



WE CREATE UNFORGETTABLE PRIVATE CURATED DINING EXPERIENCES.

We take our guests on a journey that extends beyond your ordinary dining establishment. Experience our **art of storytelling** through food. It's an **immersive culinary experience**, offering guests a captivating six-course dinner, each paired exquisitely with wine, meticulously crafted by our renowned culinary director, Steve Glenn, a finalist from Hell's Kitchen.

What truly sets us apart is our dedication to weaving powerful narratives into each dish; we invite diners on a journey that delves deep into black history, touching on topics like Afrofuturism, the story of Fort Monroe, the Freedom Trails, and the rich history of Richmond. Every meal is a chapter, every bite a revelation.





OUR MISSION

The Underground Kitchen brings people together through a shared experience of dining, community, and a sense of occasion. We are experiential storytellers, dedicated to promoting chefs of color, women, and LGBTQ+ individuals in the culinary industry. We believe in the transformative power of food to evoke emotions, memories, and a sense of connection. Our team of skilled chefs and hospitality professionals are committed to weaving together diverse cultural influences with unique locations, sights, and sounds to craft a multi-sensory culinary journey that educates and inspires our guests.





DIVERSITY



UGK is dedicated to promoting chefs of color, women, and LGBTQ+, who are typically underrepresented in the culinary world – and creating a supportive chef community within our overall community that’s based on teamwork and collaboration. We strive to educate our chefs not just about preparation and presentation, but also about the business of running a restaurant, the value of local sources and partnerships, and the need to constantly evaluate standards to maintain the highest level of excellence.

By shining a light on the unique perspectives and culinary traditions of diverse communities, culinary diversity can lead to a more vibrant and inclusive food culture that celebrates the richness of our differences.



STEVE
GLENN



....each course serves as a chapter in a compelling narrative, meticulously crafted to celebrate the richness of black history. As you enjoy each bite, you're not just savoring extraordinary food—you're participating in a story that fills us with immense pride and purpose."

MEET OUR CULINARY DIRECTOR

Hell's Kitchen ✨
Finalist
Season 20

Richmond native Chef Steve Glenn has dedicated his life to exploring the nuances of Culinary Arts. He started with humble beginnings gaining interest in the art of cuisine from his grandmother at the age of 10 years old. Over the course of his career, he's worked his way through the ranks of the industry gaining knowledge from world renowned chefs along the way. At the age of 21, he competed in Gordon Ramsay's Hell's Kitchen where he finished as a finalist and took home the coveted Black Jacket. From there he moved back home to Virginia and worked as executive sous chef at Richmond Country Club for 4 years. At 25, Steve took on the title of Executive Chef of The Black Hen and Bar Blue in Blacksburg Virginia. During his time in Blacksburg he was able to maintain The Black Hen's Reputation as the best restaurant in town. Eventually Chef Steve decided to venture independently as a traveling private chef and consultant. He received excellent reviews all along the east coast before deciding to settle back down in his hometown of Richmond Virginia.



PAST EVENTS

CONVERSATION
with VALERIE CASSEL OLIVER
Curator of Modern Art & Contemporary Art The VMFA



Dinner conversation with Valerie Cassel Oliver, a renowned curator and writer with extensive knowledge of African American art and culture, spoke passionately about the various Freedom Trails across the United States, significant landmarks to the history of the civil rights movement and the struggle for racial equality and providing an engaging discussion about their importance and impact on American society.

HEALING HOPE & FREEDOM



A fundraising event in support of The Fort Monroe Foundation and its African Landing Memorial Project. Featuring a six-course menu curated and executed by five chefs of color who drew inspiration from the black history of food and the history of Fort Monroe. *Watch our video on theundergroundkitchen.org*

The dinner with a historical significance was graced by present and former state governors as well as members of Congress.

EXPLORATION & INNOVATION OF SMITHFIELD

The evening offered an opportunity to discover the versatility of Smithfield products. UGK chefs crafted inventive recipes that guests savored, interacting with the chefs and their culinary masterpieces.





PAST EVENTS

JAMES BEARD HOUSE' *Cultural Collaboration*

The James Beard Foundation extended an invitation to the UGK chefs showcasing their culinary skills at the James Beard House.

Chefs crafted a menu celebrating their diverse cultural backgrounds, resulting in a fusion of distinctive flavors and innovative techniques. The dishes showcased the depth and richness of their culinary traditions, a celebration of diversity and inclusivity in the culinary world, marking a historic moment for the industry.



AFROFUTURISM

Afrofuturism is a cultural movement that explores the intersection of African diaspora culture and science fiction, fantasy, and technology. It imagines a future in which Black people play a central role in shaping their destiny and their relationship to technology and the universe. Food has played a significant role in the history of black Americans, and Afrofuturism has explored the idea of using food as a tool for liberation and empowerment. Food has not only been a means of sustenance for black Americans but has also been a way to resist oppression, celebrate culture, and promote economic independence.



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