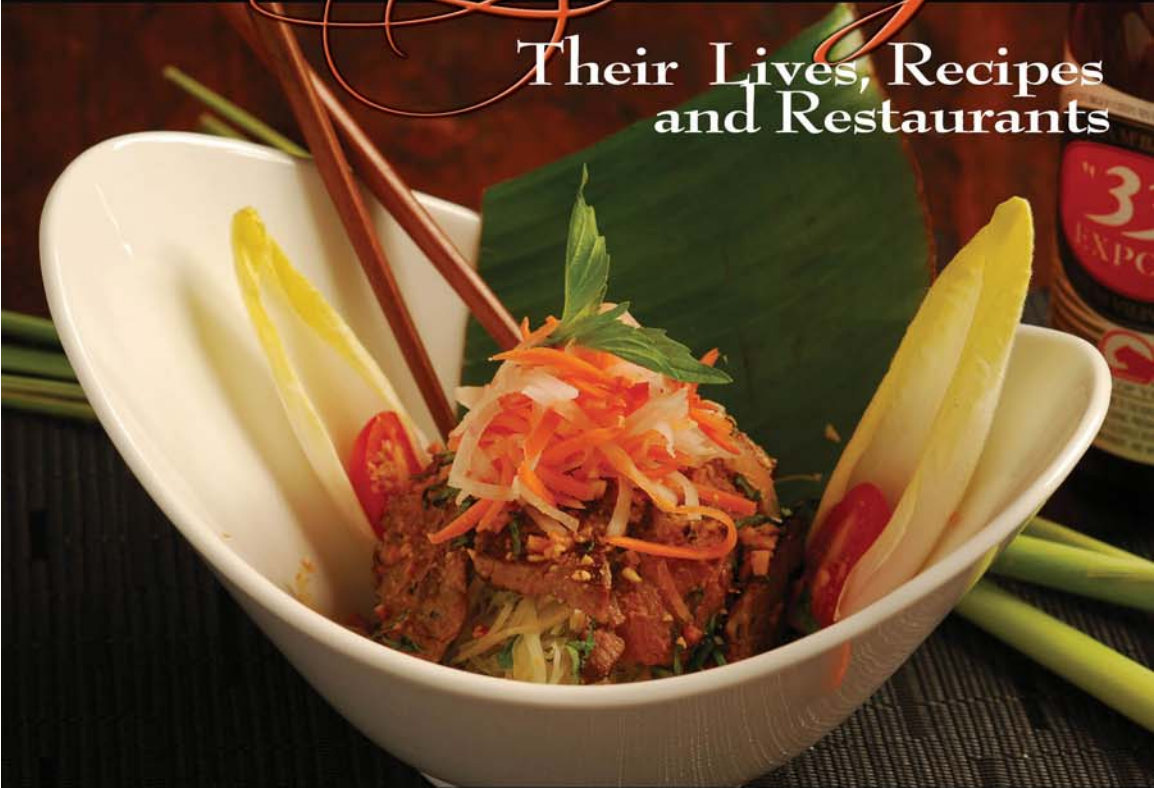




CHEFS  
OF  
*the Triangle*

Their Lives, Recipes  
and Restaurants



ANN PROSPERO

Foreword by Moreton Neal



*Colin Bedford*

PHOTO © FEARRINGTON HOUSE RESTAURANT



Colin Bedford  
*at Ferrington House Restaurant  
(Ferrington House Country Inn)*

Ferrington House Restaurant at  
Ferrington House Country Inn

2000 Ferrington Village  
Pittsboro, N.C. 27312  
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**Directions**

From Raleigh, take I-40 West to Exit 273, then follow U.S. 15/501 South to Ferrington Village, on the left. Take the first right after entering the village. From Durham or Chapel Hill, take U.S. 15/501 Business South past Chapel Hill. At N.C. 54, exit right and turn left to stay on U.S. 15/501. Continue to Ferrington Village, on the left. Take the first right after entering the village.

**Cuisine**

This AAA Five Diamond restaurant, a member of Relais & Châteaux and a Certified Green Restaurant, serves new North American cuisine with regional and seasonal ingredients.

Executive Chef Colin Bedford began cooking when he was fourteen. Living in a home where his “mum” cooked every single meal, he would often wake up to scones, fairy cakes, and Victorian sponge cakes. His

father had a plot of land, an allotment, on which he grew onions, potatoes, and beans. Good food was part of Colin's growing up.

