

Sensi – Dining Drama

12/27/2004

Where All the Kitchen's a Stage

PRNewswire

LAS VEGAS

Sensi, now open in Bellagio's new Spa Tower, invites guests on a sensual journey through an innovative approach to dining drama. Executive Chef Martin Heierling drew on his vast international experience to devise a menu based on four complementary cuisines -- Italian, Asian, Grilled and Seafood classics -- all prepared simply and focused with pure, balanced flavors. To spotlight Chef Heierling's straightforward approach, Japanese design firm Super Potato crafted a unique, interactive 'stage' setup through minimalist, earthy decor. Together they created culinary theater destined to satisfy the personal inclinations of every guest.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20041227/LAM030-a>)

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20041227/LAM030-b>)

Through open kitchens bustling with activity, a myriad of appealing aromas, tempting flavors and stone and water design elements, all of the senses will come alive. This stimulation of the senses embodies the derivation of the restaurant's name -- Sensi comes from the Italian word for senses "senzi."

Sensi's menu reflects Chef Heierling's belief in traditional dishes that are ingredient-driven and unembellished. "My menu features authentic, regional dishes made from superior yet basic ingredients," said Heierling. "The goal is food that is recognizable -- grounded, bold and flavorful."

Sensi takes the best dishes from an array of destinations and cuisines and puts them on one menu. "If you've ever wished you could sample that tantalizing dish you've seen prepared on your favorite cooking show -- this is the place to dine," said Randy Morton, vice president of Hotel Operations at the AAA Five Diamond Bellagio. "Chefs produce a personal masterpiece for each guest. Today's diners are fascinated by the cooking techniques of a

multitude of countries."

Diners can watch naan and Chicken Tikka plunge into a red-hot tandoori oven on the Asian stage or contemplate the split-second timing of a Seared Tuna Tataki, raw inside when sliced and served with a Citrus glaze. On the Italian stage, Foccacia with Vacherin Cheese and Black Truffles is slipped into a wood fire oven and baked fresh to order.

Here, delicate risotto techniques can be studied and the freshness of pasta verified as it sinks into a boiling bath. Guests can see Kumamotos and Blue Points deftly shucked in a wink on the Raw stage, and Ahi Tuna Ceviche "cooked" just so in Lime Juice with Coconut and Cilantro. And at the Grill, behold the broiled shell-on New York Steak, cooked to perfection.

Complementing the menu, Sensi's wine list focuses on regionalism, showcasing bold and unique wines. Southern Hemisphere wines are emphasized, particularly those from Australia and New Zealand, Chef Heierling's adopted homeland. The balance of the list concentrates on the world's greatest wine areas such as Tuscany and Piedmont in Italy, the Mosel-Saar-Ruwer in Germany, the Wachau in Austria, Burgundy, Washington state and California's finest selections.

Design team Super Potato conjured up this distinctive dining design incorporating four open kitchens in a sunken arena in the middle of the dining room, providing diners an intimate proximity to expert preparation techniques in action. When guests order a dish, they witness its creation.

All of this activity is played out in a setting of cool, clean stone and streaming water elements. Super Potato installed stone works of naturally aging Japanese Aji ranging from boulder-size monoliths to fragile, slender slabs. Juxtaposing sections of rough-hewn texture and high-polished sheen provide the vehicle for thin, descending sheets of water and calm, trickling streams. This natural theme guides Sensi's decor throughout, via the sensuality of wood, glass and earth tones.

Sensi also features two chef's tables on opposing sides of the kitchen complex, seating up to six and eight. These unique, single-piece tabletops -- one wood, one stone -- were hand-chiseled and carved by monks with intent to preserve the delicate imperfections of the natural materials. Vulnerable, organic wood balances impenetrable, staid stone -- yin and yang, anima and animus.

Through Sensi's luxurious textures of stone and wood, its sounds of running water and sizzling grills, mingling aromas and euphoric flavors, and the lively chatter among guests and chefs -- guests never leave unstimulated.

Photo: NewsCom: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20041227/LAM030-a>
<http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20041227/LAM030-b>

AP PhotoExpress Network: PRN4

PRN Photo Desk, photodesk@prnewswire.com

SOURCE: Sensi

CONTACT: Media, Stephanie Davis of MGM MIRAGE, +1-702-891-7517; or
Jennifer Baum of BULLFROG & BAUM, +1-212-255-6717, for MGM MIRAGE