

For Hotel, Resort, and Casino Food & Beverage Professionals

Hotel F&B

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MAY/JUNE 2008

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GET ABOARD FLYING SPOONS

Embassy Suites Turnkey Lobby
Concept for Generation Y Dining

(L-R) Embassy Suites' Kris Beck, Director,
Brand Operations Support; Cindy Patton,
Senior Director, New Product and Service
Development; and Rick McCue, VP for Brand
Performance and Support

Join us at the Hotel F&B 2009 Trends and Directions Conference **p.46**



HOTEL F&B LIFE

A GAGGLE OF GUESTS

Staybridge Suites encourages guest interaction at community tables.

BY NANCY FOX

When it comes to hospitality, the Irish parliamentarian Maurice Healy put it best: "Keep your treasures for a night when those few who are nearest to your heart can gather round your table, free from care, with latchkeys in their pockets and no last train to catch." In an effort to foster guest interaction and a sense of residential community, Staybridge Suites attempts to do that—with the introduction of a buffet design that capitalizes upon the tradition of a community table.

The transformation of Staybridge Suites' public areas involves opening the wall between the buffet area and the great room and installing the Gathering Table—a bar-height, Silestone-topped island surrounded by stools. It is a three-sided design, with two seating sides and the longest side left open for guests who wish to stand. The room's new plan and inclusion of the Gathering Table are intended to stimulate guest interaction during breakfast and the Sundowner evening reception. Pendant lighting and stone wall accents in the buffet area contribute to a cozy ambience. The Gathering Table design will be rolled out at more than 100 Staybridge Suites properties within the next several years.

Response to lifestyle trends was a big factor in introducing the Gathering Table concept. A 2007 Home Design Trends study conducted by the American Institute of Architects reported that 66 percent of firms indicated a greater consumer interest in more communal, open space in the home. The integration of the kitchen area into living space was also in very high demand. It was a logical extension to provide a kitchen-like island in the

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Community tables are the centerpiece of Staybridge Suites' redesigned public areas.

Quoteworthy

"Every hotel has beds and rooms and meeting space. Some put more money into it, but we all have the same essential product. Fifty percent is the product we have to offer, but the other fifty percent is relationships."

—Mark Bello, director of group sales, InterContinental San Francisco, page 24

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TASTINGS HOTEL F&B NEWS

DOMESTIC

Miami Beach Resort & Spa, an LXR Luxury Resorts & Hotels property, has hired Craig Tooker as its executive chef. Tooker comes from the Kingston Plantation in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where he was the executive chef ...



Chef Tooker

Yvonne Liu has been named catering manager at the **InterContinental Mark Hopkins San Francisco**. Liu comes from the Westin St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, where she was the catering sales manager ...



Yvonne Liu

The **Hilton Hartford**, in Hartford, Connecticut, has appointed Jennifer C. Hughes as director of catering. Hughes has more than a decade of experience in the hospitality industry and was most recently the executive suites and event manager at the XL Center in Hartford ...



Jennifer C. Hughes

The **Circular Dining Room** at the **Hotel Hershey** in Hershey, Pennsylvania, has achieved AAA Four-Diamond status for the twentieth consecutive year. The restaurant has received this honor every year since the inception of the Four-Diamond dining award in 1988 ...

C4 Restaurant & Bar at the **Clarendon Hotel** in Phoenix has a new southwestern-focused menu featuring locally grown and produced ingredients. Dishes include Roasted Corn & Poblano Chowder with Cilantro Crema and Tobacco Onions, and Borracho Bread Pudding with Tequila Orange Sauce ...

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GO GREEN

CLEVER WATER SAVERS GET MEETING ATTENDEES ON THE GREEN BANDWAGON

The Hamilton Park Hotel & Conference Center in Florham Park, New Jersey, is doing its share not only to conserve water but also to engender eco-consciousness among meeting attendees. The hotel has designed a coaster that doubles as a water preserver. The water saver, designed to be placed on the neck of a bottle, says: "Place this saver over your water bottle and our staff will not remove it, conserving water and saving resources for future recycling." The hotel also places large water dispensers in meeting break areas so attendees may refill their bottles with cold water if desired.

