

The Montville Inn

Captivates Diners

Rustic Charm, Sophisticated Fare, Convivial Vibe, Great Value

May 19, 2008 ... Montville, NJ ... In a bucolic corner of Morris County where Colonial dwellings abut stately developments, The Montville Inn stands out as a terrific example of turning old into new ... and making it outstanding.

Located on the site of the pre-Revolutionary War Mandeville Inn, the 10-month-old Montville Inn is the fulfillment of a two-year, \$3 million rebuild overseen by owner Randy Frankel. The new venue combines the best of the farmhouse aesthetic that still permeates the area with the contemporary—yet comfortably familiar—cuisine that today’s diners crave.

“Food and wine are passions of mine,” Frankel says with a smile, “and I wanted to create a place that served the kind of food I never tire of. At the same time, I wanted it to be fully in keeping with local architectural history.” Born in Paterson, a longtime Montville resident and former Managing Director at Goldman Sachs and Spear Leeds, Frankel divides his time among various private investing, philanthropic and real estate projects. Additionally, he is General Partner of the Tampa Bay Rays, and Principal Owner of Windham Mountain Ski Resort in the Catskills.

Working with Philadelphia-based DAS Architects, Frankel created a warm, inviting space inside a large and handsome classic Colonial exterior that feels like a comfortable lodge, replete with impressive fieldstone fireplace, reclaimed wide plank oak floors, cushy banquettes, and soft lighting. Soundproofing panels soften the noise level, and earthy brown and cream tones rule.

In the bar, modern touches abound: chocolate-color woven-leather seats (which match menu covers); a dramatic copper-topped bar; flat screen TVs; and a sleek “candle” chandelier. Situated upstairs is an antique-modern private event space that can seat up to 65, with Craftsman-style dining chairs; oak-framed windows on three sides to let light stream in; comfortable upholstered seating areas; and up-to-the-minute wireless technology for business meetings, video presentations and more.

Chef John Livera

To realize the culinary side of his vision, Frankel sought out the talents of another Jersey native, Chatham-born John Livera. A Johnson & Wales grad, the chef honed his sensibilities in the kitchens of San Francisco’s Postrio and Paris’s Les Elysees due Vernet, as well as during his three years as Executive Sous Chef at Blue Smoke, Danny Meyer’s famed barbeque restaurant in NYC. “Combining Randy’s vision with recipes developed from years of travel, tasting and creating, we’ve designed a menu that will give diners an opportunity to taste different cuisines visit after visit,” the chef reflects. His cooking is flavor-packed and assured, with clever reinterpretations of familiar dishes. Portions

are generous, there's value on the plate, and presentations are visually impressive.

Witness his *Fried Deviled Eggs*, an irresistible appetizer of panko-crusting hard-boiled egg whites capped with whipped egg yolk on a bed of crispy greens – loads of interplay between smooth and crunchy. There's a classic *Boston Bibb Salad* tweaked with charred tomato, grilled onion, and blue cheese in an avocado vinaigrette. Entrées include the Asian-influenced *Grilled Day Boat Sea Scallops with Tuna Sashimi + Wasabi Aioli*; *Grilled Bison Strip with Sweet Onion Relish + Sautéed Spinach*; and thoughtfully turned out, crowd-pleasing classics such as *Soft Shell Crabs with Baby Carrots, Sweet Corn + Red Potatoes* and *Baby Back Ribs*. Save room for homey desserts like *Rustic Chocolate Open Face "Soufflé."*

Tavern Menu

Montville Inn's more casual Tavern menu features a *Slider Sampler* of mini-beef, pork, and brisket sliders; *Grilled Skirt Steak with Guacamole + Chips*; personal pizzas; and, of course, a knockout *Burger with Applewood-Smoked Bacon, Tomato + Maytag Blue Cheese*. Dinner for two with a glass of wine apiece can be as inexpensive as \$32, which means a great night out -- without breaking the bank!

Cocktails are an increasingly important part of the Montville Inn experience. New seasonal recipes include an essence-of-spring *Strawberry Rhubarb Martini* (Grey Goose, house-made strawberry rhubarb purée) and the bracing *Cucumber Martini* (muddled cucumbers, Hendrick's Gin). The restaurant's well-balanced

wine list leans heavily toward Napa Valley, a reflection of its compatibility with the strong flavor profile of the menu.

New at The Montville Inn!

Just arrived: handsome new outdoor furniture—including granite-top tables, Adirondack chairs, and hi-top cocktail rounds—perfect for al fresco dining now that warmer weather's here. Coming soon: a handsome lower-level wine room for elegant private dining, business functions, and wine tastings—ready in early July. And Tuesday evenings all summer long means one thing now in Montville: \$9.95 pizza nights, for a terrific house-made pie and good bottle of wine to accompany it.

“It's been a long and exciting adventure getting the restaurant up and running,” reflects Randy, “and we're thrilled with the positive response from the community. We're happy to be part of a new tradition of hospitality, which this location has been known for since the 1770's.”

**for further information
—or to schedule a tasting or interview—**

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