For over three decades Jamie Kennedy has been instrumental in shaping the culinary landscape in Canada. His innovative approach to gastronomy, commitment to sustainable agriculture and advocacy of local food have been unwavering.

Following his cooking apprenticeship with George Brown College, Jamie set his sights on an finding work in a kitchen. His first job out of school was at the Windsor Arms Hotel in downtown Toronto under Chef Herbert Sonzogni and it was there that Jamie cut his teeth.

George Minden, owner of the Windsor Arms, was quick to notice the prowess Jamie demonstrated in the kitchen and hired him as his personal chef at his home in Gstaad, Switzerland. Following his stay with Minden, Jamie enjoyed a brief career as journeyman throughout Europe where he honed his craft and approach to classical French cooking. It was during this time the budding chef forged an important and long-lasting friendship with Michael Stadtlaender.

Returning from Europe Jamie and Michael were hired as co-chefs at Scaramouche Restaurant in 1980. It was then that Jamie secured his position as one of the forerunners in Toronto's culinary scene and established Scaramouche as the uptown institution it is today.

In 1985, following his tenure at Scaramouche, Jamie opened his first restaurant on College Street, the now famous Palmerston Restaurant. With its intimate dining room and open-concept kitchen, Jamie executed seasonally driven French bistro-style dishes, further establishing him as one of the most influential chefs in the country.

In 1989 Jamie co-founded Knives and Forks which helped pioneer farm-to-table practices nationwide and has continued to foster important ties between farmers and chefs across Ontario. Through the decades this approach to sourcing locally has gained popularity in our society and the now burgeoning Slow Food Movement has inspired such events as Evergreen Brickworks/Slow Food's annual "Picnic at The Brickworks". Founded in 2006 this event brings together artisans, local farmers, wineries and chefs. Jamie continues to support Ontario farmers by participating in this event each year.

In 1994 Jamie Kennedy at the Museum opened to critical and commercial acclaim. JK ROM ushered in fine dining during the lunch hour to Toronto's downtown core. With Jamie's new catering business, the venue became one of the most popular destinations for private events utilized by the likes of the Toronto International Film Festival, Alliance Atlantis as well as by private clients.

During a major reconstruction of the Royal Ontario Museum, Jamie took a well-deserved hiatus purchasing farmland in Prince Edward County. Focusing on planting his own vegetables and herbs, raising livestock as well as cultivating a vineyard with Pinot Noir grapes, Jamie was ready to shift gears.

In 2003 Jamie Kennedy Wine Bar opened at 9 Church Street, the chef's most seminal and successful endeavour to date. The open-concept kitchen and 'Chef's Bar' were among the most coveted seats in the city. With its small plates menu that changed twice daily and meticulously paired wines, JK Wine Bar ranked as one of Canada's foremost influential dining destinations.

Its adjoining dining room was briefly home to the Jamie Kennedy Restaurant which boasted a classical French bistro style menu, echoing the chef's first restaurant, The Palmerston.

In 2006 Jamie was once again at the helm as executive chef at Bloor and Avenue Road, this time with Jamie Kennedy at the Gardiner. After a highly successful fundraising campaign that drew monies from both public and private sectors, the newly renovated Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Arts showcased its third floor glass pavilion as a fine dining lunch destination while hosting private events in the evening.

During the summer of 2008, the venue was repositioned as a full time event venue for Jamie's catering business.

With its spacious, airy feel, floor to ceiling windows and impeccable view of the University of Toronto and Queen's Park, the Gardiner Museum continues to attract some of the most exclusive events in the city.

Jamie's most recent endeavour, Gilead Café & Bistro, showcases the chef's continued commitment to local and sustainable methods of cooking. Its adjoining kitchen also acts as the production kitchen for on and off-site private catered events.

Producing locally sourced, seasonally driven, hand crafted menus, Jamie Kennedy Event Catering works with each individual client to customize their experience, from private corporate functions to weddings.

In the coming years, Jamie looks forward to cultivating his farm and vineyard with plans to open a tavern on his farm in Prince Edward County.

Throughout his remarkable career, Jamie has applied the slow food philosophy in every aspect of his downtown restaurants and flourishing catering business. His seasonal methods of cooking and involvement with the local food movement continue to inspire progress in agricultural and gastronomical communities across Canada.