



CHEF *Tim Wood*

OWNER, OPERATOR, BOTTLE WASHER

A

At the age of 13, a young Tim Wood lied about his age so he could get a job working in a hotel kitchen. Right then, he was hooked on becoming Chef Tim Wood and has spent his adult life in the kitchen. Many kitchens.

Following his high school graduation, Wood attended the Culinary Institute of America, where he was given an extended internship at the historic Rainbow Room at Rockefeller Plaza in Manhattan. From there, he cooked his way to chefdom, starting as an apprentice catering high-end events along the Hudson Valley of New York, where he was born and raised.

Wood says he was born into his love of the culinary arts. "My palate has been driven by my mother's simplistic home cooking, alongside my father's resourcefulness in selecting the freshest ingredients." His father was familiar with the local farms and would buy based on what was seasonally available. His maternal great-grandfather was also a chef, whose specialty was lobster bakes on the New England seashore.

Following his apprenticeship, Wood worked in various kitchens throughout Manhattan. While expressing an interest in moving to California, he was introduced to Cal Stamenov of Bernardus Lodge in Carmel Valley. Thus began his venture to the West Coast in 2000. He was at Bernardus for eight years, and then got a taste of the Napa Valley scene at Carneros Resort and Spa before returning to the Monterey Peninsula, where he tackled the reopening of Carmel Valley Ranch in 2010.

Alongside a successful team there, Wood oversaw the assembly and pioneering of a host of programs, including a robust chef's garden, Pinot vineyards, a full-fledged apiary, and an in-house creamery provided by goats kept on-site and belonging to master cheesemaker Charlie Cascio.

Wood says what he loves about the Monterey Peninsula is the sense of community and the way it comes full circle in one way or another. "I've made relationships with many different characters, from the coast of Big Sur to the hills of Carmel Valley, all the way to the redwoods of Santa Cruz. All friends I've gotten the chance to work with over the years who have made my experience here unforgettable—the overall environment and its diversity, both with the people I've met and their transparency with their craft."

Since 2020, Chef Tim has been the "owner, operator and bottle washer" at Woody's at the Airport, and his newest labor of love, Woody's at Del Mesa, which opened in 2023. Of the Del Mesa site (an active-adult retirement community), Wood says it's "truly where only locals come to eat. . ." And that includes the public, which is always welcome there. With his talented crew and the longtime relationships he has with various vendors, both Woody's serve food that truly showcases the best of the Monterey Peninsula.

In his many years on the Peninsula, Wood has won numerous "Bests" from the *Monterey County Weekly*, the *Carmel Pine Cone*, and the *Monterey Herald*, but he says his

biggest accomplishment has been in mentoring people he's worked with to move on and become successful in their own endeavors. He takes pride in the kids he hires both in the kitchen and in the front of house as if they were his own. He currently cares about the welfare of 84 kids. "I try to instill in them my mistakes so perhaps they don't have to make as many along their journey."

Wood's philanthropic interests and activities are many. Among them, 24 years with Meals on Wheels; fundraisers for the Carmel Valley Community Center; and countless meals (and students mentored) at Rancho Cielo, a nonprofit in Salinas that invests in education, training and counseling of youth facing challenges. "Local fundraising—you name it."

Wood and his wife, Jessica, live in Carmel Valley with their cat, Ollie, and dog, Jelly. He also considers "all his devoted clientele" to be part of his family as well. Tim and Jessica met in 2001 at the Running Iron, a local "watering hole" in the Village. She was back home after getting a degree in social work from San Francisco State. "I looked across the room and said, 'I've got to meet that girl!' She was beautiful and classy. We talked most of the night and met up for lunch the next day. She was surprised that I actually called her and met her, and I was surprised she would question whether I would!" They've been married since 2005.

Outside the kitchen, Wood enjoys anything of the arts and music, American-made vintage automobiles, and sketching when given the time. And cat videos.

When asked who has inspired him and how, Wood credits Manny Frolic, the first person he ever met in the restaurant business to genuinely own what it is to be hospitable. "He embodied everything about taking care of others to the best of his ability."

"I believe in doing the hard work it takes to do the right thing." And Wood does it with a big heart and a sense of humor.



WOODY'S AT DEL MESA

Let Chef Tim Wood and his Team Cook for You!



A LOCAL FAVORITE, WHERE

EVERYONE

IS INVITED TO DINE!

Daily Specials

Sunday Prime Rib Night

Local Wines Priced for Locals

No Hassle Parking

Full Outdoor Patio

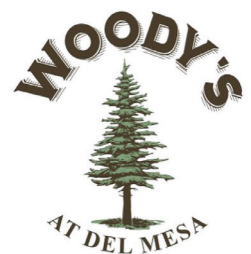
Open Wednesday-Sunday

Lunch: 11-2:30 | Dinner: 4:30 to 7:30ish

(Closed Monday & Tuesday)

831-624-1854

woodysmontereyairport.com



RESTAURANT & LOUNGE

CARMEL VALLEY, CA