

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jill Sandin/Amanda White
JS² Communications
323.866.0880
jsandin@js2comm.com
awhite@js2comm.com

676 RESTAURANT & BAR BRINGS NEW AMERICAN BRASSERIE CUISINE TO CHICAGO

The Omni Chicago Hotel introduces Michigan Avenue diners to world-class brasserie dining

CHICAGO (March 2006) – Omni Hotels continues its award-winning food and beverage program by introducing Chicago to its newest dining concept, **676 Restaurant & Bar**. This New American brasserie at the Omni Chicago Hotel overlooks bustling Michigan Avenue and serves some of the most exciting food Windy City diners can experience. The concept was created by Omni Hotels and Executive Chef Robert Gadsby, who have already combined talents to create two award-winning fine-dining restaurants.

With this new 174-seat restaurant, Omni brings the same successful and creative team together to fashion a more casual environment for hotel guests, Michigan Avenue shoppers, tourists and Chicago food lovers. 676 serves breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week. With its sophisticated décor, warm ambiance and stellar menus, the restaurant is an incomparable dining experience.

Robert Gadsby Leads a Progressive Culinary Revolution

Robert Gadsby's signature "Progressive American" cuisine is a culinary expression of the most exciting international influences on modern American dishes. Born in Bedford, England, Gadsby trained in France with the legendary chefs Alain Chapel, Joel Robuchon and Alain Ducasse. His solid foundation in classical French cooking remains the hallmark of his skills, even as he expands his repertoire to include more international flavors.

In 2003, when Gadsby and Omni opened Noé Restaurant & Bar at the Omni Los Angeles Hotel, the praise from restaurant critics and enthusiastic diners was universal, especially for his multi-course tasting menus, which are hailed as gourmet art forms. His dishes are refined to a perfect melding of world cuisines, including French, Japanese and Italian, coupled with the absolute best American flavors and local ingredients.

Omni and Gadsby opened a sister restaurant in 2004 at the Omni Houston Hotel with the same cuisine-as-art approach. In its first year, the restaurant was awarded "Best New Restaurant" by *Houston Press* and *My Table* magazine; "Best of the Best" by *Robb Report* and the *Houston Chronicle*; and Robert Gadsby received "Chef of the Year" honors from *My Table*.

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Modern Epicurean Expressions for Chicago

At 676, Gadsby continues his tireless pursuit for perfection on the plate, but his menus— constantly evolving with evocative flavors and textures to thrill the senses—are a bit more casual to reflect a stylish version of contemporary brasserie cuisine.

The kitchen is deftly managed by Chef de Cuisine Michael Fusano, a talented young chef who developed his culinary style while working side-by-side with Gadsby at Noé Los Angeles for nearly three years. Fusano loves to tour local farmers markets and ethnic markets to find the freshest and most flavorful ingredients to produce such exciting food.

Starters for lunch and dinner include Gadsby's Maryland Style Crab Cake (\$12 lunch, \$15 dinner) in a spicy red pepper caper sauce, as well as traditional American favorites like a warm bowl of Corn and Shrimp Chowder (\$10 lunch, \$12 dinner) to take the chill off brisk afternoons. The luxurious Bacon Wrapped Seas Scallops (\$16) is a delightful combination of flavors and textures with briny sea scallops wrapped in bacon accompanied with truffled and crispy leeks.

Entrées continue the culinary demonstration of how ordinary dishes become extraordinary by combining the freshest seasonal ingredients with dedication in the kitchen. The lunch menu offers Seared Tuna (\$22) complimented by peppered pineapple, soy mixed olives salad and bamboo rice, and Striped Bass (\$18) in a lemongrass-coconut broth with shiitake mushrooms and bok choy. For dinner, the Herbed Chicken Breast (\$29) elevates basic chicken to a complex dish with both sharp and balanced flavors from the mustard sauce and sautéed mushrooms. Black pepper and bourbon add a jolt of flavor to the Chicago Strip Steak (\$45), and the Stuff Roasted Quail (\$28) features the game bird with cashew stir-fried basmati rice.

In true Gadsby style, lunch and dinner offer fixed price menus for diners with an adventurous palate. The Chef's Three-Course Market Lunch (\$25) gives patrons a choice of soup, salad and entrée to enjoy during a leisurely lunch hour or business meeting. To truly appreciate Chef Gadsby's approach to cooking, the Chef's Five-Course Discovery Tasting (\$58) is a perfect choice for dinner.

Located near the heart of the restaurant, an impressive pizza oven produces an appetizing array of flat breads, such as the Aged Goat Cheese (\$12) that combines the textures and flavors of caramelized onions, potatoes, and grapes and the BBQ Chicken (\$14) has luscious, smoky chicken that complements the earthy toppings.

A Raw Bar allows diners a choice of fresh seafood to create their own *crudo* plates of Yellow Fin Tuna Carpaccio (\$18) or Oysters on the Half Shell (M/P), for example. From the Charcuterie (\$16), guests select an antipasti assortment of cured meats served with a basket of freshly baked breads.

