

Poppy Hill Tuscan Kitchen



Scott Mahar

**Executive Chef and Co-Owner,
Poppy Hill Tuscan Kitchen**

Fredericksburg, Virginia

Scott Mahar, Executive Chef and Co-owner of Poppy Hill Tuscan Kitchen, is serving dining rooms full of satisfied patrons his authentic, made-from-scratch Northern Italian cuisine. Using only the freshest local ingredients, Chef Mahar turns out Tuscan classics which heavily rely upon all-natural and organic food staples. Mahar's commitment to quality and to paying attention to the seasonality of ingredients, according to devoted fans of the popular Fredericksburg, Virginia eatery, make all the difference in the world.

Chef Mahar, today praised as a "culinary craftsman" and "fearless foodie" by an enthusiastic Virginia food press corps, grew up enjoying Tuscan-based dishes made by his Italian grandfather, who would prepare for his extended family every Sunday hearty, succulent Italian meals using fresh ingredients from his own gardens. The wonderful dishes from his grandfather's table would later become the inspiration for Mahar's distinct cooking style.

"I learned to cook at a very young age," Mahar notes. "Italians just have a passion for food and wine, and that lifestyle really made a lasting impression on me. The food in Tuscany, in particular, is so straightforward and simple. Dishes there don't have to have a dozen competing ingredients - it's just about joining together smart, ideal combinations. We're convinced that this classic approach has broad appeal to a growing number of customers in the U.S. today."

A Red Sox fan to the core, Scott was born in Boston, Massachusetts and grew up in Yarmouth, Maine. After owning his first food business, The Tavern 45 in Durham New Hampshire, Chef Mahar moved on to graduate with honors from the prestigious Le Cordon Bleu New England program, from which he earned the school's distinguished *Grande Diplôme* degree.

Mahar soon was recruited by New York City's Chanterelle, where he was mentored by Chef David Waltuck (named Best New York City Chef in 2007 by the James Beard Foundation). The young chef's next slot was no less stellar; Mahar went on to join Italian cuisine icon Roberto Donna at Donna's landmark Galileo restaurant in Washington, DC. Mahar next joined DC's Ritz-Carlton at Pentagon City, before joining esteemed Chef Jay Comfort's team at DC favorite Poste Moderne Brasserie, where he served in the busy kitchen brigade as both line cook and pastry chef.

Having honed his craft under some of the best names in the business, Chef Mahar launched his own restaurant, Poppy Hill Tuscan Kitchen, in December 2005. Mahar works at the acclaimed restaurant alongside his wife, Ingrid, who serves as the restaurant's General Manager and Wine Director.

Chef Mahar's New England roots are reflected in the fresh seafood selections regularly featured at Poppy Hill. The restaurant's all-natural pasta dishes – like the vast majority of Poppy Hill's menu items – are hand-crafted and house-made daily using premium, organic ingredients. Favorites such as Duck Cacciatore, Mushroom Galette and Stuffed-to-Order Cannoli are just a few decadent dishes featured on the chef's seasonal menu.

The busy chef also has added culinary instruction to his portfolio: he teaches sold-out cooking classes each quarter at Fredericksburg's Kitchen at Whitinghams. Additionally, the Mahars have plans in the works to launch a full-service catering business which sticks to their tried-and-true formula used in Poppy Hill's kitchen.

For further information about Poppy Hill Tuscan Kitchen, visit www.ciaopoppyhill.com.

To request an interview with Chef Scott Mahar, contact Jen Beltz at Ph: 207.699.5500 or jen@frontburnerpr.com.