

FOOD

# Houston's Hottest New Restaurant — and the Chef Who Came Home

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12.02.15

**H**ouston foodies are abuzz about the homecoming of Ford Fry — the

Houston-reared chef who's made quite a name for himself in Georgia with such critically adored eateries as The Optimist, JCT Kitchen and St. Cecilia. When rumor spread that Fry had secured a space just across the street from his alma mater, Lamar High School, curiosity hit a fever pitch.

In late October, he finally unveiled State of Grace — his first restaurant outside the Atlanta metro area. Fry and chef Bobby Matos have developed a menu as diverse as the cultures that flourish in Houston, from its Southern roots to its proximity to the Gulf and the Hill Country, not to mention the profound effect immigrants from Mexico and Asia have had on our food and drink scene. The interiors, care of Ford's in-house designer Elizabeth Ingram and architects Square Feet Studio, remind us of a mod hunting lodge with loden velvet draperies, custom blackened-iron doors and windows, a marble-topped oyster bar and dozens of Lilliputian antlers.