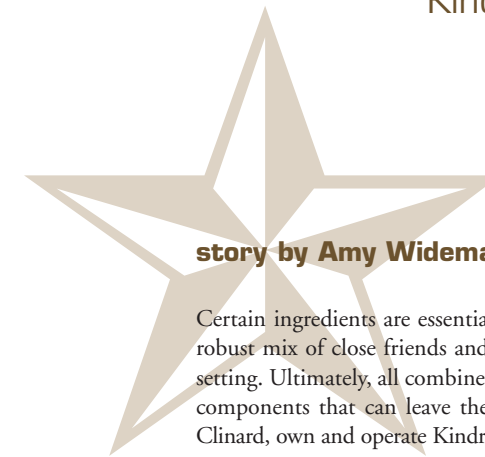




FROM THIS DAY FORWARD



Kindred Oaks Bed & Breakfast hosts unforgettable Austin weddings, keeping guest well fed with help from their DCS by Fisher & Paykel appliances



story by Amy Wideman photos by Mike Calabro

Certain ingredients are essential for a dream wedding: for the base, of course, a perfectly ripened relationship, surrounded by a robust mix of close friends and relatives, lively music, delicate lighting and colorful flowers, swirled together in an invigorating setting. Ultimately, all combine to feed a healthy marriage, but as Texans Steve and Elaine Lincoln understand, it's the last of those components that can leave the most piquant first impression. That's because the Lincolns, along with partners Sue and Randy Clinard, own and operate Kindred Oaks...

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...an idyllic wedding venue where marital magic is served with a smile. Seated on eleven acres of gently rolling hills, the site boasts ample reserves of peace and quiet, rest and relaxation, a menagerie of wildlife and that rare strain of “gentle breeze” that only blows outside a city’s limits. And at just 20 miles north of Austin, Kindred Oaks makes nature accessible without asking too much of your beleaguered gas tank.

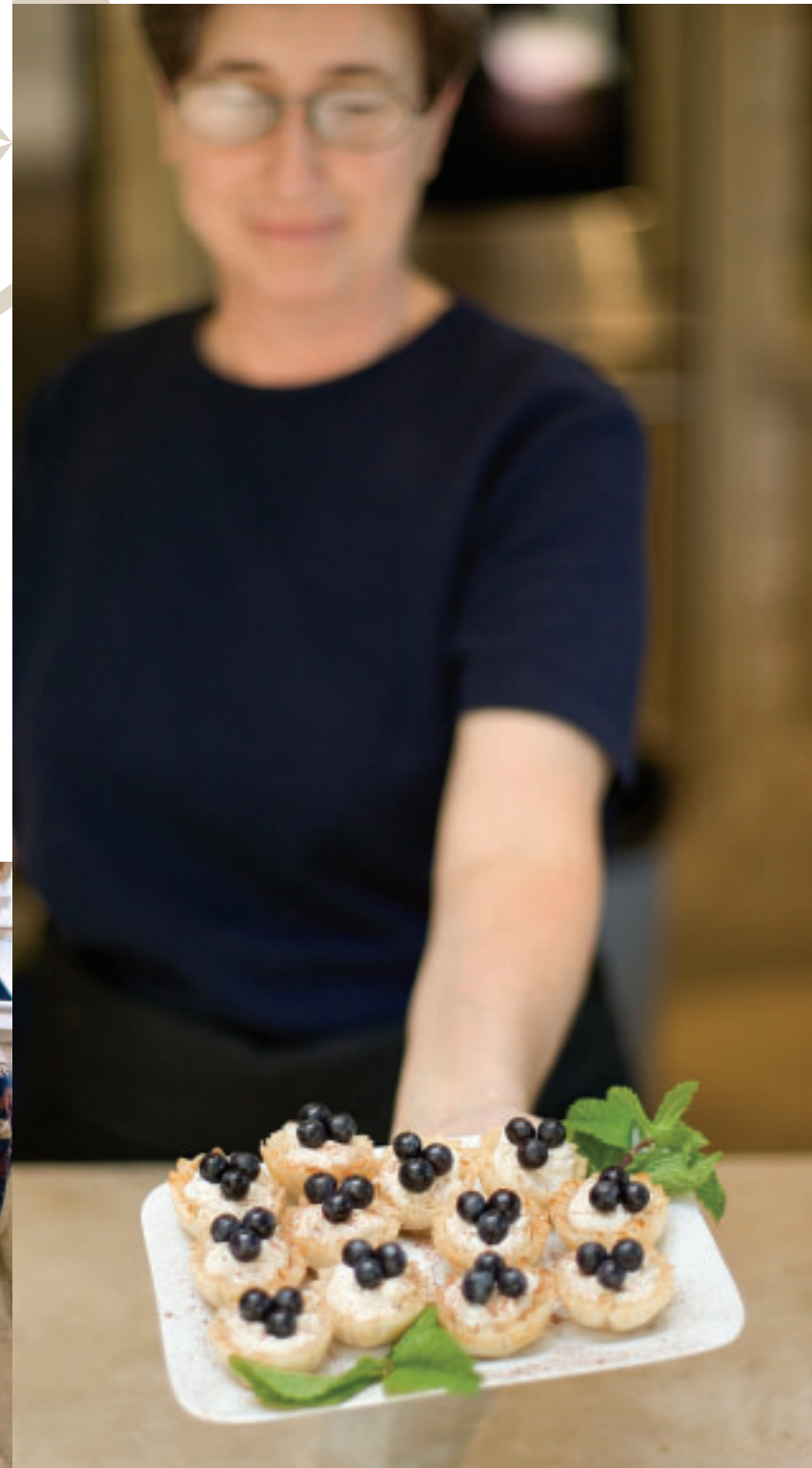
“There’s something special about this location,” says Elaine. “It’s not very far out but seems like it is. The feeling of getting away from the city is a pleasant turn that draws people here from all over.”

