



Rob McDaniel

Executive Chef

Rob McDaniel is the Executive Chef of SpringHouse, located in Russell Crossroads, town center of Russell Lands On Lake Martin, Alabama.

McDaniel's relationship with traditional Southern cuisine began in Haleyville, Alabama, where his grandmothers instilled in him a passion that he continues to carry. While at Auburn University, McDaniel decided to make a career out of that passion and graduated with a Bachelor's in hotel and restaurant management. After graduation, he headed north to Montpelier, Vermont, where he studied at the New England Culinary Institute. During his time there, McDaniel honed his knowledge of and appreciation for sustainable cooking and became an advocate for supporting local farmers and preserving regional sources.

McDaniel continued to hone his skills by training under prestigious chefs such as Johnny Earles at Criolla's in Grayton Beach, Florida, Chris Hastings at Hot & Hot Fish Club in Birmingham, Alabama, and Drew Robinson at Jim 'N Nick's BBQ in Birmingham, Alabama. During his time in these kitchens, McDaniel's passion for Southern foods, foraging, and sustainability evolved into the culinary style that he is known for today. His respect for the land and dedication to its inspiration is showcased through his affinity of creating flavorful recipes using local ingredients.

In 2009, McDaniel accepted the position of executive chef and general manager at the soon-to-debut SpringHouse. Here, McDaniel diligently works to ensure the seasonally based menu stays true to the region's local flavors and cuisine. In 2012, McDaniel additionally assumed the role of general manager for the newly re-acquired Kowaliga Restaurant.

The James Beard Foundation has named McDaniel a Best Chef South semi-finalist for the last five years, and SpringHouse was included on Southern Living's 100 Best Restaurants in the South in 2014. McDaniel was honored as Auburn University's 2012 Outstanding Hotel and Restaurant Management Program Alumnus. At the 2018 Annual Meeting, the Alexander City Chamber of Commerce honored McDaniel as the Chamber Business Person of the Year for 2017.

When McDaniel isn't in the kitchen, he and his wife, Emily, are consumed by their young twin daughters, Rosemary and Amelia.