

# What's Cooking

## HOLIDAY HOURS

**Mon - Thurs** 10:30 am to 10:00 pm

**Friday** 10:30 am to 11:00 pm

**Saturday** 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm

**Sunday** 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm

### Christmas Eve

Open at 3:00 pm

*Waiting List Names taken until 7:00 pm*

*(Parties seated in order of arrival)*

### Christmas Day

Closed - Merry Christmas!

### New Year's Eve

3:00 pm to the New Year!

*(Parties seated in order of arrival)*

### New Year's Day

3:00 pm to 10:00 pm

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Adult History Tour

Saturday, January 21

### Wine Dinner

Monday, January 23

### Steak School

Saturday, March 4

### Adult History Tour

Saturday, April 22

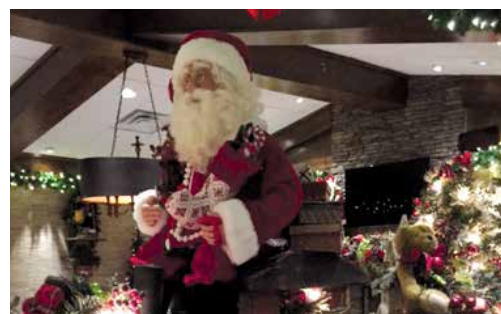
## Santa Claus has Come to the Taste of Texas

Come and see the spectacular Christmas decorations at the Taste of Texas! This year, with the help of our friend Julie Hill, we have added the complete collection of Duncan Royale Santa Clauses. This gorgeous vintage collection traces the history of Santa Clauses around the world, from the Magi, to Babouska of Russia, Christkindt of Bavaria, Saint Nicholas, Kris Kringle and more. Throughout history, these Santas have revealed a selfless love and generous spirit, exemplifying the true meaning of Christmas. This collection shows the many faces of the legend who has brightened the lives of young children around the world for over a thousand years.

**SANTA VISITS:** Santa Claus will be seated at our beautiful stone fireplace for a great photo for your family on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, December 13, 14, 20, and 21 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Bring your camera and capture Santa with your special ones.

We plan year-round to transform the restaurant into a Christmas wonderland over 6 days and 1,100 man hours. Nina and the decorating team have decked the halls with over 70 new nutcrackers, hundreds of feet of garland, 10,000 sparkling lights, antique sleighs, and our favorite Christmas collections. Please pick up a copy of our Christmas

decorations guide, and do not miss the beautiful custom needlepoint stockings, the rare Thomas Nast Christmas Post Card, and the exquisite jeweled Christmas trees. Sharing great food, treasured company, and magical surroundings are what the Taste of Texas Christmas is famous for. The Taste of Texas Family wishes you a very Merry Christmas!



## Gift Card Special

**Buy \$100, Get \$25 Free**

OPEN NOVEMBER 25 - DECEMBER 24

Our Taste of Texas Gift Card Special begins Friday, November 25 at 9 a.m. and continues through December 24 at 9 p.m. Buy \$100 in Gift Cards and get \$25 free!

Give the gift of Texas hospitality this Christmas season. To purchase, shop online at [www.tasteoftexas.com](http://www.tasteoftexas.com) and click on "Gift Card Special" to have the Gift Cards shipped USPS directly to you or your recipient with a gift message. Gift Card Special Online Orders must be placed by noon CST December 22<sup>nd</sup> to include the \$25 free gift card. Or, visit our Gift Store just inside the front door. Our Gift Cards (including the \$25 free) may be used for dining and purchases in the restaurant only, carry no expirations, and are a great value.

## Taste of Texas • ONLINE •



**TOMAHAWK STEAKS**

Surprise and delight your family, business associates, and friends with the gift of Texas steaks this holiday season at [www.tasteoftexas.com](http://www.tasteoftexas.com). We are now offering Tomahawk Steaks - serious ribeyes for the serious steak lover. Each Tomahawk is an impressive 38 ounces with a 14 inch bone that will hang off your plate. This memorable gift includes four Taste of Texas Steak Knives, ensuring that the recipient has the right tools for the job.

At [www.tasteoftexas.com](http://www.tasteoftexas.com), we offer the same perfectly aged Certified Angus Beef that we serve at the restaurant. Our steaks arrive in a reusable cooler via FedEx and include our Gourmet Grilling Guide and Signature Steak Seasoning. Complete your gift with Texas Quail Bites, Herb Garlic Butter, or Blue Cheese Butter.

We ship Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays with our last shipping day on Wednesday, December 21 for steaks and December 22 for gift cards for Christmas arrival. Order by December 7 and receive 2 bonus Taste of Texas steak knives with your steaks! The gift card special for online orders ends at noon CST on December 22.

