began at a young age, as his mother owned an Italian restaurant outside Fort Worth, Texas. Initially pursuing a marketing degree at Texas Tech University, Russell's passion for cooking led him to Dallas, where he excelled at establishments such as Nonna and later was part of the opening team at Fachini as Chef de Cuisine

In 2019, Russell ventured to Napa Valley to work at Thomas Keller's The French Laundry as part of the butcher team and eventually chef tournat.

In August 2022, he moved to Denver and assumed the role of Executive Chef at James Beard Award-winner Chef Alex Seidel's Fruition Restaurant, where his seasonal dishes and constantly changing menus garner acclaim amongst local press and diners.



John Tesar

Knife
Dallas, TX

An iconoclastic celebrity of the food world, Tesar came up as a chef in New York City at 13 Barrow St, 44 & Hell's Kitchen, Vine, and the Supper Club. He then went on to open two acclaimed restaurants in Dallas (Knife) and one in Orlando (Knife and Spoon) that have been named among the best in the country by Bon Appetit, Eater, Gayot and Esquire. In 2022 and 2023, Chef John Tesar was awarded a MICHELIN star for his exemplary work at Knife and Spoon at The Ritz Carlton Grand Lakes in Orlando. He was famously entangled in a feud with Dallas food critic Leslie Brenner. Tesar remains a fixture of Dallas's restaurant scene and a true "chef's chef." He has garnered praise from Food & Wine and The New York Times, has appeared on The Today Show and The Early Show, and is a five-time James Beard "Best Southwest Chef" semifinalist, and a two-time contestant on Bravo's "Top Chef."



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Alex Velez

REDfire
Hockessin, DE

I have spent my entire working life in the kitchen. I earned a Sous Chef position at The Whip Tavern. Shortly after my stint at “The Whip,” I accepted my first Executive Chef role at the Kennett Inn.

I joined Redfire Grill in Hockessin as a Sous Chef where the focus was on simple, amazing food paired with excellent service in an environment that saw everyone working together towards the complete satisfaction of each guest. I was offered the opportunity of Executive Chef at Redfire. Being in management is an opportunity to teach, lead, and inspire those who are following the very same path that I began just a few years earlier. To watch the team grow and harness their own raw talents and develop a skill set under my watch motivates me. I’m passionate about cooking but realize that being a strong leader and a mentor to those around me is the true catalyst of a dynamic restaurant and its ultimate success.



Cassy Vires

Sysco

Chef Cassy is an award-winning chef with experiences that span the country, but she has made a name for herself in St. Louis and decided to call this amazing city home. She received her culinary training at The Art Institute in Houston, Texas. It was there that she gained an appreciation for American Cuisine as a true melting pot of cultures, traditions, ingredients, and techniques. She has put her talent to work as a chef, restaurateur, culinary instructor, TV personality, and food writer, for which she was nominated for the prestigious James Beard Award. She has been named one of America’s “Eight Chefs with Hidden Talents” by Zagat and nominated for “The People’s Choice Best New Chef” by Food & Wine Magazine. Her passion for sustainability and community engagement are evident through her “green” initiatives and volunteer service with Slow Food, EarthDance Organic Farm School, Artisan Grain Collaborative, The Ethical Society, and the St. Louis Crisis Nursery.

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