The concept for the water preserver was developed by Hotel Manager Amy Wickenheiser. Formerly responsible for the property's conference planning and operations, Wickenheiser has an intimate knowledge of meetings and room changeover.

Since its inception in the spring, meeting attendees—who reportedly think it's very clever—have consumed 25 percent fewer bottles of water each month, resulting in less plastic waste and significant cost savings.



STAYBRIDGE SUITES *continued*

Staybridge Suites buffet redesign, where extended-stay guests can opt to dine or work in a convivial, communal setting. The Gathering Table design offers guests "permission" to engage at whatever social or business level they choose.

VP of Brand Management Robert Radomski says, "The Staybridge Suites Atlanta Perimeter East was the first property to feature the Gathering Table, and response from guests and staff alike has been positive. Guests comment that they enjoy the more relaxed atmosphere, and staffers love it. They appreciate anything that keeps guests socializing and happy. From a practical standpoint, the Gathering Table allows for better traffic patterns in the buffet area, with more adjacent counter space for beverage stations. Better access to beverage refills keeps congestion away from the food service area."

Other elements of the design include additional bar-height tables in the great room, mounted televisions, and a community bulletin board with hotel activities and the Sundowner reception menu. The Sundowner reception is offered Tuesday through Thursday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and features complimentary wine,

beer, and soft drinks. Light hors d'oeuvres are the standard fare, and a special barbecue is featured on Wednesday evenings. A complimentary breakfast buffet is offered daily and features a hot entrée, cereal, oatmeal, breakfast breads and muffins, eggs, fresh fruit, yogurt, juice, sodas, and Wolfgang Puck coffees.

Staybridge Suites continues to enhance their upscale, all-suite properties with other unique home-away-from-home design features and amenities. Corporate initiatives such as Free Wireless Anywhere, the Just Like Home Theater, and the new Outdoor Living Room offer homey touches. These features encourage guests to circulate and spend more time in public areas.

Radomski adds, "We want to provide an environment where guests can mix, mingle, and socialize—where good times and memories prevail. Both the Gathering Table and the Outdoor Living Room create a more relaxed setting where guests can linger and enjoy dynamic group energy and networking opportunities." ☺

Nancy Fox is a frequent contributor to HOTEL F&B.

TASTINGS *continued from page 9*

Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Hollywood, Florida, has opened Chef's Table, described as a "luxury dining showcase experience." It's a 30-seat restaurant arranged to showcase the cooking process for guests, including state-of-the-art kitchen appliances and the latest video recording equipment for live broadcasts and production of take-home DVDs for guests of their dinner event ...



Chef's Table, Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

The culinary team from the Willard InterContinental Washington in Washington, D.C., placed first among five hotels in the U.S. Inaugural MLA Black Box Culinary Challenge. Each team was given a "black box" of secret ingredients and 24 hours to develop a three-course menu, which was judged on preparation, presentation, innovation, and taste. The Willard InterContinental's winning entrée was Outback Spirit Spice-Rubbed Beef with Portobello Duxelles, Sweet Potato, Asparagus, Pulled Beef, Bleu Cheese, and Ravioli, with Natural Jus. They will represent the United States in the global finals in Dubai in May ...



Willard InterContinental's winning entrée

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HOTEL F&BLIFE

TASTINGS continued from page 10

InterContinental Tampa has hired Robert Hayden as senior catering manager and Jenni Nelson as the catering manager. Hayden was most recently the associate director of catering at the Sandpearl Resort in Clearwater Beach, Florida, while Nelson comes from the Westin Tampa Harbour Island Hotel in Tampa, where she was catering sales manager ...

The **Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers** has named John DiMartini as executive chef. DiMartini has nearly 20 years of culinary experience and was most recently the executive chef at the Renaissance Chicago O'Hare Suites Hotel ...