# FAMILY NEWS

**Edd and Nina:** Edd loves working on the board of the Heart of Texas Foundation, which is working to expand the Southwestern Seminary at Darrington Penitentiary. This transformational program aims to restore the lives of "lifers" through the words and works of Jesus Christ. The prison becomes safer and more forgiving as inmates' lives are transformed. The Darrington Seminary in Texas is our response to what we have seen occur at Angola in Louisiana, where violence dropped by more than 70% since the Angola Seminary was created.

**What do Ginger Rogers and Nina Hendee have in common?** They are both Admirals in the Texas Navy of course! On September 17, Texas Navy Day, we celebrated Nina's commissioning in Galveston, Texas. As a lover of Texas History, Nina is thrilled to carry on the mission of the Texas Navy Association – to present and remember the heroic acts of the Texas Navy, which were critical to the success of freedom in the Texian revolution. We are so proud of Nina's work to preserve and remember Texas' unique history, and we salute our very own Skipper.

**Kristin and Corbin** are loving working at the restaurant on the 40th Anniversary cookbook and online business. Have you seen Baby Henry on his lunchtime walks by the Taste fountain? At seven months old, Henry is happiest at the busy restaurant, and makes a delightful front door host.

**Lisa and Chris Blackard** with Hannah (soon to be 6) and Elizabeth (3 ½) are all busy and well. We are all loving watching the girls grow up before our eyes!

Lisa was recently honored at a luncheon for Freedom Place, a Christ-centered care and recovery center for underage female victims of



domestic child sex trafficking. Claudine has also become involved in this amazing charity and helped chair the "Freedom to Fly" luncheon on November 3rd. We are so proud of them for this their work on this important issue.

**Claudine and David Hartland** are having a ball and staying busy with their 5 sweet children: Sam – 13, Campbell – 11, Hudson – 9, Reagan – 7, and Conrad almost 3.

We are grateful to be working and playing together each day with our children and EIGHT grandchildren.



## 39th Anniversary Looking forward to 40 Years

We recently celebrated the Taste of Texas' 39th Anniversary with a special wine dinner featuring David Arthur Vineyards. We were thrilled to host two incredible supply partners of the Taste of Texas: winemaker David Long and Certified Angus Beef Corporate Chef Peter Rosenberg. David offered a tasting of David Arthur vintages, while

Peter served a beautiful five course menu of beef brisket, smoked tri-tip crostini, honey brie with bresaola, bourbon cured flank steak, ribeye with jumbo lump crab meat, and wild rice mushroom soufflé, followed by a Taste of Texas birthday cake. Did you miss this special vintner's dinner? Please join us on January 23rd for the next wine dinner at the Taste of Texas.

### 40th Anniversary Preview:

Ten years ago, we published a 30th Anniversary Cookbook, which quickly sold out. We are in the process of writing a 40th Anniversary Cookbook. We are thrilled to be working with cookbook consultant Roni Atnipp (Luby's Recipes and Memories; With Gratitude, Johnny Carrabba; The Junior League of Houston's Stop and Smell the Rosemary) to publish a beautiful coffee-table-worthy cookbook of our favorite restaurant recipes and Texas hospitality tips. We will start presales in the spring and plan to have the books by November 2017!

### Improvements Update:

We cannot wait for what the next year will bring. We are hard at work getting the permits and construction plans finalized for our kitchen expansion, new butcher shop and gift shop, and continued building improvements!

## Holiday Recipe Apple Spice Cakes

We start with fresh Granny Smith Apples and bake them into a moist spice cake and then soak it in a homemade brandy toffee sauce to take it over the top. Tastes like the Holidays! Serve with cinnamon ice cream, and a homemade apple chip. Serves 8.

For the cakes:

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon table salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 ¾ cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup canola oil
- 3 eggs
- 3 Granny Smith Apples, peeled and grated
- 1 tablespoon brandy

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Whisk together flour, soda, salt, cinnamon, and allspice and set aside. In a separate bowl, whisk together sugar and oil until well incorporated and sugar starts to dissolve. Whisk in eggs one at a time until incorporated and light. Fold in flour mixture one third at a time and do not over mix. Fold in the grated apples and add brandy. Scoop into individual cake molds. Bake at 325 for 20-25 minutes until done.



# HOUSTON HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

Hosting family and out of town guests this Thanksgiving and Christmas? Houston has so many fun things to offer this season!

**H-E-B Thanksgiving Day Parade:** The 67th Annual Thanksgiving Day parade begins at 9 a.m. on November 24th on Smith at Lamar downtown and will showcase beautiful floats, high-flying balloons, marching bands, and more! Tickets online.

