

THE Moffett MAGIC

Well-known Charlotte chef and restaurateur
puts a third jewel in his triple crown

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BRUCE MOFFETT

Bruce Moffett came to Charlotte in 1999. He used every penny he had to make the move to open a restaurant and live and work near his then young son. He picked up the lease from another restaurateur off Fairview Road, and on a prayer and song and some financial and emotional support from a grandmother who believed in his dream, Bruce opened Barrington's.

Chef-driven American cuisine wasn't new for Charlotte back then, but the concept was in its infancy, and it took a while for Charlotte to get it – once they did, they never looked back.

Since then Barrington's and Bruce's brilliant take on regional American cuisine remains at the top of every listing of accolades, local, regionally and nationally. Once Barrington's quickly found its niche on the Charlotte food scene, Moffett realized he needed some help in the day to day and called on his brother Kerry who was living and working in Washington, D.C.

The plan was for Kerry to come and "help out for a while" – that was 14 years ago.

In each successful restaurant operation there comes a time when a chef wants to try his hand at something new, something different. But even with seasonal menu changes and specials, that "something new" may not necessarily fit into the current restaurant concept.



FROM BARRINGTON'S SPRINGTIME MENU: NC FLOUNDER, CRISPY POTATO CAKE, SPRING ASPARAGUS, ARTICHOKE RELISH, SPRING ONION PURÉE

FROM GOOD FOOD ON MONTFORD:
FILLET OF SALMON OVER FINGERLING
POTATO, SWISS CHARD, DILL FOAM
AND BORSCHT.



So it was for Bruce and Kerry. Call it the seven-year itch (or in this case the nine year itch), whatever. The idea for another new location was nagging in their heads; and then they happened upon an empty storefront on Montford Road, off of Park Road, a block away from Park Road Shopping Center.

The area was, decades before, known as the much loved “restaurant row” of South Charlotte, but times had changed.

“You can’t open a restaurant on Montford,” people warned Bruce as the area had long ago seen its heyday – most of the much loved dining spots had come and gone. Save for Luisa’s Brick Oven Pizza and the Moosehead Bar & Grill, there really wasn’t anything happening on Montford, so the opportunity to make change happen was Moffett’s to seize.

“But there is just no good food on Montford any more”, friends told Moffett. His response?