Kindred Oaks has hosted formal affairs large and small, and it’s seen couples exchange vows to an Irish theme, in cowboy boots, and even barefoot, but one thing is a constant: “Our brides tend to be laidback, good natured...more concerned with the celebration and the union than the trappings of pop culture,” says Elaine. “We’re fortunate not to get the bridezillas!”

Enhancing the Kindred Oaks experience is the food, lovingly prepared by the Lincolns’ close friend and longtime colleague Catherine McDargh, owner of Eudora’s Cuisine. As the exclusive gourmet breakfast caterer to overnight guests of Kindred Oaks, Eudora’s specializes in innovative yet somehow instantly familiar fare—the kind that gooses your taste buds on its way to a waltz with your stomach.

“I really try to give people a lot of options, for them as well as for me,” Catherine explains, ticking off a list of favorite ingredients that includes herbs from her garden and seasonal fruits like peaches, plums, apples and loquats that grow on the grounds. “Who wants to do the same thing over and over? We offer guests a menu that includes the typical things—Belgian waffles, pancakes, eggs and so forth—but then also smoked salmon, polenta, a heavy wheat bread, several baked egg dishes... a real nice variety.”

She says some of her favorite hours at Kindred Oaks are the quiet mornings when she has time to play in the kitchen. “I’ll open the windows and listen to the wildlife out there while I experiment with new recipes.” The mouthwatering results often wind up on the counter for wedding prep crews to grab and enjoy.



The kitchen at Kindred Oaks marries state-of-the-art DCS by Fisher & Paykel appliances with fresh-from-the-garden ingredients for a match made in culinary heaven.

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This culinary experimentation is made considerably easier by the renovation project the Lincolns undertook last year. In just eight weeks, Kindred Oaks saw several major upgrades, aimed at making it a more comprehensive wedding facility. Perhaps most notable among these—to the food lovers in the crowd, at least—is the kitchen: a space that was previously “about as big as a coffee table” is now bright and airy and tricked out with state-of-the-art appliances, from the DCS Double Wall Oven and 6-Burner Gas Range that both put the fire in Catherine’s creations to the Double DishDrawer dishwasher that slices her cleanup time. “It’s definitely Catherine’s kitchen,” says Elaine. “She’s such a dear friend of ours, we built it with her in mind because we knew how much it would help her enjoy what she does.”

When they began working with Living Vistas, the design firm in charge of the renovation, Elaine says they were after a specific indoor-outdoor look that led them to BBQ Outfitters and the DCS line—a decision their guests continue to affirm. “Now everyone who comes through the kitchen *oohs* and *ahhs* and wants everything for their own kitchen,” she says. “I mean, the appliances work extremely well, but they’re also just impressive to look at.”


Newlyweds and other overnight guests in the Bed and Breakfast Suite are spared any off-putting food smells by the overhead Ventilation Hood—though of course, rare is the odor off-putting in “Catherine’s” kitchen. “Our wedding parties tend to choose lighter or fresher flavors over the rich sauces like Italian or barbecue,” explains Catherine. “I do quite a lot of Southwestern cuisine, and a lot of Mediterranean. More herbs, butter and oil than tomato sauce so you can really taste the fresh vegetables.” And often Eudora’s Cuisine menus include something grilled, taking advantage of the 48-inch DCS Professional Grill outside. “I grill a bunch,” says Catherine. “There’s so much you can do there.”

Another major piece of the renovation involved creating a 2,300-square-foot indoor/outdoor pavilion that serves as a “rain plan” for when the rare inclement day strikes. With convertible roll-up/roll-down walls, the space allows guests to remain elbow-to-elbow with nature, easily communing with the deer, roadrun-

taste



KINDRED OAKS



Kindred Oaks offers engaged couples and other guests an urban oasis with a side of country charm.

ners, birds, armadillos and other creatures that call Kindred Oaks home. (If you want to see a resident gray fox, Elaine notes, your wedding music should include a bagpipe player—the sound brings mama fox around to investigate every time.)

Maybe it’s the proximity to wildlife, or maybe it’s just the life at Kindred Oaks in general that keeps their calendar booked year-round, bringing parties from as far as Africa and South America. “People feel a real connection, a real bond here—we’re a family,” says Elaine. “We enjoy what we do and I think that’s what differentiates us.”

Certainly, all the conscientious cooking and earnest celebration pays into something Kindred Oaks prides itself on: flavor. Sure, the chewing-and-swallowing kind, but also something less tangible and more filling. It’s the delicious sensation that comes after the vows have been exchanged, the bouquet has been tossed, the toasts have been made, and the plates have been emptied, at the moment when all heads turn and watch the newly married couple dance off into the Texas sunset. **I**

