

The Next Southern: Chefs Who are Redefining Southern Cuisine

SAN ANTONIO, TX, UNITED STATES, June 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Clementine](#), owned and operated by James Beard Award finalist John Russ and his wife, Pastry Chef Elise Russ, is shaping the future of San Antonio's dining scene. John's innovative style, rooted in Southern traditions yet inspired by global flavors, brings a distinctive and refreshing perspective to the local community.

The New Orleans native discovered his passion for cooking at a young age, first sparked by his grandmother, who introduced him to her signature

quenelles de brochet. Building on this foundation, Russ studied at Delgado Culinary in New Orleans and honed his craft in fine dining at the Ritz-Carlton, then later with The Capella Group.



Co-owners and chefs of Clementine

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"Every week, we're inspired by seasonal ingredients and flavors from around the world. Our goal is to create dishes that spark curiosity and give guests something new to discover," said Chef John Russ"

John Russ co-owner and chef of Clementine

Today, together with his wife, Elise, he brings his refined experience to Clementine, where he introduces international flavors to the South. The community restaurant is known for its intimate yet welcoming atmosphere, where the open kitchen invites guests to become immersed in the culinary experience.

Each week, Russ elevates Clementine's menu by reimagining signature favorites while introducing new dishes with an intentional focus on seasonal produce, global spices, and creative textures. He and his team craft ever-evolving dishes that keep both the kitchen and guests inspired with his innovative approach.

Dishes that highlight his passion for international fusion include the Beat Chicken Breast,

complemented by chermoula - a North African sauce commonly used in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Other menu offerings that showcase this approach include Grilled Summer Okra, elevated at Clementine with a touch of za'atar, a signature Middle Eastern spice blend that adds an herbal, slightly nutty flavor.

Additional international flavors featured in dishes include negi shio-chimichurri (a Japanese twist on the classic herb sauce), Bordelaise sauce (a rich French red-wine reduction), and chermoula (a North African herb and spice marinade). The chef doesn't limit himself to a single region; dining at Clementine takes guests on a global culinary journey with every bite.



Spread of food at Clementine

Clementine provides two ways of dining. Parties can choose from the weekly menu or opt for the 'Feed Me' experience - a unique, five-course, off-menu dinner prepared by John Russ and his team. In the 'Feed Me' experience, the chef crafts each dish on the spot, inspired by fresh ingredients and seasonal produce, presenting diners with an immersive, ever-evolving journey through flavor.

Southern Chef John Russ is not only elevating San Antonio's culinary scene but, together with his wife, Elise, is spearheading a movement. Their restaurant introduces global flavors to the South, while extending a warm and intimate atmosphere where guests can experience innovative dishes inspired by international cuisine.

About John Russ

Chef John Russ, a 2023 James Beard Awards Finalist in the Best Chef: Texas category, was born and raised in New Orleans and credits his grandmother's quenelles de brochet for expanding his palate beyond PB&J. He studied at Delgado Culinary in New Orleans and went on to work in fine dining at the Ritz Carlton and then The Capella Group. John moved to San Antonio in 2012 and felt right at home with the city's food community. As Alamo City Provisions, John and his wife, Elise, organized a well-received series of pop-up dinners that showcased San Antonio's growing food scene and culinary talent. Encouraged by the popularity of the dinners and support from friends and family, John and Elise established their own restaurant group in 2016.

About John Russ

John is an advocate for bringing about much-needed change to the industry in the areas of food sourcing, sustainability, and industry support. He is also firmly dedicated to working alongside the National and Texas Restaurant Associations to support bipartisan, common-sense immigration reforms that expand U.S. employers' ability to hire a legal workforce. Grateful for an

amazing group of friends, John is thrilled to be growing his family and business in San Antonio.

About Clementine

Opened in 2018 in the Castle Hills community of San Antonio, Clementine is a family-owned [neighborhood restaurant](#) serving seasonal, innovative eats in a modern and lively atmosphere. Led by Chef John Russ, a 2023 James Beard Award Nominee for Best Chef: Texas, and Pastry Chef Elise Russ, the menu features bold, globally inspired flavors through a rotating selection of small plates, generous platters, produce-forward “sideboard” options, and nostalgic, imaginative desserts.

Many guests choose the signature Feed Me—a 5-course, family-style dining experience where Chef Russ and team create a personalized menu for the table based on seasonal ingredients and creative pairings. In addition to dinner service Tuesday through Saturday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Clementine offers lunch on the third Friday of every month from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Clementine is also home to The Juice Box, a sommelier- and Chef Russ–curated monthly wine club showcasing unexpected, highly drinkable bottles to be enjoyed at home. For special occasions, the restaurant is available for private buyouts, offering a warm, intimate setting for all kinds of celebrations. Clementine @Home extends the experience even further, with a fully staffed, in-home dining service that brings Clementine’s hospitality and flavor to your table.

Ranked one of the top two best restaurants in San Antonio by the San Antonio Express-News, Clementine is located at 2195 NW Military Highway, San Antonio, TX 78213. For more information, call (210) 503-5121 or visit www.clementine-sa.com. Follow on Instagram @clementine.sanantonio and like on Facebook @Clementine.SanAntonio.

Clementine

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HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

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