

## Joel Robuchon at The Mansion and L'atelier de Joel Robuchon

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The Chef of the Century Returns to the Stove with His First and Only Restaurants in the United States

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LAS VEGAS

Culinary history has been made in Las Vegas as legendary chef Joel Robuchon opens his first restaurants in the United States, L'Atelier de Joel Robuchon and Joel Robuchon at The Mansion and at MGM Grand.

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<http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20050919/LAM118-b> )

L'Atelier de Joel Robuchon, meaning the culinary workshop of Joel Robuchon, resembles the Parisian original. Dissolving the boundaries between kitchen and dining room, L'Atelier allows guests to observe the creation of their meal while providing a friendly atmosphere where interaction with staff and diners is encouraged.

Joel Robuchon at The Mansion marks his return to the Michelin-starred style cuisine he retired from more than a decade ago. He'll once again create the food that captured the world's attention and earned him the title of "chef of the century" along with scores of accolades, honors and three Michelin stars.

Joel Robuchon at The Mansion provides an exclusive opportunity to experience this chef's formidable cooking talents in their fullest expression. Pierre-Yves Rochon, known for his sumptuous decor for The Four Seasons George V in Paris and the St. James Hotel in London, has designed a dining room that is a magnificent setting for Robuchon's fare. With its constellation of extraordinary talent, service and ambiance, Joel Robuchon at The Mansion, in the words of MGM Grand President Gamal Aziz, "ends all arguments about haute cuisine."

For many years, Chef Robuchon was approached with numerous offers to open a restaurant in the United States. It was in 2001, when he met with Gamal Aziz about coming to MGM Grand, that he made his decision and the two

shook hands on the deal. The culinary face of Las Vegas was to be changed forever.

In 2004, Robuchon signed on to open, not one, but two restaurants at MGM Grand, Joel Robuchon at The Mansion and his famed L'Atelier. Aziz explained, "As a chef, Robuchon should be understood for his passion for excellence. Concerned not only about the quality of a vegetable, he also is concerned about the quality of the soil in which it was grown," adding, "he is in a phase of life where he needs to create, not impress."

Thus, this master chef returns to the three-star cuisine for which he is renowned. Dishes include La Noix de Saint-Jacques, fresh scallop cooked in its shell with a lemon and seaweed butter, Le Homard de Bretagne, Brittany lobster under a disappearing saffron hostie in a seafood bouillon and La Semoule de Ble Dur, confit of lamb with a Mediterranean flavored semolina wheat couscous. As he's matured and traveled, Robuchon has broadened his repertoire of purely French cuisine to include international influences, mainly from Asia and Spain, two worlds he has come to know quite well. The ingredients and techniques of these countries are seen in dishes such as Le Bar, which is pan-fried sea bass with lemongrass foam and stewed baby leeks, and Le Thon, tuna tartar served with cold red bell pepper confit, bergamot and ham.

The powerful team in the kitchen is comprised of a group of his top chefs, many of whom are veterans of Michelin-starred restaurants, all of whom have been groomed and mentored by Robuchon. Leading the team is Executive Chef Claude Le Tohic, who worked with Robuchon at his groundbreaking Jamin. Le Tohic is a 2004 recipient of the prestigious Meilleur Ouvrier de France, a rare distinction awarded to an outstanding chef by a jury of his peers. Working closely with Le Tohic is Chef de Cuisine Tomonori Danzaki who has more than a decade's worth of experience working at Joel Robuchon's restaurants in Tokyo and Paris.

Executive Pastry Chef Kamel Guechida comes to Las Vegas from Switzerland where he has served as Joel Robuchon's pastry consultant for more than six years. These chefs have spent the past few months forging relationships with purveyors to ensure the availability of top-notch ingredients.

The restaurant's wine program is overseen by Head Sommelier Jeff Morgenthal, formerly of Enoteca Drago in Los Angeles and MGM Grand's Director of Wine, Jaime Smith. "The wine list at Joel Robuchon at The Mansion represents a collection of liquid art," said Jaime Smith. "It's driven more by region than brand recognition." The wine list features 750 labels from small yet notable French and American producers, ranging from great 20th century vintages to a breadth of American red wines dating back to pre-World War II.

Paying homage to Chef Robuchon's French roots, the restaurant offers the largest collection of Philliponnat "Clos Des Goies" ever released from the chateau. A comprehensive list of more than 100 champagne options, including 1950s vintages, represent small growers where region is again the driving force. In addition, there is an extensive wine-by-the-glass program which includes various wine flights.

Loic Launay, who hails from Joel Robuchon-Monte Carlo, serves as Maitre d'hotel, ensuring the genteel and quietly efficient service for which Robuchon's restaurants are known. Launay works with a team of managers that includes Olivier Brouillet, of the Eiffel Tower Restaurant at Paris Las Vegas, and Berengere Leleu, who previously worked at Robuchon's La Table in Paris, France.

In designing the five-room space, designer Pierre-Yves Rochon called forth the glamour and elan of 1930s Paris. Guests enter the restaurant through a black and white tiled foyer dramatically lit by a crystal teardrop chandelier. The main dining room boasts soaring 17-foot ceilings, luxurious black and purple fabrics and a superb view of the indoor terrace. Relaxing pre- and post-dinner cocktails can be sipped in a cozy, intimate bar. A beautifully landscaped garden-designed dining room, presided over by an Auguste Rodin replica, "Age of Airain," has seating for 12. A private dining room, overlooking the 'indoor' garden, mimics the rich purple tones of the main room.

It has been said that Chef Robuchon's cooking is so striking in its vibrancy and precision as to render a meal memorable down to its last detail. Now, at last, diners have the chance to create a new set of lasting memories for themselves.

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