

ANDY HOLLYDAY

Below:

Andy (center) taking a break with Chef Matt Pietsch at Plum Market in West Bloomfield for a pop-up dining event with five other chefs.



The road less taken led to Selden Standard.

BY SUSAN KEHOE, PH.D.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CASEY CLAFLIN

IN THIS ERA OF CELEBRITY CHEFS, ANDY HOLLYDAY, executive chef at his award-winning restaurant Selden Standard and two-time James Beard award semifinalist, does not match the hype and celebrity that are rightfully his. He's an ordinary person who cooks extraordinarily. He's been a chef at Oliveto in Oakland, Calif., and L'Essentiel in Chambéry, France, but is content at his Detroit-based restaurant. He says he looks forward to what comes next, but is not chasing fame. That's a good thing for the Detroit restaurant scene.

Hollyday grew up in Toledo, where he worked as a dishwasher in a pizzeria when he was 14. He didn't have premonitions of becoming a chef — it was just a job to get through high school — but the cooking looked like fun and he worked his way up to become a “sous chef of pizza.”

In his 20s, he went to the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y., graduating in 2003. He found an internship at Oliveto in Oakland, where farm-to-table was an established concept long before it became a catch phrase in better restaurants.

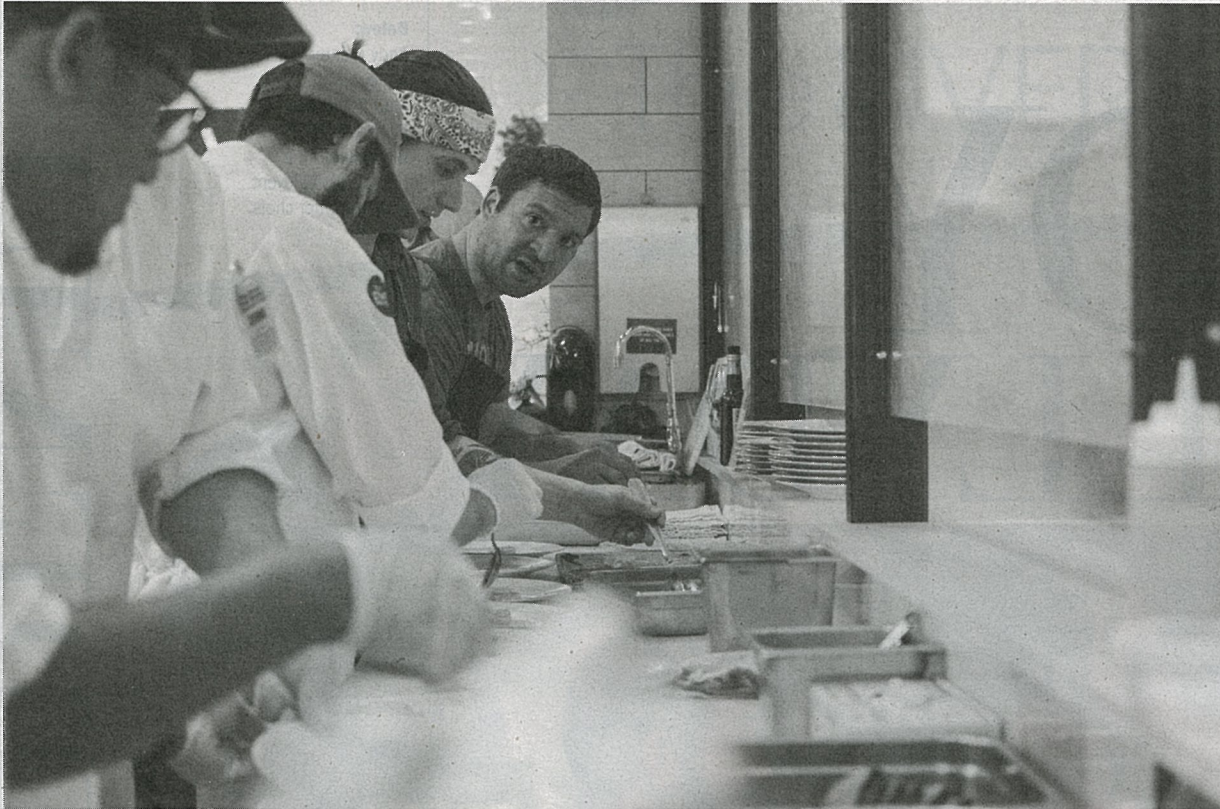
“At Oliveto, everything was simple and delicious. They used local farmers to provide food in season and the preparation never overshadowed the natural flavors,” Hollyday says.

While backpacking in Europe, Hollyday spent most of his money while on an unpaid internship at L'Essentiel, a *Michelin Guide* restaurant in France. He landed in Detroit because his sister, who lived outside Ann Arbor, said he could stay with her for a while.

“I wanted more experiences and took a job at the Ritz Carlton in Dearborn when it first opened,” he says.

Hollyday also learned from world-renowned Chef Takashi Yagihashi while working at

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Top: Andy instructing sous chefs in meal preparation. **Below right:** Andy using the wood-fired oven at Selden Standard. **Bottom:** Andy (center) at a Gang of 6 pop-up event at Plum Market in West Bloomfield.



Tribute in Farmington Hills. As his reputation evolved, Hollyday landed a position as sous chef for Michael Symon's newly opened Roast inside the renovated Westin Book Cadillac Hotel. It took only eight months before he was promoted to executive chef of the highly acclaimed restaurant.

Working with Symon, Hollyday decided to stay in Detroit — the city's renaissance was beginning. Partnering with Evan Hansen to catch the momentum, he opened Selden Standard, which roared rather than whispered when it hit the dining scene.

"There are two important points about Selden Standard," Hollyday says. "First, we want to work with local farmers to get fresh and seasonable produce. The farm-to-table concept is not a trend; it's expanding and sustaining. Hospitality is the second critical aspect. We invest in

our staff," Hollyday adds, "and we expect them to take care of our guests and each other. One of the lessons learned from Roast is that it's important to share a dining experience."

Selden Standard features some communal tables intended to blend people and share conversations. It's a familiar concept in Europe and New York City delis if you want to get a seat, and it works at Selden. With patrons flocking in from the nearby Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA), it's not unusual to strike up a conversation with fellow diners about DIA exhibits, sports or current events.

"I feel a good vibe in the restaurant," Hollyday says. "My wife, Natasha [Marin], works with me and we'd like it to become one of those casual, good-food places to go before or after any occasion."

Some of his favorite restaurants are Chartreuse, not far from his house, and Mabel Gray, the restaurant of a friend, James Rigato. He also frequents Katoï and Wright & Company — all have been reviewed by *SEEN* in the past year.

Hollyday is inspired by many tastes and bold flavors. Italian, French and Mediterranean are among his favorites.

When asked his opinion about the future of dining, he says, "In or out of the home, dining will be vegetable-focused and plant-based. It's much healthier. Interesting vegetable entrees with a light portion of meat on the side will be the way of the future."

No one said award-winning chefs were not also visionaries. **NS**

Andy Hollyday's Favorite Restaurants

Reviewed by *SEEN*

- **Chartreuse**, "Chartreuse Kitchen & Cocktails in Midtown," October 2015
- **Mabel Gray**, "Mabel Gray," January 2016
- **Wright & Company**, "The Wright Place to Dine," March 2016
- **Katoï**, "Katoï Corktown," October 2016



For more information:

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