



MERITAGE

RUSSELL KLEIN
CHEF / PROPRIETOR

Russell Klein has more than twenty years experience in the restaurant industry. A native New Yorker, he attended the French Culinary Institute. Upon graduation, he spent a year working and traveling in the south of France and Italy. After returning from Europe he worked in some of Manhattan's most distinguished kitchens, including La Caravelle, David Bouley's Danube, Picholine, Judson Grill and Fleur de Sel.

Chef Klein moved to Minnesota in 2002. He became the executive chef at W.A. Frost and Company in St. Paul, where in 2005 he met his future wife, Desta. He has been named the Twin Cities Best New Chef by Minnesota Monthly, the Twin Cities Hottest Chef by Where Magazine and has been nominated for Food & Wine magazine's "Best New Chefs in America." In 2006 The Minneapolis Star Tribune called him "one of the Cities top talents," and he was named a "Restaurateur of the Year" for 2007 by Mpls./St. Paul magazine.

Russell & Desta opened Meritage, a French Brasserie, in the fall of 2007. The restaurant was awarded 3 ½ stars by the Minneapolis Star Tribune and had an immediate energizing impact on the Downtown St Paul restaurant scene. Since then they have been named Best French Restaurant by City Pages and Minnesota Monthly, Best New Restaurant and Best Downtown Brunch by Mpls.-St. Paul Magazine. Meritage continues to shine in Downtown St Paul and win even more recognition for its food, wine and service.

Chef Klein works with numerous charities, donating time and money to such organizations as the Animal Humane Society, The American Liver Foundation, Second Harvest Heartland, The Mental Health Association of Minnesota and several others.

Klein is a regular participant in the annual Minnesota Farmers Union "Taste of Tuesday" at the State Fair, as well as the Minnesota Garlic Festival.