



## *Cooked with a Love for Texas*

Chef Stephan Pyles brings his famous Modern Texas Cuisine to Allen. BY MORGAN HALASKA

**TXM+E:** Can you tell us a little bit about your journey, from your Texas upbringing to winning the James Beard Award to becoming known as the “founding father of Modern Texas Cuisine?”

**SP:** I was practically raised in a truck stop café in the small town of Big Spring in west Texas. I did not know it at the time, but I was developing my sense of hospitality and nourishment even then. The “66” in the name of the restaurant, Stampede 66, comes from the café in

Big Spring. I had no intention or desire to continue working the restaurant industry after high school. After obtaining a degree in music, I took my first trip abroad and discovered the awesome possibilities of cuisine. The seeds were planted! After six months of travel, I returned to the United States and began my cooking career by working in local Dallas restaurants.

I opened Routh Street Cafe in 1983, which became ground zero for

Southwestern cuisine, and the platform for becoming the first James Beard Award winner in the American Southwest. My cooking evolved over the years until I eventually coined the phrase Modern Texas Cuisine to describe it.

**TXM+E:** You've got three food concepts you're working on for the new Delta Hotels by Marriott Dallas Allen & Watters Creek Convention Center. What should patrons expect?

**SP:** I will be using ingredients and cooking techniques I developed for the opening of the original Stampede 66 in 2012. We experimented for months with the sous vide process for perfecting honey fried chicken and 72 hours Texas Wagyu brisket. I will also be assisting in the facilitation of the food and drink for the hotel's meeting and conventions.

**TXM+E:** Will anything be changing with Stampede 66 as it relocates to the hotel?

**SP:** The primary difference will be décor. The Allen location will be less “Texas-centric,” as it will embody the concept of Texas, but a bit more modern and refined. Because we are in a hotel, we will be a little more family-friendly offering pizzas and flatbreads, as well as a kids menu.

**TXM+E:** How does Canyon Bar express your “undying love for Texas”?

**SP:** We will feature local beers and wines, such as Shiner Bock beer and Pedernales wines. We will also feature the growing cottage industry of locally produced spirits and liquors in cocktails such as Passion-Chile Margarita and Texas Chile Chai. The menu will be reflective of the dining room, offering authentic tastes of Texas, but with fun, playful twists on the originals.

**TXM+E:** Why Allen?

**SP:** I'm often asked by my guests from the suburbs when I am opening a concept in their neighborhoods. It's exciting to be bringing Stampede 66 to Allen for that reason, especially in such a booming suburb and wonderful location. [stephanpyles.com](http://stephanpyles.com) 🍷