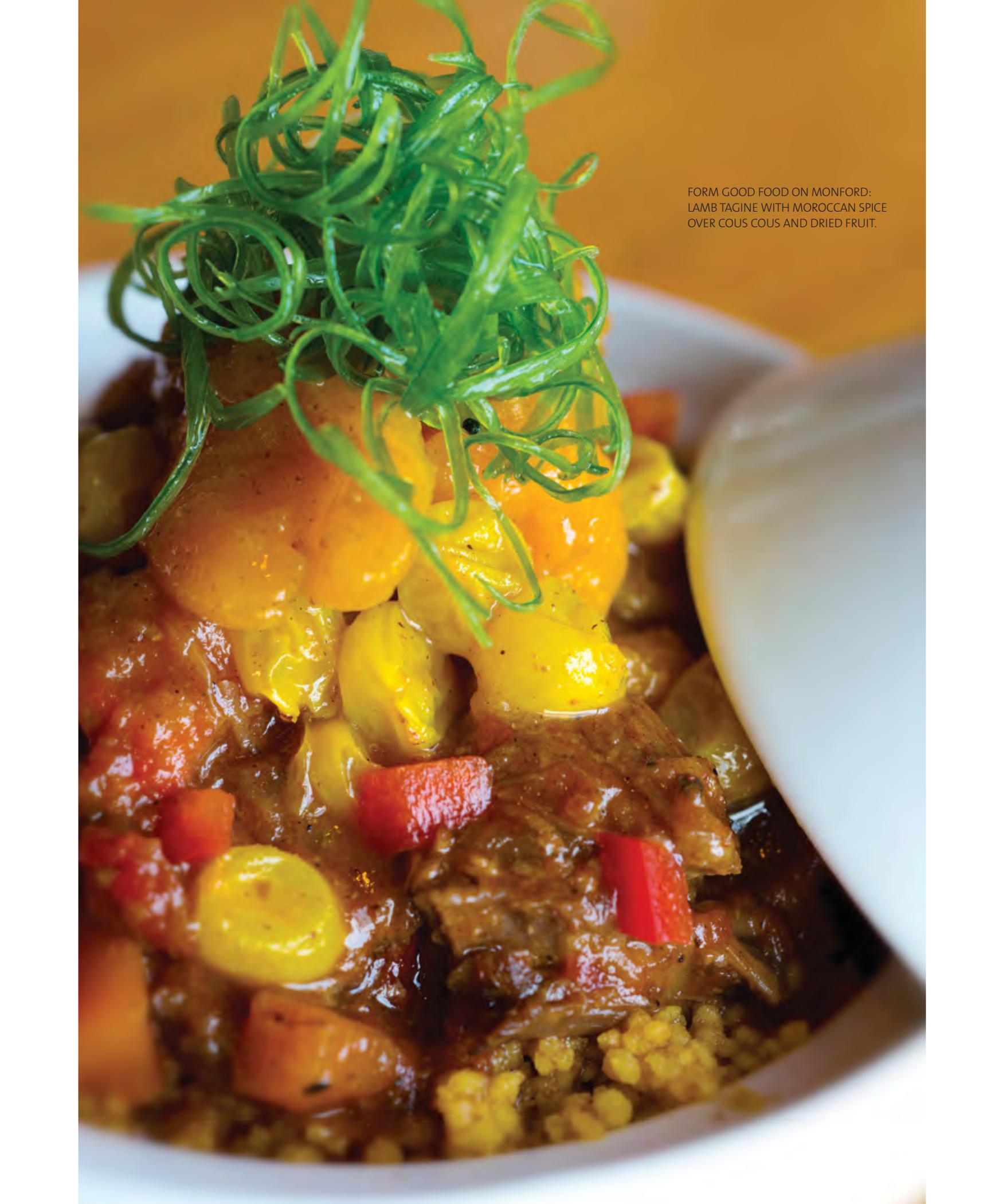
“Well, now there will be!” and with that the name Good Food on Montford was conceptualized. Since then, the area has enjoyed a rebirth, and Kerry now heads the kitchen and is a co-owner in Good Food.

The concept, purposefully different from Barrington’s, is tapas style dining, rather than a three of four course meal; but the quality is unquestionable and all you’d expect from a dining spot with the Moffett moniker.

Happily for Charlotte, with the success of Good Food came a rebirth of the old Montford restaurant row, and now there are



EXECUTIVE CHEF KERRY MOFFETT
GOOD FOOD ON MONTFORD



FORM GOOD FOOD ON MONFORD:
LAMB TAGINE WITH MOROCCAN SPICE
OVER COUS COUS AND DRIED FRUIT.



TRIANGOLI STUFFED WITH GOAT CHEESE; BALSAMIC BROWN BUTTER; FRESH BEET AND BEET GREENS

lots of new dining establishments in the two block stretch; but for this food writer, while others have tried, no one has done it quite as well as the Moffetts.

With the success of two top-of-the-list restaurants in Charlotte, you'd think the brothers Moffett would have their hands full.

But wait, there's more to the story.

Moffett had potential Charlotte diners on pins and needles when, in 2013 he announced he would open a third dining concept. This time he turned his attention to another once thriving and then sadly abandoned site: the old Reynolds-Gourmajenko House, more commonly referred to as Villa Square or The Villa, in Charlotte's Eastover neighborhood.

The building is an icon in Charlotte, built by and originally home to Mrs. Blanche Reynolds Gormajenko, a world traveler and independent spirit. It was and still is the city's only authentic Tuscan villa. Blanche and her husband Alexis Gourmajenko married and moved into the house upon its completion in 1926. On April 26, 1941, the house was deeded to Mrs. Gourmajenko's only child,

Mr. Morgan Ayres Reynolds. On August 30, 1963, Mr. Reynolds and his wife sold the house to Mr. J. Chadborn Bolles.

In the 1970s and 1980s the estate became a shopping area and the living quarters home to several restaurants. Long time Charlotteans will remember The Saucy Crepe and Blanche's, among others, as well as a tiny bar called Jenkos.

It has been said that Blanche remained around "in spirit" overseeing The Moffett Group website and all the comings and goings that have taken place, and at times – perhaps when she wasn't happy with what she saw – has wrecked havoc with the many businesses that have occupied the space.

