

# Meet the Chef

Jim Clark, General Manager and Executive Chef, Rasta Pasta



Walk into Rasta Pasta and you're greeted by the aroma of jerk chicken and the beat of reggae music. Patrons kick back, sip banana daiquiris at a tiki hut-style bar, while in the open kitchen, Jim Clark fires dishes on all the burners, tosses pasta, and oversees such improbable combos as Chicken Montego Bay, a fusion of sweet pineapple, spiced chicken, and creamy Alfredo sauce—typical of the spice-and-soul fusions that Rasta Pasta has come to be known for.

It's this irreverence and culinary playfulness at the iconic Breck pasta joint that drew Clark. He came to Rasta Pasta a few years ago as a chef looking for a change of pace, and while the concept of infusing Jamaican ingredients into classic Italian dishes was a strange new world, he quickly mastered the alchemy of juices and sauces that create Rasta's signature fusion appeal.

Since becoming General Manager and Executive Chef last year, he's kept a creative hand on the menu, creating two new offerings: a sun-dried tomato pesto dish called Mellow Mood, and a chicken, pineapple, vegetable, and spicy Thai peanut sauce dish called All Thai'd Up.

Clark was a foodie from the start, cutting his culinary chops on his hometown restaurant scene in Cape Cod as a teenager. He first tasted that "Aha!" moment of culinary creativity at age 18, when he had a hand in creating award-winning clam chowder for a local seafood eatery. After earning a degree in hotel restaurant management from Johnson & Wales, he moved to Breckenridge in 2006 to chase the skiing life. "There's such a strong, tight feel of community here," he says. "This is a place where you choose to live."

For Clark, Breckenridge offers a lifestyle where work and play intersect as easily as reggae and rigatoni. Whether he's indulging his passion for skiing or snowboarding, rafting or hiking, or serving up mountains of tasty meals, he strikes a balance between working hard and having fun.

And Rasta Pasta's open kitchen jibes with Clark's sense of showmanship and play. "We're throwing dishes out there real quick," he says. "We're having a good time and people love to watch that." He adds, "People get really happy with food. If you give them a good dish, it will change their day completely."

Rasta Pasta is open from 11AM–9PM Sunday through Thursday, and 11AM–10PM Friday and Saturday. 411 S Main St., 970-453-7467, [www.rastapasta.net](http://www.rastapasta.net) —CHRISTINE CARR