*James-Stuart “Stu” Plush*

*Executive Chef*

James-Stuart “Stu” Plush began his professional cooking career later in life. But the former graphic designer turned his creativity from the computer to the kitchen, pursuing a lifelong passion that’s paying off as executive chef of The Kitchen & Bar at Bardstown Bourbon Company.

Born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, Stu – as he’s known personally and professionally – draws cooking inspiration from growing up in the Bluegrass, where he was strongly influenced by traditional Appalachian and Southern style cuisine from his mother and grandmothers. His sister, who is a former pastry chef, also had a hand in his culinary upbringing. Along with these familiar ties to cooking, Stu loves utilizing international flavors from Korean and Japanese food, along with inspiring spices and techniques Cajun and Creole cuisine lends.

After nearly 20 years as a graphic designer and teacher, culinary school seemed like the natural choice. In 2011, Stu pursued his passion at Sullivan University, while continuing to freelance and work full-time as a graphic designer. He began his culinary career in 2014 at Winston’s in Louisville before promoting to chef and kitchen manager at Farm to Fork Catering. Before joining The Kitchen and Bar at Bardstown Bourbon Company in 2020, Stu also served as sous chef at Charr’d Bourbon Kitchen & Lounge and Winston’s, as well as executive chef at The Bourbon Academy Tasting Room.

Outside of the kitchen, Stu loves to be on the water boating or fishing with his wife.