



Tom Douglas

Chef and Restaurateur, Tom Douglas Seattle Kitchen Restaurant Group

For over 30 years, James Beard award-winning chef Tom Douglas has received many accolades recognizing his innovative role in defining Pacific Northwest cuisine. Through Douglas' self-taught methodology he has mastered fresh, local ingredients and helped define the cuisine and restaurant industry to critics, audiences, and diners around the world.

Tom Douglas began working at Café Sport in 1984 and five-short years later opened his first restaurant, Dahlia Lounge, with wife and business partner Jackie Cross. The restaurant quickly became a staple on the Seattle dining scene staple and received national accolades, including a nomination by the James Beard Foundation for Outstanding Restaurant three years in a row as well as Tom's first James Beard award as Best Chef Northwest in 1994.

After opening Etta's and Palace Kitchen, Dahlia Bakery was Douglas' next venture; he opened the bakery next door to Dahlia Lounge, baking up artisan bread, baked goods and delicious desserts, including the world-famous coconut cream pie. James Beard award winner, Eric Tanaka, started working with Tom at Dahlia Lounge in 1994, climbing from line cook to business partner in 2004.

Since 1989, Douglas has opened 18 restaurants including: Lola, Etta's, Seatown Seabar and Rotisserie, Serious Pie (three locations), Serious Biscuit, Cuoco, Brave Horse Tavern, TanakaSan, Assembly Hall, The Carlile Room, Cantina Leña, Home Remedy, Rub with Love Shack, and Palace Kitchen. In addition, he runs a catering business, Tom Douglas' Catering and Events; an event space, Palace Ballroom; a product line of spices and sauces, Rub with Love; and a cooking school, Hot Stove Society. Tom is the

author of four cookbooks, including James Beard award winning *Tom Douglas' Seattle Kitchen* and New York Times Bestseller, *The Dahlia Bakery Cookbook*.

Tom's enthusiasm in the kitchen flows into his management style for his restaurants as well. He's commitment to his staff not only includes increasing profitability but also minimizing staff turnover and constantly creating opportunities for advancement within the company, regardless of front or back of the house experience.

Fostering these relationships over the years has not only led to a low turnover rate at Tom Douglas Seattle Kitchen restaurants but has also helped to find leaders of the company in the past and for the future. A great example is Tom Douglas Seattle Kitchen business partner and James Beard award winner, Eric Tanaka, who worked his way from line cook to partner of the restaurants in 10 years. Tom's notable saying is, "no one can out-effort us."

Alongside wife and business partner, Jackie Cross, Douglas started a farm in eastern Washington in 2006. Prosser Farm, about a two-and-a-half-hour drive east of Seattle, is managed by Jackie Cross with the specific task of providing all Tom Douglas Seattle Kitchen chefs with organically grown produce. On a weekly basis, an average of 2,400 pounds of produce is trucked from the farm to the Seattle-based restaurants.

Douglas has been featured on Food Network's Iron Chef, where he won his battle against Chef Masaharu Morimoto. In 2008, *Bon Appétit* named Douglas Restaurateur of the Year. The James Beard Foundation awarded Douglas their national prize of Outstanding Restaurateur in 2012.

Tom Douglas is a board member and advocate for Food Lifeline, an organization working to end hunger in Western Washington. Originally from Newark, Delaware, Tom now lives with his wife Jackie in Seattle, as does their daughter, Loretta, who attends the University of Washington School of Law.