

# From Paris to Park Lodge

Philip Stanton was nearly through the Rs before he arrived at Le Relais Louis 13, a Michelin-starred restaurant near the Pont Neuf.

He'd been going from restaurant to restaurant, starting with the three-stars, then the two, before he found a chef in Paris willing to take him on for a short-term stage. He landed work experience on, according to the establishment's webpage, the remains of the convent where Louis XIII was proclaimed King of France.

Today, some of Stanton's favorite opening menu items – steak tartar, steamed Manila clams, duck cassoulet – remind him of the short time he spent living and working in Paris.

After working in restaurants from San Francisco to Spokane – with stints in Portland and Los Angeles as well as Paris – he's opened a restaurant of his own. Stanton's Park Lodge in Kendall Yards specializes in locally inspired comfort food with – at least for this first menu – a Mediterranean influence.

"The menu is reflective of what comfort food means to me," Stanton said. "This is me in my comfort zone."

At its center is an applewood-fired grill. "A gas grill makes things a lot easier," Stanton said. "But it's not necessarily good for developing flavor."

And, "I'm not looking for an easy answer. I want people to taste the food and be reminded of something. But I want them to look at it and see something they haven't seen before."

His rendition of chili, for example, features white bean ragu, scallions, cheddar emulsion and ancho-braised short rib meat encased in pork-belly membrane.

Look for influences from North Africa and the Middle East, too – in the seven-vegetable tagine with couscous and honey-mint yogurt, and mezze platter with hummus, baba ganoush, tabbouleh and zaatar-spiced feta.

Stanton, 32, worked for nearly three years at Italia Trattoria in Browne's Addition while searching for a location for his own eatery.

"I feel like I can put more passion into the food when it's being done the way I think it should be done," he said.

How Stanton thinks it should be done is "all from scratch" and wood-fired when possible.

Stanton is named for his late grandfather, who led the Spokane-based Washington Trust Bank like his father before him and his son after him.

But the younger Philip Stanton said he knew from the time he was in eighth grade that he wanted to be a chef.

The 2004 graduate of Saint George's School went to California after high school to attend the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco.

His new restaurant is light, bright and airy, with 25-foot ceilings and windows overlooking the river. Floors are polished concrete. Wood beams are exposed. Colors are neutral – cream, tan, charcoal – with maple tables and benches.

There's room for about 100 guests, including about 20 on the patio, where Stanton plans to install a fire pit and plant an herb garden.

Eventually, he would also like to offer multi-course tasting menus, which allow chefs to be creative and feature local, seasonal ingredients.

"My goal," Stanton said, "is to be able to create a full experience for the guest."

– Adriana Janovich, Food Editor  
*The Spokesman-Review*

**On the Web**  
Read a longer version of this article that appeared in the S-R at [www.sgs.org/magazine](http://www.sgs.org/magazine)



**Philip Stanton '04 in his new Park Lodge restaurant at Spokane's Kendall Yards.**



Adriana Janovich/The Spokesman-Review