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**WORLD CHAMPION PASTRY CHEF
LAURENT BRANLARD OPENS FIRST RESTAURANT**
*LB Bistro & Patisserie opens along with Link@Sheraton Café
at Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers*

CHICAGO – March 9, 2009 - After winning the World Pastry Team Championship twice, Chef Laurent Branlard is taking on a new challenge and opening his first full-service dining venture. Located in the Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, LB Bistro & Patisserie offers a complete breakfast, lunch and dessert menu built on the same concepts that have made Branlard one of the most acclaimed pastry chefs in the world - fresh ingredients and simple yet unique combinations of flavors.

A native of France, Branlard holds the distinction as the only two-time winner of the World Pastry Team Championship. In 2008 he captained Team USA to victory against chefs from around globe after previously winning in 2002. Between victories, Branlard served as both a coach and judge for the competition. Now Branlard is using those same culinary skills to expand his repertoire and launch LB Bistro & Patisserie.

“LB Bistro & Patisserie is the realization of one of my greatest dreams,” said Branlard. “For years it has been a goal of mine to create a casual dining venue that combines my French and American influences, and provides diners with both savory and sweet foods that feature the freshest ingredients served to customer’s specifications.”

The menu for LB Bistro & Patisserie focuses on customization and offers a wide variety of options by creating a dining room kitchen concept where guests can combine ingredients to create their own meal.

Breakfast features three stations – the pantry, the hot breakfast kitchen, and the bakery. At each station guests can customize items that include parfaits, juices, smoothies, omelets, eggs, breakfast meats, breakfast pies, Branlard’s signature crepes and more. Additional breakfast items include a strawberry cream cheese French toast (classic cinnamon batter dipped french toast filled with a fresh strawberry cream cheese filling) and breakfast sliders (one featuring bacon, egg & Wisconsin cheddar on a mini brioche and the other egg, mozzarella cheese, roasted tomato on a mini brioche).

At lunch guests can create their own salads, sandwiches and even soups with the innovative LB tableside soup cart. A la carte lunch items are highlighted by the Green Chile Turkey Melt, the Flat Iron Steak Sandwich and the Smokey Cobb Salad.

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A meal would not be complete at LB Bistro & Patisserie without one of Branlard's signature desserts. The selection includes White Chocolate Orange Gratin (vanilla marinated orange topped with caramelized white chocolate chiboust cream), Chocolate S'more (fresh homemade marshmallow filled with maracaibo chocolate custard, praline crunch), Molten Chocolate Cake (warm chocolate cake, chocolate pots du crème, chocolate sauce) and Irish Cream (layers of coffee cremeu, bourbon soaked sponge cake, caramelized hazelnut topped with bourbon whipped cream and milk chocolate dust)

As the executive pastry chef at the Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort in Orlando, Florida, owned by the Tishman Hotel Corporation, for the past six years, Branlard has been responsible for the creation of the desserts at all of the hotel's 17 restaurants and lounges which include fine dining venues such as Todd English's bluezoo, Shula's Steak House and Il Mulino New York Trattoria. Branlard is most noted for his intricately designed 100-percent edible sugar showpieces that resemble blown glass. His outstanding creations have been featured on the Food Network, CBS Early Show and Today Show.

In recognition of Branlard's achievements and outstanding work at the Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort, Tishman Hotel Corporation tapped Branlard as a consultant and the namesake of their newest dining venture located at another of their properties, the Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers.

Opening adjacent to LB Bistro & Patisserie is the Link@Sheraton Café which provides a warm environment for guests to enjoy LB Bistro & Patisserie's freshly baked goods, Starbucks coffee drinks or a grab n' go item as they surf the Internet, e-mail loved ones, research Chicago's must-see attractions or print boarding passes. The free Wi-Fi and Internet-enabled stations encourage guests to link and interact with one another during their visit. This innovative program was designed to cater to those looking for a sense of community and belonging while on the road. The café features three 42-inch plasma televisions and copies of the nation's top daily newspapers such as USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times and Chicago Tribune. Link@Sheraton will be available at Sheraton hotels worldwide.

LB Bistro & Patisserie and Link@Sheraton Café are open daily for breakfast from 6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. and for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Major credit cards are accepted. For more information please call (312) 329-5900. For hotel information please visit www.sheratonchicago.com.

Located in the heart of downtown Chicago at 301 East North Water Street, the Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers is ideally situated on the Chicago River, within walking distance of Navy Pier, fabulous Michigan Avenue shopping, Millennium Park, the Loop business district and more. The hotel's 1,209 guest rooms and suites feature spectacular views and Sheraton's ultra-comfortable Sweet Sleeper(SM) bed. The hotel also features five distinctive restaurants and lounges, including Shula's Steak House, one of America's favorites. Chi Bar, Chicago's chic new hot spot, was created by renowned designer, Jeffrey Beers. Chi Bar channels Chicago energy by bringing all the excitement and tradition of the Windy City into one luxe lounge with innovative cocktails, shareable delights and sleek ambiance. Other amenities include a full-service business center, concierge, health club with massage therapy, sun deck and an indoor pool.

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