

**LEE HILLSON**  
**Executive Chef**  
**T. Cook's and Royal Palms Resort and Spa**

Lee Hillson was named Executive Chef in August 2005, having joined T. Cook's as Sous Chef five years earlier. He has gained both local and national notoriety with this elegant and rustic interpretation of Mediterranean cuisine as well as his generous donation of both time and talent to countless charitable organizations.

Hillson's progression up the food chain is paved with award-winning culinary experiences. He began his restaurant career in 1987 at the age of 16 when he enrolled in culinary school at Bournemouth and Poole College in his native England. Two years later, degree in hand, he took off to the Hyatt in Austin, Texas to explore new worlds and new cuisines.

A year later, he returned to London for the unique opportunity to be the Chef de Partie at the Roux Patisserie, owned by world-renowned chefs, Albert and Michel Roux. Hillson then served as Pastry Chef at the Michelin star Le Poussin in Hampshire, England. His next stop was Hintlesham Hall in Ipswich, Suffolk, England where he began as the Pastry Chef and three years later was appointed Sous Chef at this European award-winning, fine dining restaurant.

In November of 1998, Hillson again crossed the Atlantic to become Executive Sous Chef at Vanderbilt Hall in Newport, Rhode Island at its Alva restaurant. Within a few short months, he was appointed Executive Chef at this restaurant ranked as one of the country's top five restaurants by *Country Inn* magazine.

From Rhode Island, Hillson joined T. Cook's and has since been part of the lineup that has garnered acclaim from the likes of Andrew Harper's *Hideaway Report, Travel + Leisure* magazine and a host of Phoenix/Scottsdale food writers. Hillson has cooked on more than one occasion at the James Beard House in New York, hosted a Friends of James Beard dinner at the resort, and participated in numerous local high profile culinary events.

In 2007, Hillson strut his stuff for the Arizona Kidney Foundation as a "celebrity dancer" for their record-breaking charitable event: *Dancing with the Stars Arizona*. In 2008, he was named Arizona spokesperson for Hass Avocados, nominated to the Arizona Culinary Hall of Fame, and was invited to battle Food Network's Iron Chef Cat Cora on the blockbuster show, *Iron Chef America* where he achieved one of the season's highest scores.

With Hillson at the helm, T. Cook's was voted the most popular Phoenix/Scottsdale restaurant by *Zagat's: America's Top Restaurants* in both 2006 and 2007.

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