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**Renie and Sterling Steves**

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ENTERTAINMENT

## Restaurant Roundup: A peek at Ellerbe Fine Foods on Magnolia

BY RENIE AND STERLING STEVES  
September 03, 2009

To be upfront and personal about Ellerbe Fine Foods, the reader should understand that Renie was born and raised in Louisiana, specifically Shreveport. She loves Fort Worth, but you can't take the Louisiana out of the girl.



Who would have thought that she would get to have Molly McCook and Richard King, Shreveport natives and childhood friends, open a restaurant in Fort Worth. Renie grew up going up and down Ellerbe Road, the restaurant namesake.

There are several Louisiana influences on the menu such as shrimp po-boy on a baguette ordered from Gambinos Bakery in New Orleans. Other bread comes in par baked from La Brea Bakery in California and finished in the oven as needed during service. Ellerbe's menu is basically seasonal grilled fish and meat with lots of local produce. Executive Chief McCook was recently spotted at Cowtown Farmers Market where she says she shops every Wednesday and Saturday.

Items will change frequently on the small lunch and dinner menus. We've already seen the fish change from halibut to sole with crawfish, and the Mexia peaches in the salad will soon become another fruit. Grilled airline chicken breast is a cut with part of the wing bone remaining. One diner later commented that it was cooked to the perfect doneness, not stringy and dry, but still smooth and succulent in texture. The accompanying polenta is perfect to soak up all the juices.

There is always a soup. ....currently roasted cauliflower. At lunch the curried chicken sandwich on whole wheat bread is served with smoky house made potato chips. Dessert menu is small but includes grandmothers bread pudding with whiskey sauce and ambrosia chocolate tart with marshmallow cream.

Eleven wines offered by the glass will be changing periodically. We had Sea Glass sauvignon blanc and then recently enjoyed sauvignon blanc by Lange Twins. King carefully chooses boutique wines that are good values for the price with most bottles listed between \$25 and \$60. There is a nice beer list including locally brewed Rahr Seasonal Wheat.

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King and McCook had to have vision to see the 1920s gas station on Magnolia as a restaurant. Their focus is about the overall experience and as the design developed, it seemed to fit their overall dream. McCook said "It definitely had potential but needed lots of love." After a year of negotiations and another year of remodeling, wildflowers were planted around the outdoor patio in large water troughs, cloths were put on tables and topped with squares of brown paper, art work hung that includes children's aprons and photos of the gas station during remodeling.

McCook's sister, Lea Lewis, is special events coordinator. Her job includes catering arrangements in-house with off-site catering to be added. Thirty to fifty patrons occupy the back room comfortably. Realistically Lewis helps where needed. Ellerbe's plans to have their Market with boutique wines, cheeses, specialty vinegars, sauces, olive oils, and pre-made meals open mid-September.

Ellerbe Fine Foods

1501 W. Magnolia Avenue

Fort Worth, TX 76104

817-926-3663

Lunch

Tuesday - Friday 11a.m.-2 p.m.

Dinner

Tuesday - Saturday 5:30 p.m.-9 p.m., until 10 p.m. on Saturday

[www.ellerbefinefoods.com](http://www.ellerbefinefoods.com)

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