



The Relentless Pursuit of Results

Don Yamauchi, Executive Chef Iridescence at MotorCity Casino Hotel

A native Chicagoan, Chef Don Yamauchi was drawn into the restaurant industry at an early age. “My uncle owned a greasy spoon in Wrigleyville,” said Yamauchi. “I remember watching him and I knew that’s what I wanted to do. Everyone in my family warned me against it.” Though he knew a life in the restaurant business meant long hours, he pursued his passion.

Yamauchi developed an innate understanding of the Midwest dining scene. He studied his craft at the Culinary School of Kendall College in Evanston, Ill. and honed his skills in some of Midwest’s finest restaurants, including top positions with Le Francais in Wheeling, Ill., Tribute in Farmington Hills, Forte in Birmingham and Saltwater in Detroit.

Yamauchi blends his classic French culinary training with Asian-inspired flavors to craft innovative and inspired dishes that are all his own. He follows his own senses, as opposed to trends, while in the kitchen. “I cook what I have a taste for at the time,” he said, “It could be of-the-day or of-the-moment. That’s my philosophy.”

Yamauchi brings a clear passion and dedication to excellence to his new role as executive chef of Iridescence, a premiere dining destination located atop Detroit’s elegant MotorCity Casino Hotel. His fresh take on upscale comfort-inspired foods has earned him notoriety among such influential area publications as *HOUR Detroit*, *Crain’s Detroit Business* and the *Detroit News*.

Solidifying his authority in the culinary world, Yamauchi has been featured in such esteemed publications as *Bon Appetit* and *Wine Spectator*. He was named among *Food & Wine* magazine’s Top 10 New Chefs in America. Yamauchi was also a nominee of the James Beard Society’s Rising Chef award. He names chefs like Roland Liccioni and Gabriel Viti as major culinary influences, but admits he’s inspired by all those with whom he’s shared a kitchen.

His plans for Iridescence mark a new beginning at MotorCity Casino Hotel. Yamauchi now leads a culinary team and oversees all dining venues. Those restaurants include The Assembly Line Buffet, MotorCity Pit Stop, Flames and the Signature Lounge.

Yamauchi describes his home life as rather *Brady Bunch*; he has three children, two step-children and three dogs.

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