

CHEF HILLSON AT T. COOK'S INTRODUCES HIS PRIVATE LABEL MARMALADE

Also pickles his own produce and cures his own meats...

PHOENIX – (October 2009) – Executive Chef and Iron Chef competitor, Lee Hillson of Royal Palms Resort and Spa, takes the term “house made” far beyond what most other top chefs are doing. It started with his private label Pesto recipe several years ago, and he has continually added new products, some for sale, some to be enjoyed only as a guest in T. Cook's.

In 1929, the original Royal Palms was built on 65 acres in the middle of a citrus grove at the base of Camelback Mountain. Today, many of the original trees are peppered throughout the grounds and around T. Cook's. In years past, citrus was one of four key drivers of the Phoenix economy.

Debuting in October, Chef Hillson's **Orange Marmalade** will be a regular accoutrement on the restaurant's breakfast tables and also available for purchase at \$8 per jar. When the citrus is picked from the trees adorning the resort's grounds in late January or early February, an estimated 1,000 to 2,000 numbered jars of signature marmalade will be available. For the balance of the year, the Royal Palms Marmalade will be made to the chef's recipe using citrus from outside Arizona. Both Chef Hillson and Pastry Chef Ronnie Dilla are creating menu items that will showcase the marmalade year-round.

Currently, T. Cook's offers an entrée on the dinner menu and a luncheon dessert featuring the marmalade: Pan roasted Orata stuffed with orange marmalade & basil on a bed of crushed fingerling potatoes, heirloom tomatoes & fennel (\$29) and Adora , a white chocolate Grand Marnier mousse with orange marmalade in the center on a vanilla bisquit with mixed berry sauce (\$10). The marmalade is in the sauce on the seared mahi fish tacos (\$14) on the lunch menu.

Large jars of **Chef's pickled vegetables** such as carrots, onions, cauliflower, mushrooms, beets and kosher pickles colorfully line a cabinet in the restaurant. While these are not available for purchase, Chef Hillson uses them liberally in his menus in salads and as accompaniments. The list of pickled items, of course, varies seasonally.

Chef Hillson's latest house-made venture is charcuterie. The rows and rows of cured meats in **his charcuterie locker** are expanding daily with luscious link chorizo, boar prosciutto, pork loin, lardo, pancetta, soppressata, coppa, mortadella, and lamb prosciutto to name a few. These too he features on his menus on everything from breakfast dishes to pizzas on the lunch menu and antipasto on the dinner menu.

“Not only is this a lot of fun, but the more things we can make in house, the more we can control the integrity of what we serve our guests. At the same time, we continue to challenge our culinary team, teaching them new things – back to basics, as it were,” states Hillson.

For T. Cook's information or reservations, call 602-808-0766 or visit www.royalpalmsresortandspa.com.

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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