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REAL SOUTHERN CULTURE

THE PLACE WE CALL

Home

SOUL RESTORATION

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ZEST FOR LIFE

Chef looks for happiness one meal at a time in GA

EXPANDED FARMING

Mother-daughter duo look for new ways to keep farming viable in AL

HOT SPRINGS TOUR

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PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA WALKER



EXECUTIVE CHEF BRIAN MOONEY is the owner and executive chef of Tre Luna Catering and Tre Luna Bar & Kitchen, and owner of Moon-Walker Inc., a consulting company, all located in Birmingham, AL. Raised in Boca Raton, FL, Brian got his start in the hospitality industry at his father's poolside bar, where he worked the grill every summer. When his father sold the bar to two Italian brothers, they took Brian under their wing and introduced him to Italian cooking. Continuing his passion for food, Brian attended culinary school in West Palm Beach at the Florida Culinary Institute. Brian and his wife Erin relocated to Birmingham, AL to work for Frank Stitt at Bottega, which is where he fell in love with Southern food and cooking. Following his time at Bottega, Brian and Erin went on to start Tre Luna Catering in 2014, and after several successful years, Tre Luna Bar and Kitchen opened in 2019. When not in the kitchen, Brian enjoys spending time with his family, swimming, fishing, and traveling.



A WING AND A SHARE

Tre Luna Bar and Kitchen is an Italian inspired restaurant created to enjoy food and drinks with friends and family. Nestled in The Village at Brock's Gap in Hoover, AL, it is a delicious destination for dining.

When starting Tre Luna, the team's motto was "bringing our table to yours," which still rings true today. Mooney finds joy in having the freedom to create and prepare dishes in his own way, and watch people enjoy them. In doing so, he makes a great effort to ensure his team feels taken care of, while providing an experience for guests that instills a sense of sharing a meal at home.

These Duck Fat Chicken Wings are a delicious year-round appetizer from their menu. They are perfect for sharing with a crowd. Rich, spicy and tangy with the lemon aioli, they are a favorite.

Chef-owner Brian Mooney takes a simple yet elevated approach to his

cooking – letting each ingredient stand out while crafting an elegant dish that is reminiscent of home cooking. Everything is made from scratch at Tre Luna from the pastas to the dough for pizza and bread. They even grind the beef for their popular burger. You'll find fresh seafood from the Gulf and much more.

Tre Luna, means "three moons" in Italian, and is a nod to the early days of Brian's restaurant career, wife Erin's Italian heritage, a play on the duo's last name, "Mooney," as well as a reference to their three children.

At Tre Luna, you'll find a place for the community to gather. Whether you want to grab a burger with friends one night and come back the next night to have seafood risotto or a steak with your date. There's something for everyone.

trelunabarandkitchen.com

DUCK FAT CHICKEN WINGS

CHICKEN WING BRINE INGREDIENTS

- 5 lbs chicken wings
- 1 gallon water
- ½ cup kosher salt
- ½ cup sugar
- 3 cups soy sauce
- 1 lb ice cubes

DIRECTIONS

Chef Mooney suggests preparing the brine 2 days before serving.

1. In a large stock pot, stir together water, salt, and sugar over medium-high heat until the salt and sugar dissolve.
2. Stir in soy, ice, and remaining water into the mixture.
3. When the mixture is completely cool, add the chicken wings.
4. Cover and chill overnight, or up to two days in the refrigerator.

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS

duck fat or canola oil for cooking
Calabrian chilis to season

PICKLED ONIONS INGREDIENTS

- 3 onions
- 1 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 fresh thyme bunch
- 4 rosemary sprigs
- 4 lbs butter
- salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Remove the outer skin of the onion and cut the onion through the root into six pieces.
2. Lightly coat the onions with olive oil.
3. Cover with red wine vinegar, thyme, rosemary, butter, salt, and white wine.

LEMON AIOLI INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup mayo
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- dash of Tabasco

DIRECTIONS

1. Whisk all ingredients together and hold in the refrigerator until ready to toss with wings.

NIGHT BEFORE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Remove chicken wings from the brine.
2. Place in a deep pan and cover with duck fat (canola oil also works well if you don't have duck fat).
3. Cover with aluminum foil and cook at 250° F for 45 minutes.
4. Remove from oil and allow to cool.
5. Season with your favorite seasoning (we love to use Lawry's seasoning).

DAY OF INSTRUCTIONS

1. Finish the wings on the grill. This should only take about five minutes since the wings are fully cooked from prepping the night before.
2. Toss the finished wings with the onions, Calabrian chili peppers to taste, and lemon aioli.
3. Garnish with some sprigs of rosemary.