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Executive Chef Robert Mason Plants Herb Garden

Orlando, FL – (May 21, 2010) – Robert Mason, Executive Chef of Fiorella’s Cucina Toscana at The Westin Imagine Orlando, recently designed and planted an outdoor herb garden. Adding new heights to his culinary offerings, the herb garden is part of the hotel’s environmental program and will produce the herbs needed for his northern Italian dishes he offers in the hotel’s restaurant. Rosemary, lavender, lemon grass, thyme, opal and Italian basil, Italian parsley, sage, cilantro, tomatoes and oregano are just a few of the many herbs growing in his garden.

“I have been planning an herb garden for the past year and finally found the best location that offers the right lighting and irrigation,” states Robert Mason. “I will be adding new herb plants throughout the year so that our guests can savor in the wonderful flavors throughout the seasons.”

Over his watch, Fiorella’s Cucina Toscana has risen to be one of the top Italian restaurants in Southwest Orlando. His signature dinner appetizer is the Antipasto Fiorella which is perfect for two and features prosciutto and melon, tomato and mozzarella, grilled artichokes, bruschetta, marinated olives, cured Salami sausage and aged cheese. Entrees include Gulf Shrimp Scampi, Cavatelli alla Vodka, Oven Roasted Grouper with Crab Tapenade, Bistecca alla Fiorentina and the Filetto con Gorgonzola. For the bigger appetites, try his tasting menu which offers selections from his market menu.

For lunch, Chef Mason offers 10 items on the \$9.99 express menu for diners who need to get back to the office in a timely manner. Menu items include: Grilled Caesar & Tuscan Shrimp or Chicken, Rosemary Chicken Panini and Tuscan Pizza. The price also includes a mista salad or a cup of soup with each entrée.

Chef Mason was formerly the Executive Chef at The Kessler Collection’s Grand Bohemian Hotel. Under Mason’s direction, The Boheme restaurant was consistently recognized as one of the top rated restaurants in the Florida market.

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Some of the accolades and awards that the restaurant received during his tenure were: the AAA Four-Diamond designation, *Florida Trend Magazine's* "Top 20 Best New Restaurants and Top 500", *Orlando Sentinel's* Foodie Award Winner/Critic's Choice for "Best Power Lunch", *Orlando Magazine's* Dining Award Recipient for "Best Restaurant", "Best Hotel Restaurant", "Best Brunch" and named in the Zagat Survey as a "Top American Restaurant" and was inducted into the prestigious *Nation Restaurant News* Fine Dining Hall of Fame.

Chef Mason has also garnered recognition when he was invited as a guest chef at the prestigious James Beard House in New York City and has called this a defining moment in his career.

About The Westin Imagine Orlando

The AAA Four Diamond Westin Imagine Orlando is a 315-room hotel conveniently located and just 12 miles from Orlando International Airport. The luxury resort features Westin's signature Heavenly Bed®, Heavenly Shower®, suites with balconies, full kitchens or kitchenettes and many of the luxuries of home. It is located within walking distance of the North/South Complex of the Orlando Orange County Convention Center and a short drive from Orlando's world-famous attractions. Amenities include the 24-hour Westin WORKOUT® fitness center that faces the pool, wireless high-speed internet access in all guest rooms, a lush outdoor environment for outside events, an on-site Business Center and Unwind®, a Westin ritual, which is available on weekdays. Complimentary scheduled transportation is offered to Universal Orlando Resort Theme Parks, SeaWorld Adventure Parks and other affiliated attractions.

About Fiorella's Cucina Toscana

Fiorella's Cucina Toscana offers upscale dining for breakfast, lunch and dinner in a fun, relaxed atmosphere. Under the culinary direction of multi-award-winning Executive Chef Robert Mason, the menu offers simple, fresh and authentic Italian dishes from the regions of Tuscany and northern Italy. Fiorella's ("Little flower" in Italian) wine list offers Old World selections from Italy and New World tastes from California, Australia and emerging wine regions. The dining room ambiance combines a Tuscan theme charm with casual contemporary elegance and showcases original blown-glass art works by Orlando artist Charles Keila. The colorful abstract pieces represent natural elements including "Millefiore", a traditional Italian form of glass-making, which translates as "a thousand flowers" that bloom on the restaurant's honey-toned Venetian-plaster walls. Al-fresco dining, a pool bar and room service offer guests a wide variety of selections. For more information, call 407.233.2950 or visit www.westinimagineorlando.com/fiorellas. 9501 Universal Blvd. Orlando, FL 32819. Complimentary valet parking.

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