

# HITTING THE RIGHT NOTES

A new home for The Blue Note Grill — and its regulars

PHOTO BY BRIANA BROUGH

**W**hen **Bill and Andrea Whittington** quit their day jobs with the dream of a little barbecue place where they could hang out, feed their friends and listen to music, they had no idea that they were creating a home away from home for a multitude. Some say Bill just wanted a comfy place to pick up his guitar. Those first years were a struggle, but by year four, they were on a roll as word spread that you could find some of the best ribs, barbecue and music around. The tiny place with the dance floor in the middle became a nightly living room for a handful of regulars who naturally became part of the family. Some nights it was so packed, you couldn't even get in.

A newer, bigger location was scary. Would taking it to the next level translate? Was the Durham neighborhood already chock-full of local favorites — **Fullsteam, Motorco, Geer Street Garden, Manbites Dog Theater** — a good choice? Would the good juju follow? Yes.

While the Whittingtons, along with help from their family of regulars, packed up and moved across town (to **709 Washington St.**) in a caravan of cars and trucks, others were at the new location building tables, hanging baffles and decking the walls with music memorabilia.

New kitchen team member **Sharon Mahofski** (**Southern Season** deli, **Al's Burger Shack, Parts & Labor** at **Motorco**, etc.) is already making noticeable menu tweaks and taking advantage of local sources. Check out the “Cow Jumped

Over the Moon” burger, which uses locally sourced, pasture-raised beef and is topped with house-made bacon onion jam, roasted garlic aioli and **Chapel Hill Creamery's Carolina Moon** cheese.

Along with the food and music is a community — a sense of belonging, a chosen family. Welcome home, Bill and Andrea!  
— *Deborah Miller DM* ▶

**RIGHT** Singer **Delillah Hurst** fronts a band of randomly grouped musicians during the weekly Tuesday night jam session at The Blue Note Grill.



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