



Media Contact:

J Public Relations

619.225.7069

Jennifer Roche, Jennifer@jpublicrelations.com

Alexis Banks, Alexis@jpublicrelations.com

***Vela Sets Sail Bringing Global Cuisine and a World Class Wine Program to Downtown
San Diego's Newest Waterfront Destination***

*Executive Chef Patrick Dahms creates a unique culinary experience with flavors drawn from
around the globe*

San Diego, CA — Overlooking the panoramic San Diego Bay and just steps from downtown sits Vela, the signature restaurant of the new Hilton San Diego Bayfront hotel. A sophisticated addition to San Diego's burgeoning culinary scene, Vela offers a menu highlighting the flavors of coastlines around the world in a chic and comfortable environment.

Vela, the Latin term for sail, provides a culinary journey for the senses, dedicated to the exploration of global wine and cuisine and the pursuit of epicurean pleasure. A coastal oasis, Vela embodies the essence of discovery with its unique wine list and a menu that truly thrives on the principle of 'farm to fork.'

"We created Vela to be a distinct dining destination where the flavors of coastal regions around the world, farm fresh local ingredients, a one-of-a-kind wine list and Hilton level service come together," said Brian Marcus, Director of Food and Beverage. "We are thrilled to introduce Chef Dahm's innovative cuisine to San Diego with Vela and hope it will become a favorite for both hotel guests and local dining enthusiasts."

Executive Chef Patrick Dahms has worked in luxury properties around the world over for over 22 years. Born in Luebeck, Germany, Chef Dahms attended culinary school in Hamburg, Germany, where he apprenticed at the world famous Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten and thus began his career in the hospitality industry. With an extensive love for travel and appreciation for other cultures, Chef Dahms has honed his culinary skills in Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Italian, German,

Scandinavian, French, Thai and Japanese cuisines. Before joining the Hilton San Diego Bayfront, he spent two years at the prestigious St. Regis Aspen, as well as two years at the famed Intercontinental New Orleans. Dahms has garnered several awards for his cooking including four bronze medals at the New Zealand Culinary Arts Festival.

Diners at Vela can choose from an extensive menu that includes refined takes on regional classics. Appetizers include *Market Oysters* served with Bloody Mary sorbet, Jerez shallot mignonette and preserved lemon granite, *Local Beet Salad* with goat cheese foam, winter citrus fruit, Spanish almonds and herb vinaigrette, and *New Zealand and Scallop Bouillabaisse* with fennel, tomato confit saffron broth and rouille.

For entrees, guests can choose from Chef's signature *Braised Korabuta Pork Shank* served with roasted baby apples, braised cabbage and Temecula honey-soy glaze or *Pan Roasted Local Bass* accompanied by baby eggplant, red peppers, pine nuts, basil and golden raisin pesto, among many other delectable offerings.

Pastry Chef John Gilbert has created an innovative dessert course for Vela diners consisting of four decadent choices. In lieu of a menu, desserts will be brought to each table fresh following the entrees. Diners can choose to order the desserts a la carte or the plate of four right then and there. The desserts, much like the rest of the menu have global influences and unique seasonal flavors infused throughout. The four desserts include *Pomegranate and Cinnamon Crème Brule* with chocolate caramel sugar and Persian "fairy floss" made with Cardamom, *Limoncello Ricotta Cheesecake* with pine nut Croquant, a silky *Chocolate Orange and Raspberry Pyramid* garnished with chocolate covered Rice Krispies, and fluffy *Mango Meringue* infused with coconut and served with tropical fruit.

Lunch offers diners fresh, light seasonal fare as well as some of the restaurant's signature dishes. Salads include a savory *Lobster Cobb Salad* with organic baby lettuces, avocado, tomato, domestic blue cheese, pancetta and tarragon dressing, and *The Mediterranean Chicken Salad* consisting of farmer's greens, Kalamata olives, artichokes, tomatoes, feta cheese and herb vinaigrette. For a heartier mid-day meal, diners can feast on the *All Natural Beef Burger* on a brioche bun with Manchego cheese, grilled onions, and roasted garlic aioli, or a *Meyer Ranch New York Steak* served with fingerling fries, wild arugula and fennel.

Vela boasts a truly unique wine program presented in an innovative concept, centered around the wine regions of the world's oceans. In keeping with the global coastal theme of the property, Vela's 'liquid world' consists of an exceptional wine list that takes diners across all oceans and

seas bringing the flavors of the globe to the diner's glass as well as their plate. When creating the list, Food and Beverage Director, Brian Marcus placed an emphasis on exploration, offering varietals from various regions of the world including the Pacific Rim, Lebanon, New Zealand, Chile, France, Canada, Portugal, Germany and many more. The compilation is assembled to be experienced by the bottle, by the glass or through wine flights, allowing guests to taste collections of pours uniquely matched to reflect the great geographic, historical, and experiential facets of the wine.

Situated on the promenade level of the Hilton San Diego Bayfront, Vela offers breathtaking views from a sophisticated, chic coastal environment. Designed by John Portman, Vela offers a warm dining retreat infused with coastal inspired elements such as Capiz shell chandeliers and subtle tones of blue throughout the restaurant.

Far from a traditional hotel restaurant, Vela offers an intimate dining experience for local San Diegans as well as guests of the hotel and tourists. A customer appreciation program called The Vela Society will offer local patrons special event invitations, package deal offers and will ensure that local fans of Vela can always get a reservation no matter how crowded the hotel becomes.

Vela is located in the Hilton San Diego Bayfront at One Park Boulevard. Vela seats 325 in the dining room and outdoor terraces, 30 in the private dining room and 60 in the private kitchen. The restaurant is open seven days a week from 6:30am to 10:30pm and the bar is open from 11am to close. For more information, please visit www.sandiegobayfront.hilton.com

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