So it was natural that he would study hotel management and earn a degree in hospitality from his local college, Yeovil College in Somerset in the southwest of England. At the age of eighteen, degree in hand, he went to the Castle Hotel, one of Europe's leading family-run hotels and one of England's finest dining establishments. He began working there in 1996. It was then that the young man met Chef Graham Fox.

In 2000, Colin left the Castle Hotel at the same time Chef Fox left to join Ferrington House Restaurant. But Colin went to Canada to join the staff at the Prince of Wales Hotel, a CAA/AAA Four Diamond hotel and restaurant. He served as junior *sous chef* and stayed for five years, leaving in 2005 to visit Executive Chef Fox in Ferrington Village. Their paths had crossed again.

"I was interested in coming down here, and when I came I discovered that North Carolina is different. It's slower-paced, and it's a great location—mountains, beaches, close to the airport," Colin says.

Chef Fox recruited him to become executive *sous chef* at Ferrington House Restaurant. And when Fox left the AAA Five Diamond restaurant in 2008, Colin naturally became his replacement.

It is clear why Colin was named executive chef. "My philosophy of food preparation is that simplicity is the key to maximum flavors. Less is more. That's a very hard thing for a chef to do—to hold back, to not keep adding more flavors," he says. "I keep the food simple, but with a twist. For example, I made a recipe that's Peanut Butter Parfait with Strawberry Jam Ice Cream. Simple, recognizable, but with a twist." He adds, "I like comfort food, and we present it so it's a beautiful construction. People connect to familiar items. They can relate to what's familiar on the menu."

Colin says, "People eat with their eyes. If it looks good, you've won them over from the get-go." Colin's presentations give the food an irresistible impact. That, together with the fact that he likes substantial food, "gives the guests value for their money," he says.

Colin's cuisine is new North American with regional and seasonal ingredients, though his background is European, French in particular. He preserves spring and summer fruits such as cherries and quince to serve with winter fare.

"Here, I had my first insight into farm-to-table cooking. We have a vegetable garden out back. We harvest them when the vegetables are tiny



*Interior of Ferrington House Restaurant*

because of the impact of presentation,” Colin says.

R. B. Fitch, who developed Fearington Village, plays a role in the restaurant. Colin says that he and “Mr. Fitch are on the same page.” Fitch told Colin there are two Bs in the restaurant: bread and breakfast. Bread is the first thing guests put in their mouths, and breakfast is the first meal of the day. Both stick in their memories.

Fitch also told Colin not to touch Thanksgiving and Christmas. He said that people have expectations about those meals, and that the restaurant should strive to meet them.

Everything is made in-house, including the bread. Most products come from local farmers.

Colin has learned an important lesson living in North Carolina. “People are genuine,” he says. And he has learned to read the needs of his chefs. “Different people have different needs.” He adds, “I’m only as good as my staff in the kitchen. They are a great bunch of guys. It’s a respect thing. They respect me, and I respect them.”

Colin creates the recipes that the restaurant serves. He and his executive *sous chef* check every plate that goes out to guests. If it is not perfect, they send it back.

Fearington House Restaurant and Executive Chef Colin Bedford earn every diamond they get from AAA.



#### NOTE

R. B. Fitch, a native of Chapel Hill, began developing Fearington Village in the early 1970s after he and his late wife, Jenny, purchased the 640-acre dairy farm from Jesse Fearington. The farm had been in the Fearington family since 1786. Ironically, in the late 1970s, R. B. and Jenny invited a young couple eager to open a French restaurant to be the first restaurateurs. They were Chef Bill Neal and his wife, Moreton. The Neals brought not only memorable food but also the tradition that Fearington Village would nurture outstanding restaurants and excellent chefs. The Fitches continued to bring exceptional chefs to the restaurant, including legendary Southern chef Edna Lewis and Walter Royal, the current executive chef at Angus Barn. They also invited Ben Barker and Karen Barker, who stayed for five years until 1986, then left to open their own restaurant, Magnolia Grill.

# *Executive Chef Colin Bedford's Recipes*

## **BACON-WRAPPED CHICKEN BREAST, SAVOY CABBAGE, AND SAGE RISOTTO**

*Serves 6*

- 2 cups water
- 2 tablespoons loose-leaf jasmine tea
- 1 cup raisins
- 2 quarts chicken stock
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Pinch of salt
- 3 cups Arborio rice
- 2 cups white wine
- 6 strips bacon per chicken breast (about 1 pound)
- 3 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cut horizontally through the middle but not all the way, then opened like a book
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup seasoned ground bulk sausage
- 1 small head Savoy cabbage, thinly sliced
- 1 cup cream
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped green onions
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup toasted pecans, roughly chopped
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup mascarpone cheese

Bring 2 cups water to a boil and infuse with loose tea. Allow to stand for 30 minutes, then reheat tea, strain over raisins, and place to the side until raisins are plump. (You can do this in advance and reserve in refrigerator.)

