



A Taste of New Orleans



Photos by Mary Jones



Putting the Food in 'Foodie'



Chef Christian Mailloux

Executive Chef Christian Mailloux, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, is Chef-Owner of Red Fire Grille. Chef Mailloux has had the opportunity to cook regional American cuisine from as far north as New England into the heartland of Memphis, Tennessee and as far south as St. Thomas U.S.V.I. at prestigious country clubs and boutique restaurants. With the chef's extensive knowledge of wine and food pairing, Red Fire Grille is committed to sourcing the region's finest ingredients, preparing an evolving menu and offering the perfect wine complement. Chef Mailloux was recently featured in the 2013 Best Chefs of America Book.



Carmen Santone

Co-owner and head chef of Switch Brick Oven Pizzeria and Wine Bar, **Carmen Santone** is a self-taught chef whose Italian roots hail from the southern Italian regions of Calabria and Abruzzi. While the core of his cooking foundation comes from the authentic Italian cuisines of these two Italian regions as opposed to what so many Americans have come to know as Italian-American cuisine, his interest in northern Italian cooking came later in life. It was at this time that Carmen's expression of art moved away from music and into the culinary arts. Switch Brick Oven Pizzeria and Wine Bar, which is co-owned by he and his wife Regina, allowed Carmen to bring to Palestine that which he considers authentic Italian dishes, such as Neopolitan-style pizza and pasta dishes like Cacio e Pepe, a dish more commonly found in the piazzas in Rome than in a customary Italian restaurant one would find in the States. Carmen believes that the quality of the ingredients is tantamount to a dish's success and that great food with the freshest of ingredients, prepared in-house, can be enjoyed at modest pricing. During his 14 years in East Texas, Carmen has moved his interest to the cuisines of New Orleans and has introduced a couple of dishes that exemplify that.



Chef Simon Webster

Simon Webster is the Executive Chef & Owner of Sabor a Pasion Estate & Vineyard, a multi-faceted venue 4 miles outside of Palestine that offers bed & breakfast, onsite dining at Restaurant Aubergine, weddings, special events and cooking classes. Born in England and raised in New Zealand, Chef Webster was classically trained at the New Zealand Culinary Institute through the City & Guilds of London and apprenticed with some of the finest chefs in the area. His experience in the kitchen spans 40 years and includes chef & developer for five star restaurants in New Zealand, chef and food & beverage manager for prestigious wine bars and pubs in London & Manchester, catering consultant for Nestle corporation, first class chef for BMI Airlines and owner of his own restaurant and catering company in Derbyshire, England and now the United States. He opened Sabor a Pasion in 2004, and single-handedly transformed it into a restaurant, bed & breakfast, event center, wedding venue, catering headquarters and vineyard. Well-respected throughout the area, Chef Webster has made a name for himself through his attention to personal service and detail to food & flavor -- proving dreams, passion and hard work are the foundation for visionary success.



Michele Merryman

Michele Merryman is a city girl with a Southern heart who has a need to entertain. Michele grew up in Houston, Texas and graduated from the Dedman School of Hospitality at Florida State University. Upon graduation, she headed for Atlanta, GA where she spent many years in the private club industry then had the privilege to work for several Fortune 500 companies. Her desire to be around family, led her back to the Lone Star State, specifically Palestine, Texas, where her father is a native son. Since her arrival in Palestine, Michele has been a guest on FRESH Ideas CBS 19, hosted multiple cooking demonstrations at FRESH in Tyler, featured recipes in Tyler Morning Telegraph Food Section, participated in the 2nd Annual Taste of New Orleans, is the cooking instructor for O'Sweet Pea's Kitchen Boutique, a Business & Golf Management instructor at Palestine High School, a private caterer and of course, home entertainer.



Chef Jackson York

My passion for cooking started when I was young growing up in a Traditional Italian Family. My love of cooking continues to be the driving force in my life. As my career went forward I joined the MAGIC PAN Chain & became an Opening Team Capt. Based out of Dallas, TX -North Park Mall. I landed at CLUB CORP. w/ Chef David Christensen, who began to fine tune my palate. I continued on my culinary journey with Club Corp with Chef Leroy Blanchard CEC, AAC. I am very fortunate that I had the American Culinary Federation (ACF) to learn and gain knowledge on numerous occasions & levels, as I had no formal education. My culinary journey led me to the East Texas Region to The Edom Bakery & Grill; this is where I developed the concept of 'Country Gourmet'. I also created an eight week cooking course that concluded with a formal graduation and diplomas. I then began my tenor at Lakeview Methodist Conference Center, where I continue my exciting journey in the culinary arts. As a member of local ACF & Texas Chefs Association in good standing I have achieved a multitude of Leadership positions, this would include my commitment to Community & Giving back. I had become involved and an interested party in helping our local region schools with the program PROSTART. Being part of local chapter serving among other fellow chefs, we cover more than 3 counties and over more than 12 schools in the East Texas area.