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Bastone Complex welcomes Chef Robert Young, takes a more authentic European approach to dining

December 10, 2009, ROYAL OAK, MICHIGAN – The Bastone Complex, which houses Bastone Brewery, Vinoteca Wine Bar, Café Habana and Commune Lounge, recently welcomed a new executive chef, Robert Young, who’s taken the dining experience in a decidedly more authentic European-inspired direction.

Young, a Welsh-born chef who trained at Cardiff Institute of Culinary Arts, held esteemed positions at Mackinac Island’s Grand Hotel and Redwood Steakhouse in Flint prior to taking over the kitchen at Royal Oak’s Bastone Complex on Aug. 4. Young has already revamped menus at two of the three restaurants, Café Habana being a current exception.

Because Young oversees the kitchen staff for three distinct restaurants, he has managed to streamline the process and craft unique dishes that share certain key ingredients. Where Vinoteca might offer a hazelnut-encrusted walleye with raspberry sauce, Bastone serves a simpler pan-roasted walleye. This efficiency will save time and money for the complex and its clientele, without sacrificing fresh, high quality fare. Young ensures all dishes are made to order.

“We do things more traditionally here,” said Young. He also asks the kitchen and wait staff to share opinions on everything from the kitchen setup to the ingredients, giving employees more of a vested interest in their success.

As of Dec. 10, Young introduced a simpler, more traditional Belgian and French-inspired menu for Bastone Brewery, re-envisioning dishes like the Seafood Waterzooi, adding appetizers like the Bavarian Sausage Platter and offering authentic Belgian sides like Stoemp, a potato and vegetable dish. Diners will also notice that entrées are more customizable – the hearty Mac n’ Cheese can be ordered with grilled chicken or generous helpings of lobster. Value is still top-of-mind as entrée costs more than \$19.95.

Bastone remains dedicated to offering simple, delicious meals that diners can easily afford. The extensive list of salads, pizza and sandwiches can still be found on the menu. Each dish simply has a more European approach. “Because Chef Young is from Wales and was educated there, he’s making these dishes and remembering how his grandmother made them,” said David Ritchie, managing partner.

Next door at Vinoteca, diners will find a more fine-dining focused approach. There are now more entrées to choose from and they come in more generous portion sizes. The menu has doubled in size and spans the globe with dishes that could be traced back to Asia, Spain and Italy.

Young, a Hazel Park resident, said he appreciates the creative freedom his new position now offers. He often creates special menu items he’s never attempted before to help keep his culinary skills sharp.

Already the restaurant has seen the benefit of these changes. Ritchie said on Nov. 23, Bastone Brewery broke a company-wide record going nearly \$5,000 over any other single-day sales.

For more information regarding new offerings at Bastone Brewery or Vinoteca, or to schedule an interview with Chef Robert Young or Managing Partner David Ritchie, please contact Jim Miller at millerj@publicityworkspr.com or Stephanie A. Casola at scasola@publicityworkspr.com or call 248.691.4466.

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