

MGM National Harbor Sets Unforgettable Impression With Monumental East Coast Debut

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Sarah Jessica Parker, José Andrés, Marcus Samuelsson, Voltaggio Brothers, Jerome Bettis, Wolf Blitzer, Omarosa and More Welcome Guests for Historic Grand Opening
NATIONAL HARBOR, Md., Dec. 9, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- **MGM National Harbor** made its historic debut in the Capital Region during a series of official grand opening festivities on Thursday, December 8. Delivering incredible views of Washington, D.C.'s iconic monuments and unrivaled room, spa, entertainment, shopping and dining offerings, the \$1.4 billion resort introduced an experience unlike anything on the East Coast.

[High-resolution grand opening photos/ b-roll: http://bit.ly/MGMNHGrandOpening](http://bit.ly/MGMNHGrandOpening)

[Click here for resort overview: http://bit.ly/MGMNHOverview](http://bit.ly/MGMNHOverview)

As the sun set over the Potomac River, 5,000 guests flooded the resort to enjoy an elegant evening of surprises. **Sarah Jessica Parker** looked stunning as she proudly showed guests her first standalone shoe boutique, **SJP by Sarah Jessica Parker**, personally fitting guests with her now coveted collection of shoes and SJPLBD little black dresses.

A host of prominent food & beverage personalities joined attendees and mingled with guests throughout the evening. Acclaimed Michelin-starred Chef **José Andrés** revealed his unique seafood concept **Fish**, which draws inspiration from the nearby Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Guests sampled lobster jambalaya with shrimp, lobster, chicken, andouille sausage and holy trinity; gin & tonic oysters, lemon-soy sea urchin, spicy big eye tuna tartar with tempura shiso leaf and sesame; and whole-grilled red snapper. From Maryland blue crabs to Rappahannock oysters, Fish delivers an ode to local traditions.

Five-time James Beard award-winning Chef **Marcus Samuelsson** reveled in the opening of **MARCUS**, serving classic American dishes with Samuelsson's special twist. Chef Samuelsson turned up the heat with a funky jazz band

as guests enjoyed his spin on American classics such as Gravlax with green harissa crème fraiche, pickled mustard seed and crisp injera; the Obama Short Rib Slider with China afro funk and sweet potato purée; and St. Hill Shrimp N Grits with Carolina shrimp, shoebox ham and creamy grits. He also debuted his first in-room dining program for MGM National Harbor's 308 rooms and suites.

Bravo's Top Chef alumni and brothers **Bryan and Michael Voltaggio** showcased their first project together, **Voltaggio Brothers Steak House**. With an in-depth wine program that pairs perfectly with hearth-fired dry-aged ribeyes, the restaurant made guests feel right at home. Fabulous samples included oysters with frozen mignonette, parmesan anchovy hush puppies, loaded baked potato with osetra caviar and American Wagyu ribeye with aerated white cheddar.

In attendance to celebrate the grand opening were **Speaker John Boehner**; American Gaming Association President **Geoff Freeman**; former RNC Chairman **Michael Steele**; **Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake**; property architect **Eddie Abeyta** of HKS Hospitality group; **Michael Marshall and Paula Moya** of Marshall Moya Design, who dreamed up the incredible vision of National Market; and event planner/designer **Ed Libby**, who envisioned the stunning Conservatory. Artists from the property's Heritage Collection – **Alice Aycock, Margaret Boozer, Chul Hyun, Ron Beverly, Martha Jackson Jarvis, Liao Yibai** and **Katherine Mann** – watched as guests interacted with their works throughout the resort's public spaces. CNN host **Wolf Blitzer**; TV personality **Omarosa**; and 21 contestants from **Miss World 2016**, including the reigning **Miss World Mireia Lalaguna** (Spain), also were on-site to ring in the momentous occasion.

Guests were treated to a little slice of Las Vegas with acts by some of the city's top performers. **Cirque du Soleil** took over The Theater at MGM National Harbor with surprise performances from its award-winning shows O, KÀ and Zumanity. The world-famous **Jabbawockeez** dazzled guests with a special pop-up performance on the casino floor. Following a high-energy employee parade led by the Redskins' cheerleaders and marching band, fan favorites **Blue Man Group** pumped up the crowd.

On the outdoor terrace overlooking National Market, a fierce 5,500-pound lion ice sculpture was carved by world champions **Angelito Baban & Jess Parrish**, accompanied by sounds from rising artist, **DJ Cee**.

At the party's conclusion, doors opened promptly at 10:30 p.m. and 5,000 eager visitors flooded MGM National Harbor to see the spectacular resort for the first time. Guests were able to experience the property's 24-hour amenities, including MARCUS, The Conservatory and the casino floor.

Earlier that day, media and guests joined executives from MGM Resorts International, key state and local officials and partners of the property for a press conference in The Theater at MGM National Harbor.

MGM Resorts' executives in attendance included **Jim Murren**, Chairman and CEO of MGM Resorts International; **Bill Hornbuckle**, President of MGM Resorts; **Anton Nikodemus**, COO of MGM Resorts Regional Operations; **Lorenzo Creighton**, President of MGM National Harbor and **Bill Boasberg**, General Manager of MGM National Harbor. Maryland Governor **Larry Hogan** welcomed guests and shared his excitement alongside Maryland Senate President **Mike Miller** and Prince George's County Executive **Rushern L. Baker, III**.

Today, the rest of the property will open for business, including all restaurants, spa, salon and select retailers. The first guests will check into the hotel Saturday, December 10 and the inaugural concert will be held Thursday, December 15 with openers **Boyz II Men**.

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