

Michael Symon Biography

Renowned in the culinary world and adored in his hometown of Cleveland, Michael Symon is the chef and owner of critically acclaimed Lola and Lolita restaurants in Cleveland, Ohio. Michael's pedigree started upon graduating from The Culinary Institute of America in New York in 1990. Michael quickly began revitalizing the Cleveland pallet, practicing in some of Cleveland's up and coming restaurants, where he found success as well as a loyal following and fan base.

In 1997, Michael collaborated with future wife Liz to open his own restaurant Lola. To compliment Michael's menu, Liz brought an unpretentious elegance to both the design of the restaurant and the unique wine selection from lesser-known boutique vineyards that made Lola Cleveland's destination of the year. In 2005, Michael, Liz and Doug Petkovic gave birth to Lolita, which again became the cornerstone of the Cleveland dining scene. 2008 and 2009 brought the partners new darlings, including; Roast, Bar Symon in Avon Lake, B-Spot in Chagrin, as well as Bar Symon and B-Spot in downtown Cleveland.

Michael has earned much attention through the years for his thoughtful Midwestern cooking style and his attention to detail. He was named National Rising Star by *Restaurant Hospitality Magazine* (May 1997 issue), one of the Top Ten Best New Chefs by *Food and Wine Magazine* (July 1998 issue), and one of Americas Best Restaurants in *Gourmet Magazine* (Oct. 2000 issue). Michael was featured in Michael Ruhlman's book *The Soul of a Chef* (2000) and has appeared on "Mondays with Michael" on local Cleveland station WKYC, and I-Village, live on NBC. He has hosted over 100 episodes of "The Melting Pot" on the Food Network, in addition to appearing on "Sara's Secrets with Sara Moulton," "Ready, Set, Cook," "Food Nation with Bobby Flay," and "Iron Chef America," where he faced-off against Chef Morimoto (2005). In 2008, Michael became one of five Iron Chefs on the Food Network's "Iron Chef America," where he is known as the Midwestern chef, and hosted Season 5 of "Dinner Impossible." In 2009, Michael Symon won The James Beard Award for Best Restaurant in the Great Lakes Region and published his first cookbook, "Michael Symon's Live to Cook – Recipes and Techniques to Rock Your Kitchen."

This year has been no different, with three new television programs: "Cook like an Iron Chef" (The Cooking Channel), "Next Iron Chef" (The Food Network, premiering in October), and "Food Feuds" (The Food Network, premiering later this year).