

**ANDREW SUTTON**  
**NAPA ROSE EXECUTIVE CHEF**

*"I've always thought the best restaurants reflect the personality of the chef." - Andrew Sutton, 2003*

When you're the executive chef at one of the country's finest restaurants, culinary passion seems to come natural, but for Andrew Sutton, a more humble beginning spawned his love affair with fine cuisine and success.

"It probably all started with a family tradition," muses Sutton, whose kitchen is the magnificent Napa Rose at Disney's Grand Californian Hotel® in Anaheim, California. "I was one of four kids, a family of six. Each of us had to cook one night a week – on the seventh night we went out. It was in his home kitchen that Sutton discovered his fervor for cooking and which later parlayed into line jobs at casual eateries in his hometown of Dallas during high school.

Sutton's small town reputation quickly swelled when he got a call from Jean LaFont, the corporate chef of Universal Restaurants, which owned the most prestigious restaurants in Dallas. It was here in Longview, East Texas, where Sutton found his flair. He was captivated by the "artistry and athleticism" of classic French cuisine. The flavors were explosive, reflecting the cooking of Lyon. What had started as a summer job, became a life's calling

In the fall of 1983, Sutton joined the opening culinary team for Dallas' celebrated Registry Hotel under Executive Chef Henry Boubee. Two years later, Sutton enrolled in the Culinary Institute of America, to add a formal education to hands-on experience that mirrored a European-style apprenticeship. His externship translated into opening Dallas' Crescent Court Hotel, where he encountered his first taste of California cuisine as rendered by Steve Singer.

At the celebrated The Mansion at Turtle Creek in Dallas Sutton added yet another style of cooking to his repertoire. He worked with Dean Fearing and his Southwest cuisine. Subsequently he was promoted to sous chef, a position wherein he developed the commitment to excellence that has driven his career ever since. He also realized he was keenly interested in creating high-end cuisine at relatively high volumes. "There's an intensity about it that fuels my passion for cooking." Consequently, he spent the next five years doing just that.

In 1993, Sutton was recruited to another internationally acclaimed boutique property, Napa Valley's Auberge du Soleil. By 1995 he had been promoted to executive chef and he immediately fell in love with the wine country lifestyle. "What a beautiful place to refine yourself as a chef. True earth-to-table cooking and America's best wines." Sutton developed his signature wine country cuisine, which he describes as having "two roads – one sophisticated, the other rustic" as well as his Sense's Menus, earning the resort's restaurant a rank of third in the nation by *Condé Nast Traveler*.

The opportunity came to share his talents with Southern California developed in 2000, when Disney approached him about opening a dining destination for Disney's Grand Californian Hotel at the DISNEYLAND Resort

Disney encouraged him to create an eatery that would complement Sutton's energetic sense of fun with a theater-style kitchen that would enable him to exercise his showmanship. "I loved Napa and Auberge, but the offer to design my own kitchen, to create an entirely new restaurant to showcase my food was one I couldn't refuse". "It's an environment in which we can show people how very passionate we are about creating the kind of food that is truly good and that people love."

The commitment by Disney to enable Sutton and General Manager Michael Jordan to run Napa Rose like a free-standing restaurant has also been honored. As testimony to their success in doing so, the Napa Rose has already been awarded "2002's Best New Restaurant" by Zagat Survey as well as *Food & Wine Magazine's* June 2002 "Best New Wine List" in the country. Much like Napa Rose, Chef Sutton has been presented with numerous awards, including the "2004 Chef of the Year" by the Southern California Restaurant Writers (SCRW).

The powerful endorsement for Sutton's food reflects the discipline of a formal French training as well as his experience with and appreciation of American regional cooking. "I don't build towers, but I do like a beautiful plate with great flavor. After all, the culinary arts are the only art forms that touch all the senses."

Talent and success did not find Sutton only in the culinary field. In October 2001, Sutton passed an arduous two-day exam to successfully complete the Level I Sommelier Course, making him one of only a handful of chefs in the country who have demonstrated this level of wine knowledge.

Married to a fellow culinarian with a prosperous catering business, Sutton is the father of two young daughters. Despite his pride in being a chef who can be seen daily working on the line in Napa Rose's kitchen with the "best team I've ever assembled," Sutton carves out time for his family and a variety of athletic pursuits including ocean water swimming and surfing in Southern California.