

**Metro Washington's top restaurants and chefs revealed  
at "RAMMY" Awards announcement event**  
*DC area's cool, new reputation celebrated...*

**Washington, DC** - Celebrating the area's growing national reputation for its "cool restaurant scene," who's who in the Washington area's restaurant world turned out as the Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington (RAMW) revealed the 2005 RAMMY Restaurant Award finalists on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at Smith & Wollensky.

"This year's RAMMY nominees have boosted our entire area's image as a restaurant town that rivals New York," said Gala Chair Jodi Lehr, of Santa Lucia Estate Coffee. According to RAMW Executive Director Lynne Breaux, a panel of esteemed Washington food writers and hospitality industry educators selected this year's finalists, representing some of the finest restaurants and food service professionals in the metropolitan Washington area.

The public will decide the winners of following three award categories, including the new, Favorite Restaurant of the Year award. Votes can be cast through a special ballot appearing in *The Washington Post Magazine* and also online at [www.ramw.org](http://www.ramw.org) on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Finalists include:

**Neighborhood Gathering Place of the Year:** Belga Café; Café Saint-Ex; Cashion's Eat Place; Evening Star Café; Firefly

**Hottest Bar Scene of the Year:** Degrees Bar & Lounge; Harry's Tap Room; Helix Lounge; IndeBleu; Local 16

**Power Spot of the Year:** Bistro Bis; Cafe Milano; The Caucus Room; Charlie Palmer Steak; The Oceanaire Seafood Room

**Favorite Restaurant of the Year:** (to be selected by the public)

The judge's panel will determine the winners of the following award categories. Finalists include:

**New Restaurant of the Year:** Belga Café; CityZen; Komi; Le Paradou; Restaurant Eve

**Fine Dining Restaurant of the Year:** 1789 Restaurant; 2941 Restaurant; Equinox; Maestro; Ristorante Tosca

**Informal Dining Restaurant of the Year:** Andale; Firefly; Johnny's Half Shell; Ray's The Steaks; Zaytinya

**Chef of the Year:** José Andrés , Jaleo/Café Atlantico/Zaytinya/Oyamel; Ris Lacoste, 1789 Restaurant; Cesare Lanfranconi, Ristorante Tosca; Morou Ouattara, Signatures; Fabio Trabocchi, Maestro

**Restaurant Employee of the Year:** Moez Ben Achour, Marcel's; Peter Chan, Smith & Wollensky; Emily Jarmuth, Mie N Yu; Efrain Velasco, Andale; Serge Zinga, Four Seasons Hotel

**Pastry Chef of the Year:** Leon Baker, Signatures; Didier Derouet, Marcel's; Steve Klc, Jaleo/Café Atlantico/Zaytinya/Oyamel; Chris Kujala, Kinthead's; Joshua Short - Zola/Red Sage

**Wine and Beverage Program of the Year:** Charlie Palmer Steak; Michel Richard Citronelle; Maestro, DC Coast/Ceiba/TenPenh; Ristorante Tosca

**Restaurant Manager of the Year:** Donald Bachelier, Jaleo; Tricia Cominsky, Poste Moderne Brasserie; Christine de Clerfay, The Oceanaire Seafood Room; Steve Greehan, KAZ Sushi Bistro; David Troust, Mie N Yu

**Rising Culinary Star of the Year:** Cathal Armstrong, Restaurant Eve; Katsuya Fukushima, Café Atlantico; Rob Klink, The Oceanaire Seafood Room; Johnny Monis, Komi; Bryan Voltaggio, Charlie Palmer Steak

In addition, the following **RAMW Associate Member of the Year** finalists were announced: A.J. Dwoskin & Associates, Balancing Act, Foodservice Monthly, Krupin O'Brien LLC, SYSCO Food Service of Baltimore. This year, the winner of the Duke Zeibert Lifetime Achievement Award will be revealed at a special RAMMY preview party at Saks Fifth Avenue on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The winner will be honored and all other category winners will be announced at the 2005 RAMMY Awards Gala on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at the Washington, DC Convention Center. Tickets are \$175 for RAMW members, and \$200 for non-members and can be reserved by calling 202-331-5990. For more information visit [www.ramw.org](http://www.ramw.org).

Partial proceeds from this year's RAMMY Awards Gala will benefit the RAMW Education Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping area high school students develop viable careers in the restaurant/hospitality business. This Fall, the RAMW Education Foundation will introduce DC Public Schools' first-ever, two-year, school-to-career program. This groundbreaking program will serve as a model for DC Public Schools to create new "school to career" curriculums for other professions. Proceeds from gala ticket sales will allow the RAMW Education Foundation to offer scholarships and purchase chef uniforms for DC youths who enroll in the new professional training program, and may not be able to afford uniforms themselves.

According to Event Co-Chair Gus DiMillo, RAMMY Awards Gala sponsors include: Iceland Naturally, Icelandair, Whole Foods, BB&T, Comcast of the District, Dairyland, Embassy of Chile, Hargrove, Inc., Group 360, Hisaoka Public Relations, Profish, Projections, Santa Lucia Estate Coffee, SYSCO Food Services of Baltimore, Washington Convention Center Authority, *The Washington Post Magazine* and *WHERE Magazine*.

Established in 1920, the Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington's vision is to unite the restaurateurs of the Washington area. Today, RAMW has more than 500 members, and is the voice of establishments ranging from casual eateries to internationally acclaimed fine dining restaurants.

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