



NEW BEGINNINGS

Chef Freddy Money breaks the rules of fine dining in Atlas' exciting, playful and private new addition THE PAPILLON ROOM

Written by LAUREN IVERSON Photographed by DAVID CHRISTENSEN



top to bottom The Papillon Room features 3,000 decorative blue butterflies that adorn the walls and ceiling. Poached white asparagus with caviar and citrus beurre blanc. The Legendary Old Fashioned is smoked to perfection.



THE BUTTERFLY: a metaphor for hope, endurance and transformation—and a storyline that acclaimed chef Freddy Money, culinary director for Atlas and The Garden Room, related to when conceptualizing The Papillon Room.

Located inside of Atlas at The St. Regis Buckhead, the intimate private dining space leans into its French name with 3,000 decorative blue butterflies delicately installed on the walls, ceiling and shelves by interior design firm The Drawing Room. “I had met the designers of The Drawing Room and we were talking about new beginnings, and the conversation of the butterfly came up,” says Money. “With how times have been, it felt symbolic, so we took the idea and ran with it.”

Indeed, guests will find nods to the butterfly throughout the multicourse experience, such as atop the foie gras bonbon in the first course. Led by the seasons, the curated menu—which may include dishes like poached white asparagus with caviar and citrus beurre blanc or roast seabream stuffed with a mushroom duxelle, asparagus and morels—is constantly evolving to highlight the freshest ingredients.

Though the experience is certainly five-star, Money is keen to break the stuffy connotation that fine dining sometimes carries. His dessert cart holds ingredients for a lavish tableside nitro experience, but also an assortment of familiar candies such as Andes mints, gummy bears and wafers. Furthermore, his first course is called snax—yes, with an x—because to Money, it’s “more fun.”

“I grew up working with really innovative chefs, and what I learned is that you’re allowed to break the rules,” says Money. “Calling the first course snax instead of canapés is a subtle way of saying we’re not as formal as you think we are.”

Regardless, when dining at The Papillon Room with Money and his team at the helm, it’s clear that guests should expect the unexpected. “There’s a lot of preconceptions that fine dining is stuffy or overly formal, but I don’t believe in that. At its core, it’s about having a good time and creating a memory that lasts.”

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clockwise from left The first course features bites such as the beet cloud, foie gras bonbon and liquid olive tarts. The Drawing Room designers studied how butterflies cluster in nature before starting the installation. An interactive experience, Chef Freddy Money prepares a tableside dessert using liquid nitrogen.



THE SCOOP

PRIVATE DINING



With the lotus the national flower of Vietnam, it's sensible that Atlanta's Vietnamese hotspot **LE COLONIAL** would have a private dining space designed around the symbolic bloom. A hand-painted mural of lotus flowers by Swedish artist Jonas Wickman delicately graces the wall while black-and-white photography of Saigon in the 1920s transports and delights. Seating up to 14, the Lotus Room offers a specially curated tasting menu perfect for celebration. lecolonialatlanta.com

Put on your afternoon best and head to the vineyards for an al fresco soirée at **CHATEAU ÉLAN**. Best suited for groups of 6–12, the popular North Georgia winery's new private dining experience includes a wine steward, food and beverage service, personalized decor and a picturesque backdrop of either the Rose Vineyard or East Vineyard lawn. chateauelan.com

Enjoy an intimate evening at **NO. 246**'s chef's counter, a four-seat experience that offers a custom five-course menu with wine pairings. Located in downtown Decatur and headed by Ford Fry, the Italian restaurant recently returned to its roots with a reimagined direction that mirrors iconic mob-style dining scenes. Guests will experience all of the classics, from “Nonna-approved” pizzas and pastas to chicken al limone. no246.com

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