



### **Justin Smillie**

Chef Justin Smillie was born in Upland, California, but raised in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Both areas in which he lived were rural, and Smillie found himself inspired by the rustic elements of the outdoors, including regular camping trips, foraging for wild ingredients, and fly-fishing. He began his career at the age of 17 at Bernards Inn under Chef Edward Stone, where he had his first taste of the kitchen life, and he was hooked. Two years on the line was all it took; Smillie enrolled at the Culinary Institute of America, where he fine-tuned his fine-dining techniques, while rounding out his culinary education.

After attending the CIA, Smillie secured a position at Jean-Georges Vongerichten's Mercer Kitchen, followed by posts at Danny Meyer's Gramercy Tavern and Jonathan Waxman's Washington Park. Smillie next earned a chef position at Waxman's Barbuto, and in the six years he spent under Waxman's attentive eye, Smillie fell in love with the bold flavors and rustic techniques showcased in the restaurant, and this philosophy would stick with him.

In 2010, Chef Daniel Silverman invited Smillie to help open Andre Balaz's The Standard in New York, where he would work winters, followed by two summers as executive chef of Balaz's Sunset Beach on Shelter Island. Smillie was introduced to Il Buco owner Donna Lennard, who tapped Smillie as executive chef of Italian trattoria Il Buco Alimentari e Vineria, where he earned three stars from *The New York Times*.

In 2014, Smillie was introduced to Stephen Starr, and the two decided to collaborate on a new restaurant - Upland. At Upland, Smillie pays tribute to his culinary mentors and inspirations by offering dishes that showcase his California roots and seasonal, rustic culinary sensibilities. Since opening Upland, Justin has received critical and popular acclaim from outlets such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Saveur*, *GQ*, *The Washington Post*, *The New Yorker*, and more. Justin's first book, "Slow Fires" was released by Clarkson Potter in 2015.