

Executive Chef
Kerry Heffernan



Exec Kerr

By Maralyn D. Hill

Times have changed in Ireland, the U.S. and New York.

The Irish started immigrating to the U. S. in the 1800s. Because they were fleeing poverty and hunger, they came as laborers and service staff, migrating across the country.

People used to say, "The Irish focus on potatoes." Well, that is not true today. Whether you are experiencing an Irish chef or in an Irish restaurant, you will enjoy some fine fare.

When asking about a well-known Irish chef, many New Yorkers will think of Bobby Flay and his famous Mesa Grill NYC; Bar American burger places in Garden City, NY; Lake Grove, NY; Cherry Hill, NJ; Eatontown, NJ; or Paramus, NJ. He has certainly made his mark serving exceptional food, with a wide variety of prices and a dynamite television show.

Kerry Heffernan opened Union Square Hospitality Group's Eleven Madison Park and in time, became partner. This was after bringing 20 years of culinary excellence, experience and leadership to the kitchen on Central Park South at New York City's South Gate and becoming known for his seasonal American dishes. However, Chef Heffernan did his due diligence around the world and in New York City at Montrachet, Le Régence, Restaurant Bouley, Sous Chef, working with Chef Tom Colicchio at Mondrian before landing his first job as Chef de Cuisine at One Fifth

IMAGES COURTESY OF KERRY HEFFERNAN

Executive Chef Kerry Heffernan

Avenue. Under the direction of Chef Alfred Portale, Kerry designed the restaurant's signature fish menu. Kerry later became the Executive Chef of the Westbury Hotel's famed Polo Restaurant.

At Eleven Madison Park, he introduced his elegant seasonal cuisine. Under his leadership, the restaurant continues to receive accolades with a tie with Per Se on "Zagat Survey's Top 20 Most Popular Restaurants in New York," The James Beard Foundation's Award for Outstanding Service in America, Wine Spectator's Award of Excellence and Esquire Magazine's "Best New Restaurant."

Kerry is as involved outside the kitchen, with numerous philanthropic projects including: Share Our Strength, Project by Project, City Meals on Wheels, Kids for Kids and both the Central Park and Madison Square Park Conservancies. Kerry also serves as an advisor to seafood sustainability and conservation agencies. He was honored in 2012 as the commencement speaker at the Culinary Institute of America.

As a seafood expert and avid outdoorsman, Kerry has won numerous charity fishing tournaments. Two include the "Manhattan Cup" and the "Montauk Redbone." He also seems to be a favorite on many TV shows, including: The Today Show, Good Morning America, Martha Stewart, CBS and CNN's American Morning.

Chef is an avid saltwater fly fisherman and snowboarder. Kerry sees Central Park as a seasonal inspiration and ideal backdrop for his cuisine.

Kerry was kind enough to share a recipe with us -- unfortunately, no photo, but it is easy to envision.

Deconstructed Turkey Shepherd's Pie

4 cups cooked diced turkey meat (light or dark, free of fat and skin)

2 cups white sauce (see recipe)

1½ cups cooked diced vegetables (optional)

½ small bunch sage, shredded
1 bunch parsley, chopped

In a 6-quart saucepan, gently heat sauce; check, adjust seasoning, if needed, as it warms. Place turkey and veggies in a microwavable covered container, sprinkle with water to moisten; heat for 2mins,





Verbeena panna cotta topped with strawberries, crumbled butter cookies, mint leaves and a raspberry coulis on a white rectangle plate



Littleneck and manila clams with sliced fingerling potatoes, sliced leeks and bacon garnished with thyme in a white sauce in a round white bowl



Apple infused honey crepe with whipped creme fraiche and thyme flowers on a white background



Asparagus topped with minced egg, air dried beef, butter fried panko, a slice of a meyer lemon, dill and cardamon vinaigrette on a white background



Fluke with asian greens in chili paste, leeks and fermented black beans on a flat white rectangle plate



Kerry Heffernan
opened Union
Square Hospitality
Group's Eleven
Madison Park





then “toss” and reheat for another minute. Add herbs to sauce, check seasoning, add warmed turkey, veggies and continue to heat on stove, gently folding with rubber spatula until just hot.

White Sauce*
 2 quarts peeled pearl onions,
 cipollini or other small onion
 (leftover creamed or roasted
 onions work well)
 ¾ cup Carolina rice

2 quarts chicken stock
 6 sprigs fresh thyme
 1 cup heavy cream

Method:
 *This is basically creamed onions,
 thickened with rice and pureed.
 Put all ingredients except cream in
 a 6 quart saucepot; season well,
 simmer slowly until onions are
 cooked through and remove (if
 some of the overcooked ones
 remain, that is fine, too). Add
 cream to rice. For stock mixture;
 reheat to simmer, check seasoning.
 Cool for ½ hour for safer blending.

Place in blender (in batches if
 needed) so that the mixture never
 fills more than half of the blender.
 Puree slowly at first, then build
 speed, until completely smooth.

Potato Croquettes
 3 cups leftover mashed potatoes

For Breading

1 cup all purpose flour
 2 whole eggs beaten with
 ¼ cup milk
 2 cups panko breadcrumbs

For Frying
 2 cups canola oil

Form leftover mashed potatoes
 into approximately 8 thin disks;
 brush each disk evenly with egg
 wash and dredge in flour and Panko
 mixture. Fry at a high temp until
 both sides are golden brown,
 carefully flipping between each
 side. Remove and drain on a plate
 with paper towels.

To serve, lay crisp sautéed
 potatoes in four bowls and spoon
 equal amounts of hot turkey
 mixture on top. Serve immediately.

To learn more about Executive Chef
 Kerry Heffernan go to
www.kerryheffernan.com.

