

Charlotte

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# HOME

DESIGN & DECOR



Contributing Editor

FOODIE



B R U C E  
M O F F E T T



## NEW YEAR, NEW GRATITUDE

The clock struck midnight on December 31, and without much fanfare, I popped open a nice bottle of Champagne. I poured ten glasses, and we exchanged hugs and a toast. I looked around at the same faces that have become so familiar to me since I opened Barrington's 16 years ago. I've been lucky in that I've kept my staff intact for the better part of a decade. My general manager, Peggy, was the first person I hired and I'm confident that I wouldn't have made it six months without her, and definitely wouldn't be where I am today. I thanked Jason, my executive chef, who has been the talented rock in my kitchen for close to a decade and has afforded me the opportunity to pursue other ventures.

I looked around at the other faces that I've grown to know so well over the last ten years with the full knowledge that they are my family. Fatigue showed in everyone's eyes, and we were all comfortable enough with each other to show it. December is a long month in the restaurant industry. We are busy every night, and sometimes customers bring their holiday stress to dinner with them. It's always a delicate dance to keep the wheels from coming off. We quietly wish each other a happy New Year and head off into the night and



to our other families.

When I arrive home, well after midnight, there is a dim glow coming from the master bedroom. I enter the room and see on the television that the New Year's Eve festivities have ended and that I can buy the world's best nonstick pan for one low, low price. My wife and seven-year-old are sleeping, and I get a sudden regret that I'm missing too much. I carry him to his room and tuck him in. I head back, and my wife looks at me with one sleepy eye and says he tried but only made it to 11:30. Maybe next year. She then drifts off again.

Over the next two days, the restaurants are closed, and I try to make the most of it. I spend hours outside throwing the football with my son. In the evening, I cook my wife those fabulous meals that everyone assumes she has every night, rather than only the three or four times a year I get the energy to cook a restaurant-grade meal at home. The next day, I'm back in the restaurant discussing new beginnings and all the innovative changes we want to implement in the coming year. I've realized I am a man with two homes and two families. I thank everyone, in Charlotte and beyond, who have made that possible. ♦

Chef Bruce Moffett is the executive chef and owner of Moffett Restaurant Group, consisting of Barrington's Restaurant, Good Food on Montford and Stagioni. He's been in the restaurant business 35 years, and cooking even longer. You'll find him in the kitchen mostly at the flagship, Barrington's. To make reservations, call 704-364-5755. For more information, visit [www.moffettrestaurantgroup.com](http://www.moffettrestaurantgroup.com).

