



1002 NINTH STREET
AT KNOX
DURHAM
NORTH CAROLINA 27705
919.286.3609

Dinner Tuesday-Saturday
Reservations Accepted

North Carolina native Ben Barker met his Brooklyn born wife Karen on their first day of class at the Culinary Institute of America . . . they've been cooking together ever since. After stints at La Residence and the Ferrington House in Chapel Hill, NC, they opened the Magnolia Grill in 1986. Located in an unassuming converted grocery store in Durham, the Grill's casual atmosphere is the perfect backdrop for Barker's bold Southern-inflected cooking. The restaurant's motto is *Not Afraid of Flavor* as is the title of the Barker's cookbook published by the University of North Carolina Press. Karen's dessert book, *Sweet Stuff*, followed in 2004. While not strictly Southern, Magnolia Grill's cuisine displays a Southern sensibility – making creative use of regional ingredients with an emphasis on seasonality and local sourcing.



After twenty-five years, the Barker's goal remains to be viewed as an extraordinary neighborhood restaurant that provides a venue for folks to gather together around a common table. In recognition of these efforts, Ben has been named as one of *Food & Wine Magazine's* Best New Chefs and was the James Beard Foundation's Best Chef in the Southeast in 2000. Karen was selected as *Bon Appétit's* 1999 Best Pastry Chef and in 2003 was the recipient of the James Beard Awards Outstanding Pastry Chef Award. Magnolia Grill has repeatedly been selected as one of America's Best 50 Restaurants by *Gourmet Magazine*.

The Barkers have participated in many charity fundraisers throughout the country benefiting organizations such as Meals on Wheels, The James Beard Foundation, Magic Moments and Make a Wish Foundation. They have also been featured as part of such guest chef programs as "Cuisines of the Sun", La Varenne at Greenbriar and the "International Food and Wine Festival" at Epcot. Their articles and recipes have been published in *Bon Appétit*, *Southern Living*, *Food & Wine*, *Fine Cooking*, and *Traditional Home* magazines and the New York Times.

As both founding and active members of the Southern Foodways Alliance, Ben and Karen seek to preserve the traditions, cuisine and culture of the South. When away from the restaurant, they love to garden, sit on their screen porch listening to the blues, and spend as much time as possible at the NC coast.

The source of Magnolia Grill's rise to national prominence is certainly the joint talents of Ben and Karen Barker, a success firmly founded on their combined forty years of experience in top-quality restaurants and upon their formal educations at New York's prestigious Culinary Institute of America. Upon opening Magnolia Grill in November, 1986, they received immediate national attention. That recognition has been on-going and includes the following honors.

Honors & Awards

2006, 2001

Selected as one of America's Best 50 Restaurants by *Gourmet Magazine*

2003

Winner of James Beard Foundation All-Clad Bakeware Outstanding Pastry Chef Award

1999 - 2001

Recipients of DiRoNA Award of Excellence for Distinguished Restaurants of North America

2000

Co-authors of *Not Afraid of Flavor . . . Recipes from Magnolia Grill* published by UNC Press

Winner of James Beard Award for Excellence, Best Chef in the Southeast

1992 & 1995 - 1999

Nominated as Best Chef in the Southeast, James Beard Awards

1999

Recipient of *Bon Appétit* American Food & Entertaining Awards as Best Pastry Chef

1997 & 1999 - 2002

Named Outstanding Pastry Chef, James Beard Awards

1997

Featured on *Great Chefs of the South* Television Series