

ROMANCE REIGNS AT ROYAL PALMS RESORT AND SPA

Love memories orchestrated by Robert Vickrey, Director of Romance

PHOENIX – (October 2009) –According to Royal Palms' Director of Romance, Robert Vickrey, romancia is still hot. The economy may have cooled down, but love has not.

Royal Palms Resort and Spa, managed by Destination Hotels & Resorts, exudes romance at every turn. Combined with the resort's regal Spanish Colonial architecture, lush estate-like interiors, beautifully sculpted gardens, and multitude of mesquite fireplaces indoors and out, Vickrey, has put Royal Palms on the "romance map."

As Director of Romance, Vickrey's role goes far beyond ordering flowers and making dinner reservations. He says that most people ask for his help because they want to do something special and need a little extra help. He approaches each request with the attitude of "what can we do that's truly unique and make this a WOW experience?" He takes control and orchestrates every detail of the evening so that his guests can completely relax and enjoy each moment.

"The resort has so many intimate nooks indoors and out where we can stage something incredibly unique. Most of these evenings are surprises so it's a thrill to see the end result. We scrutinize and maximize every detail," explains Vickrey. Among his favorite venues for a romantic rendezvous are the Alegria Garden, the *Cervantes* Library, the Mansion Courtyard and the Bell Tower.

A host of creative evenings and imaginative details

Vickrey has enhanced special memories with violinists, flamenco guitarists, poem readers, rose petals (lots of rose petals), diamond-laced desserts, white doves and fireworks. He also handles the small, intimate (and often last-minute) details – rose petals or flowers for the table, exquisitely wrapped gifts, *fine wine*– all with panache. Another knockout is a surprise privately catered dinner complete with rose petals scattered on the floor, champagne, candle-lit ambiance and sensual music, all taking place within quiet nooks in the Tuscan-style landscaped gardens.

His favorite romantic event? A proposal he orchestrated in the Mansion Courtyard for the prospective groom. He set up a fully catered dinner with both a private server and himself seeing to every detail. They personalized the music and set up a nearby sound system. On cue from the groom, he set fireworks on the roof in motion. "To say this experience lit up the night for the bride and groom is an understatement," he says. "By the way, she said yes."

Pearls of wisdom for the “romantically challenged”

According to Vickrey, about 20% of his requests are from women who want to make a birthday extra special while the men are usually celebrating an anniversary or proposal. He shares these thoughts about why his romantic events create such impact: “First and foremost is the element of surprise. It says volumes about how much effort, thought and care went into making a memorable evening. Second, because I’ve staged so many different experiences, I don’t miss any of the details that are going to make him or her feel adored. And third, to women, don’t be afraid to take the lead in surprising him – men love to feel adored too.”

About Robert Vickrey

Vickrey joined Royal Palms as Maitre D’ in the award-winning and ultra-romantic T. Cook’s restaurant in August 2007, and his special talents when interacting with guests and anticipating their requests and needs were immediately apparent and qualified him to step into the role of Director of Romance.

“Coming from Las Vegas, my career has been filled with opportunities of catering to the unique needs of high rollers which, in turn, I’ve been able to translate into ‘creative anticipation’ when serving the clientele at T. Cook’s and Royal Palms,” explains Vickrey. “And because Vegas is the marriage capital of the world, I’m no stranger to the romance side of guest experiences.”

Vickrey says that he gets his keen skills naturally. His father managed casinos in Las Vegas during the days of the Rat Pack, so he grew up learning how to treat people with a high level of respect and a desire to go beyond the obvious and create magic for them. To hone his skills further, he received a masters degree in communications from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and currently teaches interpersonal communication and public speaking as an adjunct instructor at Chandler-Gilbert Community College.

Director of Romance, Robert Vickrey, may be reached at 602-977-6459.

For information and room reservations, call 602-840-3610 or 800-672-6011, or visit www.royalpalmsresortandspa.com.

For T. Cook’s dining reservations, call 602-808-0766.

About Royal Palms Resort and Spa

A member of Historic Hotels of America, Royal Palms Resort and Spa is a AAA Four Diamond resort located at the foot of majestic Camelback Mountain. Combining the graciousness and sophistication of a Mediterranean villa with the intimacy and privacy of a secluded retreat, Royal Palms offers: 119 custom-appointed guest rooms, suites, intimate clusters of casitas and grand villas; regal Spanish Colonial architecture; over 20,000 square feet of estate-like meeting space; Tuscan-style gardens; exquisite tapestries, antiques and stone fireplaces throughout, a Mother-of-Pearl-tiled swimming pool with private cabanas; and a croquet lawn. Designed around the original historic private mansion built

in 1929, Royal Palms is home to the award-winning T. Cook's restaurant and the Mobil Four Star Alvadora Spa. Just minutes from Scottsdale's shopping, galleries, golf, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and the Camelback financial corridor, Royal Palms is an ideal retreat for business, pleasure and special occasions, offering luxury, privacy, romance and convenience.

Royal Palms Resort and Spa is one of more than 30 independent, upscale hotels, resorts and conference centers managed by Destination Hotels & Resorts, which is consistently rated one of the top 10 independent hospitality management companies in the United States. To protect and preserve the unique communities in which the company operates, Destination launched Destination Earth, an environmental sustainability program in 2008. New for 2009 is the 582-room Terranea Resort situated on the Palos Verdes Peninsula in southern California, which opened to the public in June. The 102-acre ocean front resort features a 25,000-square-foot destination spa, three swimming pools, three ocean view restaurants and a Todd Eckenrode-designed par three golf course. In addition to Terranea in the greater Los Angeles area, Destination operates properties in key metropolitan areas and resort markets including Washington, D.C., Denver, San Diego, Santa Fe, Aspen, Palm Springs, Houston and Lake Tahoe. Destination is a subsidiary of Los Angeles-based investment, development and management firm Lowe Enterprises. For more information on the properties in the Destination Hotels & Resorts collection, please visit www.destinationhotels.com or to join the company's loyalty program for the best offers available, visit www.destinationdelivers.com

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