Place chicken stock in a saucepan over medium heat. Sweat shallots and garlic in butter on low to medium heat in another saucepan. Add salt. Once shallots and garlic are soft and without color, add rice. Cook rice on a consistent medium heat until tips start to go translucent. Add wine and reduce by half.

Add half of warmed stock a ladle at a time. Add more only when rice has totally absorbed stock. It is very important to

keep a consistent heat. This will take about 15 to 20 minutes. When rice is almost cooked, add a ladle of cold water, scoop rice onto a tray, and score lines into rice, which will allow risotto to cool quickly.

Lay 6 bacon slices side by side, overlapping slightly, on buttered foil to form a square on which each chicken breast will lie. Place butterflied chicken on top of bacon. Position sausage in a line on front portion of chicken. Roll chicken and bacon around sausage to form a cylinder. When finished, sausage will be in center of chicken and bacon will be on the outside. Wrap chicken with foil and tightly twist ends of foil in opposite directions. Simmer in a large pan of water for 30 to 35 minutes until firm to the touch.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Blanch cabbage in water for 30 seconds and refresh in ice water.

To finish, take chicken out of foil and crisp bacon on chicken in an oiled, preheated pan. Reheat rice by using some of the warmed stock (used for making risotto) and cream. The warmer the risotto gets, the thicker the rice will become.

Be careful not to add too much liquid, as you do not want a watery consistency. Add raisins, cabbage, sage, green onions, pecans, Parmesan, and mascarpone to risotto. Once you add mascarpone, do not reboil risotto. Slice chicken crosswise. Spoon risotto into pasta bowls or on plates and place sliced chicken on top.

## HAZELNUT PRALINE AND ORANGE *SEMIFREDDO* AND SHORTBREAD

*Semifreddo*, Italian for “half cold,” refers to any of various chilled or partially frozen desserts including cake, ice cream, fruit, custard, and whipped cream.

*Serves 10*

### Semifreddo

1¼ cups sugar, divided

1 cup water

1 cup peeled hazelnuts or other nuts such as almonds

1 vanilla bean

4 large eggs, separated (use commercial egg yolks if desired, 1 ounce for 1 yolk)

Pinch of salt  
2 cups heavy cream  
Zest of 1 orange

Grease a baking tray or cookie sheet with a rim for when caramel is ready. Place 1 cup of the sugar in a saucepan.

Add water and heat over medium heat to melt sugar. When sugar is dissolved, water will be clear. Wipe sides of pan down, removing any sugar granules. Place on medium-high heat and boil at about 235 degrees, measuring with a candy thermometer, until sugar water reaches the soft-ball stage. When sugar reaches caramel stage, add nuts, pour mixture onto greased tray, and allow to cool. Edges will be uneven. Once hazelnut praline is at room temperature, break into pieces, place in a food processor, and pulse for about 2 minutes into a coarse powder. Reserve in an airtight container.

Split vanilla bean in half and scrape out seeds into a bowl. (Pod may be reserved for other use.) Add remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar to bowl and mix with vanilla seeds until blended.

Whip egg whites in a bowl just until they are broken up. Add salt and continue beating until firm peaks form. Place bowl in refrigerator.

In a large bowl, add vanilla bean–sugar mixture to egg yolks and beat with an electric mixer or whisk until pale. Place in refrigerator.

In another bowl, beat heavy cream to soft peaks using an electric mixer or a whisk. Do not overwhip. Place in refrigerator.

Remove whites, yolks, and heavy cream from refrigerator. Add praline powder, orange zest, and whites into yolk mixture, folding in thoroughly. Once ingredients are  $\frac{3}{4}$  incorporated, gently fold in whipped cream. Immediately scoop into a container, cover with plastic wrap, and freeze until ready to serve.

### Shortbread

1 $\frac{1}{4}$  sticks butter  
6 tablespoons sugar  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
6 tablespoons cornstarch  
Pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream together butter and sugar until pale. Add flour, cornstarch, and salt and mix until a ball forms. Chill mixture, then roll out to 1/8-inch thickness between 2 pieces of parchment paper. Cut into desired shapes and sizes, place on a cookie sheet, and bake until golden brown.



Serve shortbread on individual dessert plates alongside bowls of *semifreddo*.