Chef DiMartini

The **Inn at Bay Harbor** in Bay Harbor, Michigan, has added two to its food and beverage team: Tim Markey is the new director of food and beverage, and Mike Lutz is the new executive chef. Markey was previously the



Tim Markey



Chef Lutz

club manager at the Country Club of Boyne at Boyne Highlands Resort in Harbor Springs, Michigan, while Lutz was most recently the executive chef at Bay Harbor Golf Club ...

Eugene Staples has been named the chef de cuisine of the Old House restaurant at the **Eldorado Hotel & Spa** in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Staples' specialty is creating menus with local and seasonal ingredients. Prior to joining the Eldorado Hotel & Spa, Staples was the sous chef of Le Cirque at the Bellagio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas ...



Chef Staples

Renovations at the **Sheraton Phoenix Airport Hotel** Tempe are completed, including Fire + Spice, an upscale southwestern steakhouse with a menu specializing in ingredients and flavors from Arizona and New Mexico ...

The **Hyatt Regency Houston** opened Texas's first Shula's Steakhouse in April. The outlet, named after former Miami Dolphins head coach Don Shula, will replace two of the property's three restaurants and will serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The interior features three private dining rooms, walls decorated with sports memorabilia, and menus hand-painted on official NFL game footballs ...

Mohegan Sun in Uncasville, Connecticut, has opened Birches Bar & Grill inside the property's Casino of the Earth. The outlet's décor is inspired by Native American design, while the menu's focus is on casual dining, with dishes like cedar plank salmon, turkey pot pie, and lobster mac and cheese ...



Birches Bar & Grill, Mohegan Sun

Guests at the **Ritz-Carlton, New Orleans** can learn to make classic New Orleans cocktails like the Pimm's Cup, Mint Julep, and Sazerac from Master Mixologist Chris McMillian in the hotel's mixology class program. Prices are \$125 per person ...



Mint Julep

Customers staying at the **Hotel Vintage Plaza** in Portland, Oregon, have a chance to experience "Pinot in Portland." The package includes two Riedel Pinot Noir glasses, a bottle of '05 Chateau Bianca Pinot Noir (the hotel's private label wine), a journal for tasting notes, and a private session with Wine Director Lemmy Cooper. Rates start at \$289 ...



Monday night is "Bistro Burger" night at blue on blue, the restaurant in the **Avalon Beverly Hills** hotel. Chef Scott Garrett serves up six different 100 percent angus beef burgers with seasonal gourmet ingredients, including the Olympic burger topped with tempura onion rings, Maytag bleu cheese, and garlic aioli ...



Olympic Burger, Avalon Beverly Hills

The **Westin Lombard Yorktown Center** in Lombard, Illinois, opened as the 150th Westin hotel worldwide and features Harry Caray's Italian Steakhouse and Holy Mackerel!, a fresh seafood restaurant ...



Westin Opening Celebration

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HOTEL F&B LIFE

TASTINGS continued from page 12

The **Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center** in Nashville has opened three new dining outlets: **Stax**, a build-your-own-burger restaurant; **Paisano's**, a Tuscan-style pizzeria; and **Water's Edge Marketplace Buffet**, featuring flavors from around the world ...

The **Orlando World Center Marriott Resort & Convention Center** in Orlando now has the largest pillar-free resort ballroom in the United States. The recently opened 105,000-square-foot **Cypress Ballroom** combines with the existing **Palms Ballroom** next door to create 150,000 square feet of contiguous pillar-free, carpeted meeting space. The addition of the **Cypress Ballroom** increases the property's total event space to 450,000 square feet ...



Cypress Ballroom

Construction is underway on the 21-story **Hotel Palomar-Atlanta**, a boutique property managed by **Kimpton Hotel & Restaurant Group**. The hotel will feature over 10,000-square-feet of meeting space and a destination restaurant. The grand opening is scheduled for May 2009 ...

Smart Ice Machines

YOUR MAIN FREEZE

Ice machines are multitaskers. They have a multitude of functions to perform beyond simply freezing water. They must be user-friendly, energy-efficient, easy to clean and maintain, and able to produce large amounts of ice very quickly.

