

THE BETSY SOUTH BEACH

The Betsy Hotel Welcomes Chef Laurent Tourondel and BLT Steak ***Tourondel Brings his Iconic Modern American Steakhouse to South Beach***



Miami, FL (February 15, 2008) - Whether it's the world of style, culture or cuisine, there's a finesse to crossing boundaries with grace. The Betsy Hotel, a stately evocation of colonial architecture in Deco-centric South Beach, turns classic lines into a soothing counterpoint for its curvy modern neighbors. Laurent Tourondel, executive chef and partner of BLT (Bistro Laurent Tourondel) Restaurants has crossed an ocean in coming to the U.S., and bridged cuisine and culture in winning the hearts of American diners. The only Miami location in the BLT Restaurant Group, BLT Steak is the culinary anchor of the new Betsy Hotel, slated to open mid 2008.

Two gracious designs meld to create the main lobby of The Betsy and the BLT Steak restaurant. Stylish but not trendy, they are of the moment yet rooted in the continuity of enduring tradition. In addition to the 88-seat restaurant, the Ocean Drive front patio provides al fresco dining for breakfast, lunch and dinner accommodating up to 100 guests or patrons. The Betsy and BLT Steak perfectly complement each other - a pair of modern classics that are at once cool and refined, professional and friendly.

Named "Restaurateur of the Year" in 2007 by *Bon Appétit* magazine, Tourondel takes the steakhouse concept to a new level by artfully combining the highest quality ingredients with the precision of exacting French technique. Acclaimed by *Esquire* magazine in 2004 as one of "the best new restaurants in America," BLT Steak has redefined the American steakhouse, satisfying the epicure and neighborhood diner alike.

BLT Steak offers a variety of cuts of USDA Prime, Certified Black Angus, American Waygu and Japanese Kobe beef, each naturally aged for maximum tenderness and flavor and served finished with herb butter in a cast-iron pan.

The menu is organized by category and complements dishes with corresponding savory sauces, such as Peppercorn, Maitre D'Butter, Horseradish or Béarnaise – all of which exemplify Tourondel's classic French training and insistence on perfection. Although delicate, fish, like meats, arrive in steakhouse sized portions, and are delivered in similar style. Sides recall the great steakhouses of the past, and include *Grilled Asparagus*, *Stuffed Mushroom Caps*, and eight different preparations of potatoes.

The French inflections in Tourondel's signature style can be seen in his preparation of the *Tuna Tartare with Avocado and Soy-Lime dressing* and signature giant gruyere cheese popovers. Dessert ends the meal with updated American classics such as *Caramelized "NY" Cheesecake with Melon Syrup* or *Peach-Blueberry Cobbler and Lemon Verbena Sorbet* and *Crêpe Soufflé with Passion Fruit Sauce*.

Designed by Michael Bagley, BLT Steak integrates the traditional elements of a steakhouse with a stylish urbane design. BLT's signature "blackboard" menu is prominently featured, highlighting the menu offerings of the day.

Like the Betsy, Tourondel understands restraint. Flash isn't the goal; quality and integrity are. For both hotel guests and destination diners, BLT Steak South Beach offers a world of comfort and good taste that is both elegant and electrifying.

ABOUT BLT RESTAURANT GROUP

BLT Restaurant Group is owned by Jimmy Haber, Laurent Tourondel and Keith Treyball, and comprised of **BLT Steak** in New York City (2004), Washington, DC (2006), San Juan, Puerto Rico (2006), Dallas (2007) and White Plains (2007); and **BLT Fish** (2005), **BLT Prime** (2005), **BLT Burger** (2006) and **BLT Market** (2007) in New York City. Upcoming projects include additional locations of BLT Steak in Los Angeles, Scottsdale and Atlanta; as well as BLT Burger at The Mirage in Las Vegas and a concept in development for Trump Soho in New York City.

ABOUT LAURENT TOURONDEL

Honored by *Bon Appétit* as Restaurateur of the Year in 2007 and by *Food & Wine* as a Best New Chef in 1997, Tourondel also has received an array of "Best of..." awards from publications that include *Esquire*, *Travel & Leisure*, *Saveur* and *Wine Spectator*. Tourondel has changed the approach of fine dining by creating accessible menus prepared with the finest ingredients and presented in a casual, comfortable dining room. By adhering to his belief that ingredients should be stellar, food simply prepared and service kind and efficient, BLT Restaurants have become household names.

With the passion and skill of a French trained chef, and the sensibility and style of a metropolitan restaurateur, Tourondel has successfully infiltrated the rarified world of New York restaurants and the national dining landscape, much to the delight of critics and diners alike.

THE BETSY

From its superbly decorated and marvelously appointed 62 guestrooms to its friendly, unassuming and thoroughly professional service, The Betsy will be a serene and luxurious *escape* offering an experience unparalleled in South Beach. As a timeless alternative to artificial flash and all that's trendy, The Betsy will resonate with true luxury and authentic sophistication, setting an enduring new standard for South Beach chic and attracting savvy leisure travelers to return again and again. Room rates range from \$499 to \$4,000 and including three categories of rooms and a total of 20 suites.

LOCATION

The Betsy is located on Ocean Drive and 14th Place. Just outside this luxurious retreat you will find beautiful sand beaches, surrounded by the Art Deco neighborhood with a wide range of cultural and pleasure seeking activities. Miami, Coral Gables, Coconut Grove and Bal Harbour are only minutes away.

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