



FAYETTE ALLIANCE

GROWING OUR CITY, PROMOTING OUR FARMS

Ouita Michel

Native Lexingtonian Ouita Michel graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y. In 2000, she and her husband, Chris, purchased historic Holly Hill Inn. Holly Hill Inn has been in continuous operation as a restaurant since 1979. In 2012 Holly Hill Inn and Chef Ouita Michel were semi-finalists for the James Beard Award for Best Restaurant & Chef.

In addition to Holly Hill Inn, Ouita has opened revered restaurants Wallace Station, Windy Corner, Smithtown Seafood, and Midway School Bakery. Michel is also the chef-in-residence at Woodford Reserve.

Ouita makes locally grown ingredients a priority in her cuisine. Over the last 14 years, her restaurants have purchased more than \$2 million of Kentucky-grown meats, dairy products, fruits, and vegetables. Her use of ingredients from area farmers not only provides her customers with the freshest and highest-quality cuisine, but also sustains Bluegrass family farms.

Ouita is a member of Slow Food USA; congregational coordinator of Kids in the Kitchen and free community supper programs for Midway Christian Church; board member of FoodChain; and member of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence.

The Fayette Alliance Awards Committee selects Ouita Michel for the 2015 Agricultural Excellence award because of her enduring contributions to Fayette County's signature agricultural industries, and in particular its burgeoning Farm-to-Table movement.

Thanks to Ouita, eating is truly an agricultural act. Lexington is a vibrant city that is becoming more balanced with, and connected to its productive Bluegrass farmland because of her tireless and pioneering leadership in our community.