STONE SOUP COTTAGE

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STONE SOUP COTTAGE TO OPEN – JUNE 25, 2009

Intimate Fine Dining in historic Cottleville…not your traditional restaurant

Cottleville, Mo – The eagerly anticipated Stone Soup Cottage, featuring fine dining in historic Cottleville, MO, will open its doors to the public on Thursday, June 25, 2009 for a 6:30 PM Chef's Tasting Dinner. The restored 1850's farmhouse venue, named after the classic fable, "*Stone Soup*" partners with area merchants, farmers and vendors to provide their guests with the freshest ingredients and upscale services in the area.

Stone Soup Cottage is not a restaurant in any traditional sense. The feeling is more of a coming to a charming 1850's historic home for a dinner party or special event. Every table is a chef's table, and everyone who enters the property feels as if they were personally invited by the chef and his wife.

"We wanted to open someplace very unique here, not your average restaurant. In fact, you will rarely hear us refer to it as a restaurant," says Chef McConnell. The venue holds up to 25 guests traditionally seated and 30 for a meeting or cocktail reception, so the experience is very intimate. The cottage was meant to be small and private, so that we can truly control every aspect of our guests' experience. Every detail is attended to from the handcrafted utensils, china, crystal and tableside service to the manicured cottage herb garden where the chef hand selects seasonal harvests.

The prix fixe menus are different every week and the chef's tasting menus are designed around the seasons and what is fresh at the farmer's market. Inspired by European tradition, many of the dishes are focused around southern French and northern Italian fare.

Stone Soup Cottage is open to the public a few evenings a week featuring four and six course tasting menus. The rest of the days and evenings during the week are reserved for private parties, corporate events, cooking lessons and off property estate catering engagements. A sit-down Champagne Sunday brunch will be a constant with two seating's: 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

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Cottage and Community – Helping Others Grow

A little over two years ago, chef Carl McConnell and his wife, Nancy, found their way to Cottleville, Missouri, a quaint bedroom community in St. Charles County. After traveling the world to over 82 countries as executive chef for major cruise lines, private jets, and the American Orient Express Luxury Train, Chef McConnell knew that at some point he and his wife would open a very upscale fine dining venue, but never imagined it would be just two minutes away from their home in the heart of this century-old hamlet.

"The historic area is absolutely charming with a local butcher, flower shops, boutiques and antique stores. Something magical happens when you visit historic Main Street. We knew that if we found the right location, we could make something really special happen here, "says Chef McConnell."

Stone Soup Cottage, a restored 1850's farmhouse, is named after the classic fable, "*Stone Soup*." (See story attached). "The moral of this childhood classic is about the giving and sharing of talents and working together for the greater good of a community," says McConnell.

"Everyone in the area has been so supportive of our concept. We have been truly overwhelmed, said Nancy McConnell. Like the story of Stone Soup, we in turn wanted to give back as much as we could to the surrounding vendors and merchants in the area as we grow our culinary business. Our vision is to utilize many of the unique services in Cottleville as we plan our menus & special events in the cottage."

Chef McConnell and his wife will work with area farmers, wine merchants, florists, boutiques and stationary shops in the planning of special events and menu creation for the cottage. "Many people may not know that the historic main street of Cottleville has such a rich array of wonderful services. By utilizing these businesses in our day-to-day planning, we are not only offering our guests the finest products & freshest ingredients, but we are helping to give back to those who have supported us in the community," says Chef McConnell.

Reservations are required for all events, dinner and brunch due to the size of the venue. Guest may check which days the Cottage is open to the public on the website www.stonesoupcottage.com

The Stone Soup Cottage is now accepting reservations, and will debut on Thursday, June 25, 2009 with a 6:30 PM Tasting Dinner. For reservations call 636-244-2233

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ABOUT THE CHEF:

Carl McConnell, the founder and co-owner of Stone Soup Cottage has been in the culinary field for over 18 years. While working towards his culinary degree in Michigan, Chef Carl McConnell apprenticed with the renowned Chef James MacDonald at the nationally acclaimed Tratoria Bella Ciao in Ann Arbor, MI. There, Chef McConnell learned and practiced his skill in the art of traditional southern French and Italian cookery. With classical continental culinary technique firmly rooted, Chef McConnell left to continue his education at the Ljungstedtska Skolan (Nordic Culinary School o Europe) in Gothenburg, Sweden where he mastered his knowledge of vintage European preparations.

Upon completion of his regional studies, Chef McConnell accepted an Executive Chef position with Clipper Cruise Line working on-board ships around the world for this affluent and renowned small ship cruise line for the next four years.

In 1997, Chef McConnell was invited to create and operate a gourmet culinary program for the American Orient Express rail line. During his year with the luxurious American Orient Express rail line, the Chef honed his skill of nouvelle American cuisine, specializing in the elegant preparation of regional North American dishes and wild game.

After finding success within the luxury travel industry, Chef McConnell expanded his horizons to include around the world private jet excursions, taking on the responsibility of Corporate Executive Chef with TCS Expeditions in Seattle, Washington. During his three-year tenure with this elite private jet company, Chef McConnell broadened his knowledge to include multiple types of international cruise, traveling to 82 countries of the world and working with an elite clientele.

He continued his part time academic and occupational study at the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone in Napa Valley and often frequents for various visits.

Chef McConnell has been featured in written publications including the San Francisco Examiner, Los Angeles Times, Victoria Magazine, Traveler's Tales, National Culinary Review and Fine Cooking. Television appearances include "The Rockies by Rail" (PBS)

In addition to his media recognition, Chef McConnell is the recipient of professional awards presented by the American Culinary Federation and the National Restaurant Association.