

KENT RATHBUN
EXECUTIVE CHEF/PROPRIETOR
ABACUS AND JASPER'S RESTAURANTS

After rapidly rising through the ranks of some of the world's finest restaurants, Chef Kent Rathbun has created two of the most talked about restaurant concepts in the nation – Abacus and Jasper's. Rathbun's roots are firmly set in food and at the age of nine, he discovered his passion for culinary creativity and began to live his life learning the skills and techniques needed to become the renowned and impressive chef that he is today. Starting as an apprentice at La Bonne Auberge, a five-star French restaurant located in Kansas City, Missouri, Rathbun gained the experience of working with high-end ingredients and learned the art of perfect preparation. Preparation was something Rathbun came to value, and that sense of significance continued with him as he moved from kitchen to kitchen, working with some of the best chefs in the country.

Most notably, Rathbun worked in the kitchens of Mr. B's in New Orleans, American Restaurant and Milano in Kansas City, The Mansion on Turtle Creek in Dallas and the Landmark Restaurant in the Dallas Melrose Hotel. While at the Landmark, Rathbun had the opportunity to make annual trips to Bangkok, Thailand, which provided him the resources and research to create his own spectacular style of Contemporary Global cuisine. Drawing on Southwestern, Mediterranean, American, Cajun/Creole and Pacific Rim influences, Rathbun's signature blend of flavors became the foundation of Abacus.

In 1997, Rathbun decided to follow his dream, draw on his eclectic and distinctive style and establish his own world-class restaurant. Striving for perfection in Abacus, Rathbun spent two years prior to its opening in continued research and travel in the culinary centers of the world. With the help of Engstrom Design Group, Rathbun's vision of an elegant culinary hotspot began to materialize in the heart of Dallas' uptown district. Within months of its opening, Abacus began to be recognized as a pinnacle of fine dining and has received numerous accolades, including Mobil Four-Stars; AAA Four Diamonds; Five Stars from the *Dallas Morning News*; *Bon Appetit's* Best of the Year 2001 issue which named Abacus' Chef's tasting menu a "Top Pick;" "Best Chef" by *D Magazine*; and "One of the Top Meals Around the World" by *USA Today*. Abacus' design, wine list and menu also has been recognized and featured in publications such as *Elle*, *Southern Living*, *Veranda*, *Texas Monthly*, and *The Rosie Magazine*. To date, the most prestigious of its recognitions has been Abacus' induction into the Nation's Restaurant News Fine Dining Hall of Fame.

With a flourishing five-star restaurant exceeding his expectations, Rathbun decided to begin research for his second concept, Jasper's. Keeping with Abacus' level of ingredients and design, Rathbun wanted to add a touch of "home cooking" flair featuring a "modern outdoors" theme. Focusing on the best of America's regional cuisine, including steaks, chops, fish, rotisserie chicken, pasta, pizza and his mother's famous sink salad, Jasper's "Gourmet Backyard Cuisine" quickly became a location with distinction. With the opening of its first location in Plano, TX, Jasper's recognition helped kick-start Rathbun's idea of expanding to additional locations in The Woodlands, TX and Austin, TX. Jasper's has been named one of *Esquire Magazine's* Top 20 Best New Restaurants in America and has been touted by various regional publications in all three of its locations, including *Tribeza*, *Austin Chronicle*, *Austin American-Statesman*, *Austin Monthly*, *Modern Luxury*, *Texas Highways*, *Diversions Magazine*, *ReviewIt Magazine*, *PaperCity* and the *Houston Chronicle*.

By creating an astounding culinary legacy in Texas, Rathbun has thrived in the national scene. He has cooked at the James Beard House in New York on several occasions and was nominated as the James Beard Foundation's Best Chef: Southwest in 1999, 2002, 2003 and 2004. He has repeatedly appeared on a number of TV shows, including the Food Network's "Chef du Jour", Cooking Live with Sara Moulton, "Ready Set Cook", the CBS Early Show, the Rosie O'Donnell Show and NBC's Today Show. Most recently, Kent appeared on Food Network's "Iron Chef America" and defeated Bobby Flay. Rathbun has been featured in *Esquire Magazine*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Rosie Magazine*, *Bon Appetit*, *Southern Living Magazine*, *Nation's Restaurant News*, *Elle*, *Veranda Magazine*, *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*. He was honored to be one of the featured chefs for the Bush 2001 Inaugural Ball and has participated in the Pre-SuperBowl Event, "Taste of the NFL" for the past four years. Passionate about charitable organizations, Rathbun is actively involved in the American Cancer Society, March of Dimes, Zoo to Do, the North Texas Food Bank and the American Heart Association.