

sacramento

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BEST CHEFS

20 OF THE AREA'S MOST TALENTED FOOD AND DINING EXPERTS PAGE 140

Molly Hawks | HAWKS RESTAURANT

5530 DOUGLAS BLVD., GRANITE BAY; (916) 791-6200

Hawks grew up in Hillsborough, attended UCLA, got a degree in biology and thought she was headed to medical school. While working at a boring Stanford lab as she waited for acceptance letters, she took stock. "I thought, maybe I'm in the wrong area of the medical field," she recalls. Turns out, she was just in the wrong field. "I told my parents, 'I'm going to cooking school.'" She enrolled at California Culinary Academy in San Francisco, took a position hosting at Aqua when Michael Mina reigned as chef, and gained professional experience at The Village Pub in Woodside, where she met her chef husband and restaurant partner, Michael Fagnoni. The pair recently opened Hawks to rave reviews.

AGE: 34

FIRST RESTAURANT JOB: Host at Aqua in San Francisco

FOOD STYLE: Clean and classic

INSPIRATION: "Being able to have a direct effect on someone, to see their pleasure."

CULINARY PHILOSOPHY: "Don't adulterate great ingredients."

ON THE MENU: Grilled meats, beautiful fish, Dungeness crab, cauliflower risotto with black-truffle Bordelaise sauce.

FAVORITE INGREDIENT: Produce

SIGNATURE DISH: Hawks burger of Hereford beef (freshly ground at Vande Rose Farms Meat & Fish store) on housemade buns, served with house-made pickles, aioli and house fries

NOT GONNA HAPPEN: Unisex restrooms

WHO YOU'LL SEE IN THE DINING ROOM: "Sopranos" cast member Joe Pantoliano; Kings exec Wayne Cooper; Kings player Brad Miller; former baseball great Steve Sax; KCRA financial expert Kurt Halverstadt

FAVORITE FOOD MEMORY: "My mom's entertaining, setting her table and her perfect dinners."

WHERE SHE EATS: "We're never off—not yet. We eat at Hawks."

LAST MEAL ON EARTH: A water's edge picnic of sandwiches made with Parisian baguette and Ibérico ham from Spain, a bottle of '95 Salon Champagne and Pierre Hermé macarons in chocolate, white truffle and rose

HAWKS' INSPIRATION?
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