

EPICUREAN FARE

Four Seasons Gets New Face

January 2008 will see the opening of Talavera restaurant and Onyx lounge at Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North, which has been under renovation since July 2007, guest rooms, lobby and more. According to Executive Chef Mel Mecinas, Talavera, named for a type of brightly colored, hand-painted Mexican pottery, will focus on the freshest seasonal ingredients, focusing on prime cuts of meat, seafood, poultry and game from boutique purveyors. A private dining room, which can be reserved for private functions, will brandish the finest Russian vodka, Mexican tequila and American caviar; the private wine cellar is also ideal for small private parties. Next to Talavera is Onyx lounge, its namesake derived from the amber-ribboned onyx that frames the bar. Onyx will feature a menu of small plates and savory cocktails, and promises to be a complementary contrast to Talavera. Talavera will be open from 6 to 10 p.m. and Onyx will open at 3 p.m. until midnight. Four Seasons Resort is at 10600 East Crescent Moon Drive, 480-513-5020.

The Herb Box For Sports Fans

2008 is going to be an exciting year for Susan Smederovac-Wilcox and Becky Windels, owners of The Herb Box since 1995. Not only are they opening a second location on Market Street at D.C. Ranch, The Herb Box will be catering the VIP section at The Nest, the Thunderbird's Coop and *The Best Damn Sports Show* during the FBR Open and will also cater at Super Bowl XLII in Glendale. The Herb Box is expanding its catering service to a market and eatery at D.C. Ranch, providing an expanded menu for all three meals as well as their renowned dinners to go. Specialties will include the Brown Sugar Jerked-Pork Sandwich and Market Sunflower Salad, as well as organic wines by the glass. Plans are in the works for two

more eateries in Phoenix in the coming years. For more information, go to www.theherbbox.com or call 480-998-7531.

South America On Central

Oscar and Kristi Mastrantuono have brought a taste of South America to Central Phoenix with the opening of Bomberos Café and Wine Bar, which features a Latin-themed menu and beers, South American wines and live music on weekends. Spanish for *firemen*, Bomberos is named for its location, what used to be a Sunnyslope fire station on Central Avenue just north of Northern. Oscar is from Uruguay and grew up in his family's bodega in his home country as well as New York, and to open Bomberos is a dream come true for him and Kristi, who live in the neighborhood with their two sons Nico and Marshall. To open a place to the public that reflects his heritage and offers a welcoming place to meet friends and have a good time is exactly what Oscar had in mind. The remodeled fire station is warm and inviting yet modern in its décor, and a good place to stop for an early morning breakfast, light lunch or an after-hours gathering spot on the patio. For more information, visit www.bomberoswinebar.com.

Creative Cuisine At Kai

The chefs at Kai at the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass and Resort are concocting an innovative menu and ramped-up tableside service for the chilly months ahead. Executive Chef Michael O'Dowd and Native American Chef de Cuisine Jack Strong incorporate the essence of the Pima and Maricopa tribes and locally farmed ingredients from the Gila River Indian Community to create unforgettable cuisine. Kai, which means "seed" in the Pima language, will be serving unique dishes such as Hudson Valley Foie Gras and Pumpkin Brulé, with the Hatch chiles and piloncillo sugar dust torched at the table, quickly followed by a

charred marshmallow oozing onto the dish. Elevated dining can be experienced by trying the Caviar and Champagne Meringue appetizer featuring Beluga, Suvruga, Osetra and Tobiko caviars. Reservations are strongly encouraged and so is dressing for the occasion; denim is discouraged and shorts and hats prohibited. For reservations, call 602-385-5726 or visit www.wildhorsepassresort.com.

Cupid Likes Chocolate, Too

It's never been easier to get your Valentine the perfect chocolates. Just a few clicks and you're at the website of Chatham's Fine Chocolates, where you can customize a box of chocolates with delectable confections from all over the world, each with its own chocolate ID card so that your loved one isn't left guessing what's inside, otherwise known as "chocolate abuse." Choose from over 200 unique pieces from 14 artisan chocolatiers. Other gift ideas available are specialty bars, chocolate cookbooks, even chocolate-covered coffee beans. You can even order well ahead of time and choose your desired day of delivery. February 14, perhaps? Go to www.chathamfinechocolates.com and be a Valentine with forethought.

Mesa Gets Sushi in RA

Known for its hip and sexy dining environment, RA Sushi is opening its newest location in the Valley at Dana Park Village Square, a new upscale shopping and restaurant district at Val Vista Drive and Baseline Road in Mesa. Founding partner Scott Kilpatrick feels that Dana Park is the right place for RA and a niche waiting to be filled for Mesa and Gilbert residents. The 5,000-square-foot restaurant will have a traditional sushi bar and table dining, as well as a separate cocktail bar serving Asian-inspired spirits. Outdoor seating will also be available. Food is served 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., seven days a week. For more information, visit RA at www.rasushi.com.