

Let's eat out Entertaining by design

Jeffrey Haines' association with The Bernards Inn began more than two decades ago as a frequent patron to the beloved Bernardsville landmark. As a longtime resident of a historic home up on Bernardsville Mountain, he and his family entertained and celebrated numerous special occasions at the inn over the years.

The inn even became a haven for the Haines family as an overnight refuge when storm conditions cut power or when a renovation project in their home was under way. Of course the Haines' out-of-town guests always stayed there.

"I've always had a special fondness for The Bernards Inn. It has 100 years of history within its walls and is a true 'Grande Dame' in the Somerset Hills," said the interior designer and owner of Butler's of Far Hills.

So when Haines was commissioned to redesign the interior of the inn in 2006, it was a "gratifying opportunity," he said. His vision immediately crystallized: The Bernards Inn should be redesigned as a grand yet welcoming estate – like the historic mansions on Bernardsville Mountain – and have spectacular spaces for entertaining and special events.

Haines describes the redesign of the century-old inn as "recapturing the classic elegance of a bygone era in the Somerset Hills and combining it with a Park Avenue flair."

"Jeff's vision was perfectly in line with what we wanted for the inn," said proprietor Harold Imperatore of Basking Ridge. "Our goal was to stay true to the inn's historic roots, but transform it into a luxury property with the highest standards of hospitality."

The vision was a natural one for Haines. As the owner of two homes on Bernardsville Mountain over the years – he and his wife, Patty, currently reside in the Westover country property – Haines has a long appreciation for historic properties. He has become involved with countless estate homes on "the mountain" as an interior designer – and simply visited many others as the guest of neighbors.

SIGNATURE STYLE

The redesign of The Bernards Inn was the beginning of a new collaboration between Haines and the hotel and restaurant that has evolved into a new "Signature Style of Entertaining." While the inn always has been known for exceptional events, the Jeffrey



Haines Signature Style takes entertaining to a new level, said Imperatore.

"This is a distinctive style of entertaining that can't be duplicated. Our venue is like a grand estate – and we're opening our doors for people's most special occasions," he said. "There's nothing more intimate than feeling like your special occasion is in someone's home – especially one as splendid as The Bernards Inn."

This marriage of design and entertaining has resulted in a collection of six concepts inspired by Haines that are tailored to the tastes of a discerning patron planning a wedding, private party or corporate event.

Planning such "Signature" celebrations includes a private consultation with Haines so the event decor reflects the personal style of the couple or individual. Guests then select from a menu of themes which correspond to specially selected linens, china, flatware, glassware, florals and centerpieces, along with unique antiques and accouterments from Haines' own J. Butler Collection.

Event themes include: Traditionalist, Traditional Sophisticate, Classic Modern, Cosmopolitan, Naturalist and Individualist.

Ensuring the flawless execution of events is entrusted to the professional staff at The Bernards Inn. Exceptional service has been the hallmark of the inn – along with



acclaimed cuisine and an award-winning wine program. Executive Chef Corey Heyer and wine director and sommelier Terri Baldwin deliver unforgettable dining experiences.

GIVING BACK

Haines' entree to event design and decor began almost accidentally when interior design clients asked him for help with entertaining after their homes were finished. That led to coordinating numerous charitable balls and galas including the Archangel Ball to benefit the Arc of Somerset County, and the Kaleidoscope Ball to benefit the Morris Museum. Haines said he also designed and provided the event decor for the American Paralysis Foundation fund-raiser at The Plaza in New York City.

"These were causes that were important to me and my family and we enjoyed being involved and helping to raise funds for these amazing charities," he said.

Haines emphasizes that his inspiration for the Signature Style of Entertaining is certainly "the uniqueness of The Bernards Inn property, its talented staff and its new interior spaces." From that, a new experience in leisure and entertaining has emerged for the enjoyment of life's most special moments.

For more information about this new service, visit www.bernardsinn.com.