



## Michelin-Starred Chef Michael White Makes Dallas Debut At The Stoneleigh



**At a time when** Dallas restaurants are increasingly defined by spectacle, scale and celebrity, Uptown's newest dining entry is leaning into legacy, craft and a sense of place.

That vision now arrives at [The Stoneleigh](#), where Michelin-starred chef Michael White is making his Dallas debut with two original concepts — Lions Den and Bar Leonessa — both created exclusively for the historic property as part of a multi-million-dollar transformation.

For White, whose career includes five Michelin stars at once and multiple three-star *New York Times* reviews, the project is both a first for Dallas and a continuation of a global culinary path rooted in Italian coastal tradition.

"The Stoneleigh possesses a heritage and a presence that was immediately felt," said Michael White in an official statement. "Lions Den and Bar Leonessa are anchored in Italian tradition and hospitality, yet reimagined through the vibrant energy and distinct character of this incredible city."



## A New Chapter For An Uptown Landmark

[The restaurant and lounge](#) debut arrives alongside a broader reinvention of The Stoneleigh, long known as one of Uptown's signature hotels. The latest renovation repositions the property as part of Marriott's Autograph Collection, pairing historic character with a more modern luxury identity shaped by design studio Fettle.

For Brookfield's hospitality leadership, the addition of White signals a cultural pivot.

"Lions Den and Bar Leonessa transcend traditional dining; they are the social heartbeat of the hotel, transforming every encounter into a shared experience," said Shai Zelering, managing partner and global head of hospitality at Brookfield. "This partnership is the cornerstone of a meticulous restoration that re-establishes The Stoneleigh as Uptown's most distinguished cultural landmark."

### Lions Den: Old Hollywood Energy, Modern Italian Execution

Lions Den draws its name and spirit from one of The Stoneleigh's original historic venues, reinterpreted as a modern Italian supper club.

The space leans into maximalist design influences tied to Dorothy Draper's bold aesthetic — marbled stone, patterned textures and layered finishes that give the room a sense of movement rather than minimalism. It is intended to shift as the evening unfolds, moving from polished dining room to a darker, more atmospheric supper club.

On the plate, White's focus stays firmly coastal Italian. The menu centers on seafood-driven dishes, handmade pastas and tableside presentations that bring a sense of theater without feeling performative.

Standouts include a dual presentation of porterhouse alongside Dover sole finished with brown butter and lemon, veal chop with Marsala and signature pasta dishes that anchor the menu. The experience is rounded out by a wine program designed with equal attention to depth and approachability.



## Bar Leonessa: A Lounge Built Around Transition

If Lions Den is anchored in dinner service, Bar Leonessa is designed to move with the entire arc of the day. The lounge is built around a marble bar and structured as a space that evolves — aperitivos giving way to cocktails, then into a late-night social setting with curated music and programming.

Cocktails are treated almost as performance pieces, with reimagined classics and tableside preparation from a custom beverage cart. The food mirrors that approach, offering refined small plates such as grilled octopus with eggplant caponata, truffle-forward pastas and oysters finished with caviar.



The result is less a traditional hotel bar and more a layered social space meant to carry guests through multiple moods in a single visit.

## Extending The Experience Beyond The Dining Room

White's influence at The Stoneleigh is not limited to the two headline venues. His culinary direction extends to poolside service, private events and in-room dining, creating a unified food identity across the property.

That consistency is part of a broader strategy to make the hotel feel less segmented and more experiential, where a pool lunch, a cocktail hour and a formal dinner all feel connected by the same culinary point of view.

## A Chef With Global Reach, Now Focused On Dallas

White's arrival in Dallas adds another chapter to a career that has stretched from Spiaggia in Chicago to acclaimed restaurants in New York, Hong Kong and beyond. His 2009 restaurant Marea helped define modern Italian fine dining in the U.S., earning two Michelin stars and multiple top reviews.

More recently, he has focused on hotel and hospitality partnerships through BBianco Hospitality, bringing his coastal Italian approach into resort and luxury developments worldwide.

Now, that trajectory intersects with Dallas at a moment when the city's dining scene is increasingly shaped by national names, local ambition and rapid urban growth.

Lions Den and Bar Leonessa are now open at 2927 Maple Ave in Dallas.