



PROGRESSIVE AMERICAN CUISINE
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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SOUTH MOUNTAIN TAVERN OPENS TO BRING NEW DINING EXPERIENCE TO SOUTH ORANGE

The Former Ricalton's Village Tavern, Reimagined & Reinvented With A New Culinary & Management Team

(April 26, 2017 – South Orange, NJ) On Tuesday, May 16th, South Mountain Tavern will officially open its doors to South Orange residents with a new dining experience at the site of the former Ricalton's Village Tavern. This new venture between business partners and restaurateurs Ted Stampoulos and Tom McLaughlin was developed through much planning to bring an elevated level of service and cuisine intended to surpass all experiences of its predecessor eatery.

With this new partnership, Stampoulos' trademark of developing warm and inviting restaurants will set the bar for guests' expectations. Perhaps best known for creating the popular Milburn hot spot, Martini's Bistro & Bar, Stampoulos brings decades of experience in both the kitchen and the dining room. Having practically grown up in the hospitality business with his father and grandfather, who owned and operated several restaurants and bars, Stampoulos, a Milburn resident, has worn practically every hat in the business and has developed a keen sense for what makes a vibrant and go-to "it spot" destination restaurant and bar.

In explaining this new partnership, Stampoulos stated, "As soon as Tom and I got to talking about the great potential that this space had to offer, we both knew we'd make a good partnership. We shared a common vision for reinventing the restaurant with a new mission of focusing on the most important elements that we knew were lacking before--providing excellent service and a progressive, diverse menu that offered great value."

And by all accounts, that's what they're already well on their way to doing. One of the pair's first initiatives in preparing for the launch of South Mountain Tavern was to find a chef who shared this approach in order to execute it on the kitchen side. The small world that the restaurant business is, Stampoulos had a common friend who highly recommended Chef Scott Howlett for the piece of the puzzle for which they were searching. According to McLaughlin, "Ted and I both liked what we saw from Scott; he showed an impressive level of creativity and diversity of culinary influences without any pretention about his cooking."

Chef Scott Howlett also adds to the seasoned nature of the leadership team, having worked around the globe, from Florida to Japan to Mexico and closer at home in restaurant kitchens of Philadelphia and New York City. His experiences even reach to the tall towers of New York City's Grand Hyatt and Ritz Carlton hotels.

Howlett puts to good use his broad exposure to culture and cuisine, seamlessly blending elements of influences across cultures to make a progressive, inclusive approach to American cuisine without the fussiness seen in more esoteric eateries. And there's no messing around with portions or price; his approach will be sure to keep you well fed at fair prices. As former chef/owner for eight years of the well-reviewed Sublime in Gladstone, NJ, Howlett also fits perfectly into the tasteful tavern environment.

And although there is heightened attention to the quality of the cuisine, the "Tavern" in its name is not a misnomer. The sleek and spacious bar will itself be a draw for a crowd of its own offering an extensive variety of beers including local, seasonal, and other craft selections. Add to that, creative cocktails and an ambitious wine list, impressive for a restaurant of its size.

The restaurant's main dining room offers comfortable, sizable and sumptuous banquettes as well as generously-spaced centralized seating. The venue will also offer a beautiful, spacious private party room with a modern, yet warm ambiance, complete with a large built-in wine and whisky bar ideal for gatherings of all kinds which can accommodate up to 40 seated guests and 70 for cocktail events.

After offering a sneak peak to guests enjoying a Mother's Day brunch buffet as the first day operating as South Mountain Tavern, the restaurant will officially be open with its new, full à la carte menu for dining beginning on Monday, May 16th. The restaurant will be open for dinner Tuesdays through Saturday from 4 p.m. until 10 p.m. and Sundays from 3 p.m. until 10 p.m. On Friday and Saturday evenings, the restaurant bar will even offer its own after-hours light menu available from 10 p.m. until midnight.

Reservations for dinner are recommended by visiting their website at www.southmountaintavern.com or by calling 973-736-1006.

The popular downstairs Irish Pub, The Snug, also owned and operated by the duo will stay in continuous operation seven days a week. The always-reliable and even kid-friendly hideaway for locals in-the-know looking for a cozy comfort food environment is now launching its new Spring lunch and dinner menu. According to McLaughlin, "We have a really loyal following at The Snug and know that we have a good recipe for success already in place, which we'll continue to hone, keeping its own identity and vibe while offering

new and exciting things upstairs.” The Snug will be open for dining Sunday through Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. – 10 p.m. and Thursday through Saturday from 11 a.m. until midnight.

Located between Valley Street and the train station in the heart of South Orange’s bustling downtown, surrounded by parking lots and with soon-to-be town-managed valet parking just steps away (which the restaurant will validate for its customers), the convenient location, diversity of offerings and welcoming atmosphere are sure to make South Mountain Tavern a desirable new dining destination. Said Stampoulos, “Just as South Orange has a strong appeal as ‘New York’s Sixth Borough’ in its diversity of residents, city style, and well-informed foodies with the added comforts of a more residential backdrop, so too I think will our progressive and international approach to American cuisine and sleek service fit in perfectly with a more relaxed and inviting environment for savvy citizens of the area. We’d like to welcome them all to stop in and say hello.”

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HOURS OF OPERATION

South Mountain Tavern

Opening Date: Tuesday, May 16, 2017

Tuesday through Saturday: 4:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Sundays: 3:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

*Late Night Menu - Thursday through Saturday: 10:00 p.m. - Midnight

The Snug

Currently Open

Sunday through Wednesday: 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Thursday through Saturday: 11:00 a.m. - Midnight