

for immediate release from
JOHN F. BLAIR, PUBLISHER

Chefs of the Triangle
Their Lives, Recipes, and Restaurants
by Ann Prospero

When Ann Prospero moved to Durham in 1996, she was looking for a way to combine her passion for writing with her interest in food. As she began her research about fine dining in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area, the name Bill Neal kept resurfacing. Before his untimely death in 1991, Neal became the standard-bearer for introducing a fresh approach to traditional Southern cooking. After Craig Claiborne, then food critic for the *New York Times*, wrote about Neal's now-famous recipe for shrimp and grits, that dish became a standard on any menu featuring fine Southern cuisine.

The other thing Prospero kept hearing about was Neal's influence as a teacher in the kitchen. After learning that numerous local and regional chefs, now stars in their own right, began their careers working alongside Neal, Prospero decided to focus her research on the lives of the chefs in her area. What inspired them? Who influenced them? What were their passions?

Prospero began by interviewing Moreton Neal, Bill's wife and business partner for eleven years before their divorce and a friend until his death. In an effort to share what she learned about Neal and other chefs, Prospero began a blog (www.prosperoskitchen.typepad.com) in the spring of 2008. On a trip to Chicago, she learned of a blogger writing about Chicago's neighborhood eateries and realized she had enough material to write her own blog about chefs in the Triangle.

As she interviewed more chefs, a friend told her she had the makings of a book—and she did. **CHEFS OF THE TRIANGLE: THEIR LIVES, RECIPES, AND RESTAURANTS**, focusing on thirty-one of the area's leading cooks, was released in September 2009. Each chef's profile also features two or three recipes that have been tested and adapted for home kitchens by a group of volunteers that Prospero recruited through her blog.

Those who remember the cuisine of the Triangle area as mainly steaks and barbecue are in for an awakening. In 2008, *Bon Appétit* proclaimed Durham-Chapel Hill as "America's Foodiest Town." Who cares if outsiders don't know Durham and Chapel Hill are really two towns? As Prospero reveals in her book, the local culinary genealogy of the Chapel Hill and Durham chefs is intertwined. On the other hand, Raleigh's chefs tend to have arrived from other parts of the globe and like the chefs in Durham and Chapel Hill studied with some of the world's best.

Publications such as *Gourmet* and *Saveur* have written recent articles about the area's dining scene. Nominees for the annual James Beard awards frequently include area chefs. In **CHEFS OF THE TRIANGLE**, those interested in fine cuisine will learn about the personalities responsible for making the Triangle one of the country's culinary hot spots.

978-0-89587-370-5
\$16.95 trade paper
6 x 9; 224 pages
Publication date:
September 2009