1. **Uptown Holiday Lighting:** Gather along Post Oak Boulevard on Thanksgiving evening (Nov. 24, 4 - 7 p.m.) for a dazzling holiday lighting, featuring live music, holiday characters, Santa's reindeer, and a special appearance by Santa.
2. **Dinner at Tony's:** For an incredible and memorable meal, make a reservation and dress for a very special occasion at Tony's, the cherished Houston fine dining destination, led by our dear friends Tony and Donna Vallone. 713-622-6778.
3. **A Christmas Carol at the Alley Theatre:** Houston's seasonal favorite retells Charles Dickens' classic story of Ebenezer Scrooge's Christmas Eve journey. We love this powerful story about redemption! (Nov. 20 - Dec. 28) Tickets online.
4. **We Three Kings: An Irish Tenor Christmas:** On December 7 at 8 p.m., the Irish Tenors—Finbar Wright, Anthony Kearns, and Ronan Tynan— will bring their beautiful traditional voices, mixed with a little humor and a lot of heart to Jones Hall for a holiday concert like no other. Tickets online.
5. **Annual Candlelight Tour in Historic Sam Houston Park:** The Heritage Society takes you back in time with costumed carolers on December 10-11. Tickets online.

## HOLIDAY Wine Picks

Here are a few of our favorite picks from the Taste of Texas' award-winning wine list to bring good cheer to your holiday table this year!

**Pedras Cabernet Sauvignon 2005 "Ristow Estate Vineyard," Napa Valley.** This is a bold cabernet of exceptional intensity and flavor.

1. **Silver Oak Cabernet Sauvignon 2011, Napa Valley and 2012, Alexander Valley.** Perfect for big dinners or holiday celebrations, these are delicious and distinctive wines to perfectly complement your steaks. Be sure to see our Silver Oak Vertical by the wine room.
2. **La Crema Chardonnay 2014, Sonoma Coast.** This wine opens with lively citrus, subtle oak, and finishes with just a kiss of butterscotch.
3. **Mumm Brut Prestige, Napa Valley.** Offered by the glass and by the bottle, this signature sparkling wine is the perfect wine to accompany dessert or end a celebratory meal.
4. **Prosecco La Marca, Veneto, Italy.** With delicate, golden straw color and lively effervescence, this prosecco opens with aromas of citrus, honey, and white flowers and has a light and refreshing finish.

## Staff Service Milestones

**Chuck Heaton, General Manager 35 years**  
**Ruben Valladolid, Kitchen Prep Manager 35 years**  
**Rolando Pastrana, Kitchen Supervisor 25 years**  
**James Kane, Manager 25 years**  
**Jay Fox, Manager 20 years**  
**Scott Gerow, Manager 20 years**

Kitchen Supervisors **Rolando Pastrana, Huber Vazquez, Luis Gutierrez, and Pedro Nava** have a combined 69 years' experience running the Taste of Texas kitchen. We are so thankful for you all!

## Staff Updates

After 48 years in the restaurant business and 28 years at the Taste of Texas, Senior Manager Stephen Edelstein retired this fall. On October 9, current and former Taste of Texas staff members, customers, suppliers, and family gathered at the restaurant to celebrate this remarkable man's career. Fred Moses, a Taste server in the 1990's, came all the way from California to celebrate! Stephen has touched the lives of so many people at the Taste, and we miss seeing him each day!



Manager Patrick Dominguez and former staff Shelby Robinson were married June 4. Carlos Diaz and his beautiful bride Estela were married in August. Blessings to you all!



Manager Lindsey Johnson and husband Jeremy welcomed their daughter Alice Elaine on October 9.



Celeste Zubia and Robert Guillory became parents to a baby boy, Robert, in July. Servers Randi and Travis White, are expecting baby number two. Michael Tucker and his wife are also expecting their second baby. Congratulations and welcome sweet babies!

Cindy Le will be graduating from U of H in December with a Business Management degree and a minor in Supply Chain Management. We are so proud of you!



# TASTE OF TEXAS™

RESTAURANT

10505 Katy Freeway  
Houston, Tx 77024

[www.tasteoftexas.com](http://www.tasteoftexas.com)  
713.932.6901

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## Honors

The Taste of Texas was listed at #41 among the Top 100 Independent Restaurants in the United States by Restaurant Business Magazine. We are honored to be on this distinguished list.

Wine Spectator Award of Excellence: The Taste of Texas Wine List, curated by Manager Norman Faust, was honored again with our 21st Wine Spectator Award of Excellence. Thank you Norman!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Please check our website for details  
and register online at [www.tasteoftexas.com](http://www.tasteoftexas.com)

### January 21 & April 22

Adult Texas History Tour with Nina: Please join Nina for a morning of exciting stories about Texas History and the Legends of our beloved state. Lunch is included. Cost is \$25 plus tax per person.

### January 23

Taste of Texas Wine Dinner: Please join us for our next Taste of Texas Wine Dinner. Another amazing 5 course dinner and wine pairing. Cost is \$159.95 per person includes tax and gratuity. Space is limited.

### March 4

Steak School: You'll learn about USDA grading, trim specifications, the aging process and how to grill a perfect steak every time. This makes a wonderful gift for the steak lovers and grillers in your life. Cost is \$75 plus tax per person and includes a steak lunch. Come hungry!

*Proceeds from these events benefit our employee scholarship program at the Taste of Texas.  
Space is limited, so please reserve early. Thank you for your support!*