When Bruce and his wife Katrina and brother Kerry found the mansion available, they thought it to be the perfect location for an Italian restaurant concept Bruce had been considering.

They went in and with much respect for the historic qualities of the home, beautifully renovated and restored the space to make a dining room, open kitchen and bar. In the main dining room, on the ceiling over-

head, a silkscreen of an old photo of one of Blanche's elaborate dinner parties keeps it all in the family.

Stagioni, the third jewel in the Moffett Group's triple crown opened in 2013 in the Myers Park neighborhood to rave reviews and standing room only crowds. The menu, which changes with the seasons, features deliciously done Italian classics with a fresh, modern twist. At the helm in the kitchen, Bruce's long time friend Larry Schreiber.

The food, like that in each of the Moffett Group restaurants, is beyond reproach; and the atmosphere at Stagioni is, well, the Moffett website says it best, "Since opening their first restaurant 13 years ago, the Moffetts know from experience that life's greatest memories unfold around the dinner table and created Stagioni to bring family and friends together."

Blanche, who always loved a party and happy people gathered around, would be proud.

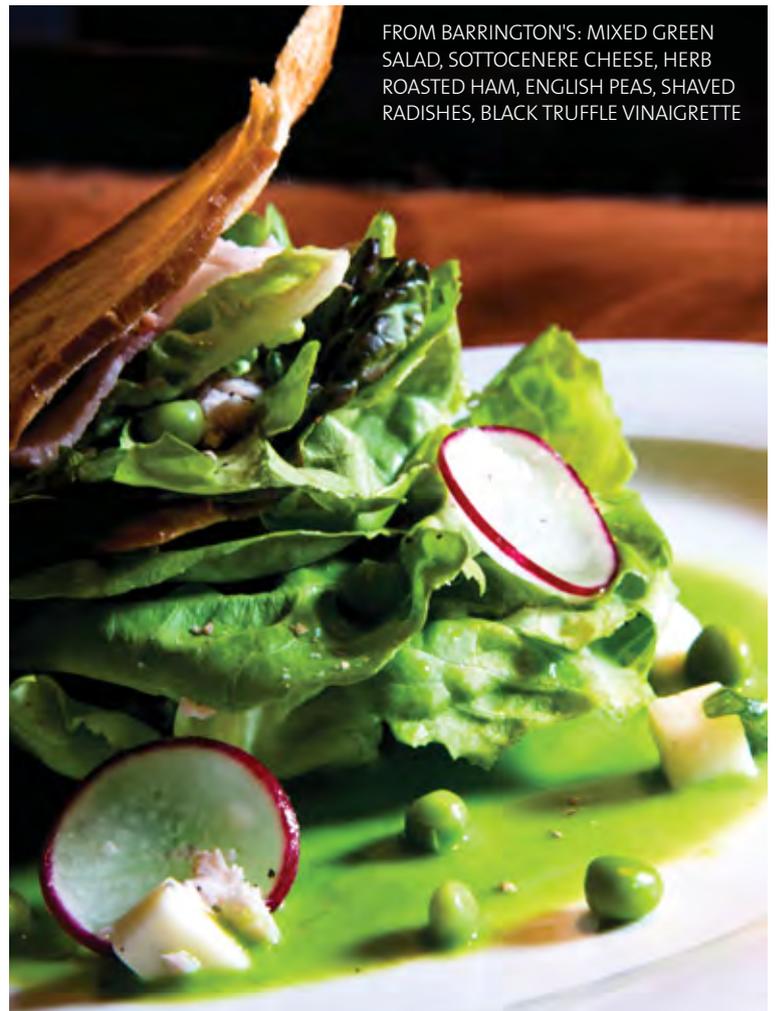
For information, reservation links, directions and phone numbers, visit barringtonsrestaurant.com; goodfoodonmontford.com and stagionicl.com *



EXECUTIVE CHEF LARRY SCHREIBER
STAGIONI



FROM STAGIONI: BALSAMIC GLAZED PORK BELLY WITH PICKLED
RUBARB SALAD AND FAA AND CANNELLINI BEANS



FROM BARRINGTON'S: MIXED GREEN
SALAD, SOTTOCENERE CHEESE, HERB
ROASTED HAM, ENGLISH PEAS, SHAVED
RADISHES, BLACK TRUFFLE VINAIGRETTE