



Sage opening eatery in hotel

Restaurant group renovates space in JW Marriott

By John Rebchook

Saturday, March 1, 2008

The 48th restaurant in Cherry Creek North opens to the public at 6:30 a.m. Monday.

And diners in the Second Home Kitchen and Bar, on the ground floor of the JW Marriott Hotel, actually will be able to pronounce the name of the restaurant without any problem, unlike its predecessor, Mirepoix.

The Sage Restaurant Group spent \$1.6 million renovating the 5,000- square-foot space in the hotel at 150 Clayton Lane.

The Second Home Kitchen and Bar is part of a trend to bring stand- alone restaurants with their own identities to hotels.

"If you go way back, 30, 40 years ago, the great restaurants were all in hotels," said John Montgomery of Horwath Horizon Hospitality Consulting/Montgomery & Associates.

"Then, almost the reverse became true," Montgomery said. "In a typical hotel you go to the front desk and ask where the good restaurants are, and they shuttle you out the door, which is almost bizarre when you think about it."

Popular restaurants in hotels aren't tied to the hotels, said Walter Isenberg, CEO of Sage Hospitality Resources, parent of the Sage Restaurant Group, which is opening restaurants in hotels it owns or operates in Rhode Island, Chicago and Portland, Ore., as well as Denver.

"In Denver, when you want to meet at lunch at Panzano, no one says let's meet at Hotel Monaco," which houses the restaurant, Isenberg said.

Peter Karpinski, who heads the Sage Restaurant Group, watched Friday afternoon as Second Home staff served friends and family on a test run.

Second Home will feature comfort food in a mountain retreat-style setting. The idea was to create a restaurant that "would have the look and feel of someone's second home in the mountains of Aspen or Telluride," he said.

Karpinski said he expects only 10 percent of the business to come from the JW Marriott.

He expects 70 percent of the business to come from dinner, 20 percent from lunch and 10 percent from

breakfast.

"From a business perspective, we would like the restaurant to pay itself back and stand on its own two feet in three years," Karpinski said.

That's a shift from past years, he said, when hotels often considered restaurants as loss leaders.

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