

Bruce Moffett Cooks: A New England Chef in a New South Kitchen

Bruce Moffett

Keia Mastrianni, Contributor

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The popularity of fusion cooking too often overshadows the fact that mastering, truly mastering, the cuisine of even one region can take years, even decades. On the one hand, we have adventurous fusion devotees go to town pairing Korean BBQ with Peruvian pork rolls, while the devoutest of French chefs spend their whole careers perfecting Escoffier's five French Mother Sauces.

Bruce Moffett, an accomplished New England chef who transplanted to Charlotte, North Carolina to be near his son, falls somewhere in between the two mindsets. As a fierce disciple of using local ingredients in season, his first years in the South required that he reset his northern instincts to the unfamiliar cycles of southern seasonality, in addition to studying the native ingredients and cooking techniques of his adopted region. He now owns three Charlotte restaurants, including one, Good Food on Montford, that specializes in small plates.

But the food and cooking memories he retains of his grandmother Betty Perkins confirm the axiom that you can't take the Rhode Island childhood out of the chef. So in *Bruce Moffett Cooks* we find North-South inspirations like Baby Arugula with Pickled Beets, Pumpnickel, and Creamy Horseradish; English Pea Salad with Cheddar-Ham Croutons; and heartier dishes like Striped Bass with Wilted Napa Cabbage, Smoked Bacon, and Chardonnay Cream; Pecan-Crusted Lamb with Chipotle BBQ Sauce, Sweet Potatoes, and Green Beans; and Sweet Potato Cavatelli with Spiced Lamb and Swiss Chard.

Moffett's recipes are grounded in the classic techniques he learned as a Culinary Institute of America grad and showcase the bounty of the local farmers, fishermen, and other producers he has befriended over his nearly twenty years in the Charlotte area.

MATT SUTHERLAND (March/April 2019)

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