



flour + water

pasta

THOMAS MCNAUGHTON
with Paolo Lucchesi



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photography by Eric Wolfinger



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PREFACE: THE ORIGINS

David Steele and David White

I wrote the original one-page business plan for Flour + Water on the back of an envelope, over a decade before the restaurant actually became a reality. It started with a simple premise: In Italy, I saw how pasta was used as a delivery agent for seasonal ingredients; pizza took the same approach. Coming from the East Coast of the United States, where pasta sauces and menus stayed the same 365 days a year, this was an eye-opening experience for me. —David Steele

I grew up in Ireland, in a village of sixteen hundred people. It was your classic small town in the Irish countryside: It had a couple of churches, a town square, one dentist, two lawyers, two doctors, and ten pubs. When we had a full house, there were eight people at the dinner table: Mum and Dad and six of us siblings. Dining together was a part of our life, mostly because our father insisted that we come together at the table every day. My mother is a great cook, and our meals were always wholesome and delicious. There were always potatoes, and sometimes multiple potato dishes at once—everything that you'd expect from a rural Irish family. —David White

I grew up in New Jersey, coincidentally about fifteen miles from where Tom was raised. I put myself through college by working in restaurants. I started as a dishwasher at the age of sixteen and worked my way up to a prep cook. The higher up the ladder I got, the more quickly I realized that kitchen life is a very tough life. At the same time, I saw servers in the front of house working fewer hours and making more money. So I did the logical thing and moved out of the kitchen. I became a busboy, and by age eighteen I was managing an Italian restaurant in Wildwood, New Jersey.

I went to college not very far from my Jersey roots, at Temple University in Philadelphia. During that period, I waited tables at some of the best restaurants