According to Tom Port, president of Pioneer Restaurant Equipment Company, Scotsman ice machines perform all of those tasks. That's why he recommended a Scotsman Prodigy cube ice machine for the new **Elway's** restaurant at the **Ritz-Carlton** hotel in Denver, Colorado.

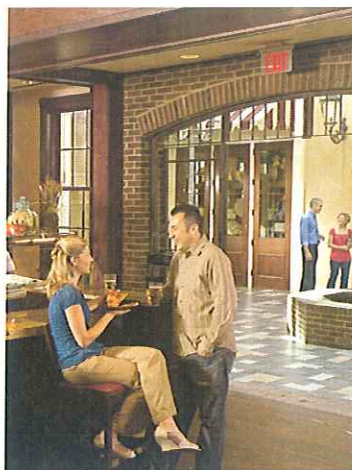
"I have a very strong business relationship with Scotsman. I'm a design builder, and I will only work with companies like Scotsman that have good quality items and follow-through," he describes.

Scotsman says its high-quality hotel ice machines are the result of technological innovation and fifty years of industry experience. Their new Prodigy Ice Machine has been receiving accolades for its energy efficiency and its self-monitoring system with an auto-alert panel.

Port appreciates that Scotsman ice machines are as reliable as they are efficient. It's this reliability and efficiency that make Scotsman the right choice for Port. "The ice machines are working quite well in the hotel. Since the day we turned them on, they've been running great.

"There have been no problems with them whatsoever," he adds. "They are quite good in their operation and performance." —AV

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Gaylord Opryland's Paisano's (left) and Stax exterior

A 122-room **Hotel Indigo** is being built in Miami, Florida. Like other Hotel Indigos, the property will offer coffee and breakfast at the **Golden Bean** and a selection of salads, pizzettas, paninis, and seasonal entrées at the **Phi Bistro**. The hotel is expected to open in early 2008 ...

The culinary team at **Rio Mar Beach Resort and Spa** in Rio Grande, Puerto Rico, won a silver medal at the 9th Annual Culinary Super Challenge Team Competition in Orlando. Executive Chef **Pablo Budet** and his team members **Ramon Carrillo**, **Luis Acevedo**, and **Anibal Rodríguez** had five hours to prepare a four-course meal for 60 people, with every step closely monitored by judges from the American Culinary Federation ...

Vic's Steakhouse at the **Mayfield Inn & Suites** in Edmonton, Alberta, has opened, featuring a menu with locally grown Alberta beef, including **Hazelnut** and **Brie Crusted Sirloin**, **Sweet Chili Steak**, and **Steak au Poivre** in a **Cognac Cream Sauce** ...

INTERNATIONAL

The **Sheraton Cable Beach Resort** in Nassau, Bahamas, has opened its new meeting facilities. Consisting of 25,000-square-feet of indoor and outdoor function space, it can accommodate events of up to 1,200 attendees. The largest area is a 12,500-square-foot ballroom, complemented by four additional breakout rooms ...

Rosewood Little Dix Bay in the British Virgin Islands has hired **Marcel Driessen** as its executive chef and **Stephane Duvacher** as its food and beverage director. Driessen's career spans 25 years and more than a half-dozen countries, including Lebanon, the Seychelles, Jordan, Croatia, and the Netherlands. He was most recently the executive chef at **Sandy Lane Hotel & Golf Resort** in Barbados. Duvacher has logged more than 22 years in Michelin-rated restaurants throughout France and at top hotels in the Middle East. He was previously the culinary and food and beverage director at the five-star **Jebel Ali Golf Resort & Spa** in Dubai ...

Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino has opened a **Ruth's Chris Steak House** in the space that was previously the property's **Tuscany Italian** restaurant. The outlet is part of a \$40 million dollar renovation at the **Aruba Marriott** and will include two 16-seat private dining rooms featuring artwork by local artist **Elisa Lejueuz**.

—Michael Costa

Send news items to
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