The bar menu showcases the highlights of the dinner and lunch menus with some additional treats. The Lobster Corn Dogs (\$18) brings high-class to a casual American standby and the Bacon-Wrapped Drumettes and Chicago Style Hot Wings (\$14) raises traditional bar food to a higher level. Guests can also choose to enjoy either a three-cheese tasting (\$11) or a five-cheese tasting (\$15) featuring a selection of artisanal cow, sheep or goat's milk cheeses.

Fine Wines Complete the Total Dining Experience

The wine list was created to enhance Chef Gadsby's eclectic but precisely focused cuisine and each selection from the international collection complements a variety of dishes. The wines form a spectrum of flavors and styles, and they not only create culinary synergy with a range of menu choices but also stand on their own as examples of inspired winemaking.

Elegant Décor with Unexpected Touches of Fun

The dining room and lounge at 676 were designed by Curtis Schnell, who created the signature looks of the Noé restaurants in both Los Angeles and Houston. Schnell draws on his experience as a television and film set designer to create dynamic but comfortable environments, and the American brasserie atmosphere at 676 is no different. The diner's experience is all about color, texture and dimension. Art deco accoutrements make the restaurant come alive with alluring detail, such as a long artistic branch stretching throughout the restaurant. Adorned with ruby red, green apple, warm orange and golden yellow leaves fashioned from stained glass, this piece ties the rooms together with unexpected whimsy. The rich blue carpeting below harmonizes with the Murano glass jewel-toned chandeliers overhead. A hand-painted moonscape mural on an arched ceiling becomes a focal point as colored LED lights produce dramatic lighting effects.

The 110-seat sunken dining room areas are framed by floor-to-ceiling picture windows overlooking bustling Michigan Avenue and the historic Hancock Building. Unique chain-link window coverings can be lowered to reduce any afternoon glare. Eye-catching glass wall dividers, fashioned from small gold, red and green tiles and strung together with wire, decorate the dining room. Draped with fine linen, each table is elegantly set with Hepp stainless steel flatware and table-top pieces, Cardinal Vigne glassware and several stylish china selections from Steelite International. Dining room chairs have been crafted from off-white suede and blonde wood with tall comfortable backs.

The 64-seat bar/lounge provides a high-energy environment where guests can enjoy top-shelf wines by the glass, domestic and imported beers and spirits along with exclusive signature cocktails. The 50-foot-long bar takes center stage in the dedicated lounge area, which also features wheat-colored couches and rich blue suede chairs and barstools with dark wood. Captivating urn-shaped light sculptures built into the shelf behind the bar to draw the eye upward. With the full restaurant menu available in the lounge, the bar serves as a focal point to enjoy a mid-day meal, an after-work cocktail, a pre-theater bite or a long, fun night out with friends.

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676 Restaurant & Bar is located on the fourth floor of the Omni Chicago Hotel, 676 North Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60611; 312.944.7676. The restaurant is open for breakfast Monday through Friday from 6:30 to 11 a.m., and Saturday and Sunday from 7 a.m. to noon; lunch Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; on Saturday and Sunday an à la carte brunch menu starts at noon and continues until 3 p.m.; dinner Sunday through Thursday from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.. The 676 Lounge is open Monday through Friday, noon to midnight, Saturday 11 a.m. to 1 a.m., Sunday 11 a.m. – midnight. Cash and all major credit cards are accepted, and reservations are recommended for dinner. Hotel valet parking is available on Huron Street.

Omni Hotels, based near Dallas in Irving, Texas, offers luxury accommodations at 40 hotels and resorts located throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico. Each property in the Omni Hotels portfolio provides guests with exceptional personalized service and exquisite décor, creating a distinctive experience at each location. Omni Hotels offers unsurpassed meeting facilities with a wide range of guest services and amenities including free Wi-Fi and high-speed Internet connectivity, gourmet dining and unique fitness options from in-room workouts to state-of-the-art fitness facilities. Omni Hotels also offers airline miles and additional services with its Select Guest loyalty program and the award-winning Omni Kids program. Through an aggressive expansion strategy, Omni Hotels is steadily entering new markets across North America. Omni Hotels is ranked “Highest in Guest Satisfaction Among Upscale Hotel Chains” in the J.D. Power and Associates 2005 North America hotel Guest Satisfaction Study^(SM). Guests can locate hotels and book accommodations at www.OmniHotels.com or by 1-800-THE-OMNI.

*For more information regarding 676, please contact Jill Sandin or Amanda White
at JS² Communications, 323.866.0880
jsandin@js2comm.com or awhite@js2comm.com
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Editor's Note: (*Study based on 37,471 responses from guests who stayed in a hotel between December 2004 and May 2005. Fourteen upscale hotel chains were ranked in the study. www.jdpower.com)