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WE-KO-PA CASINO RESORT INTRODUCES NEW CULINARY TEAM

Innovative group of seasoned chefs helming fine dining and casual restaurants

FORT McDOWELL, Ariz. – Nov. 16, 2020 – The [We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort](#) is proud to introduce its new roster of talented chefs that are creating delicious, inventive cuisine at Ember steakhouse, Ahnala Mesquite Room, WKP Sports & Entertainment sports bar, The Buffet, The Market and other outlets throughout the brand new state-of-the-art casino and adjoining AAA Four Diamond hotel.

Graham Quayle – Executive Chef

Born and raised in Liverpool, England, Chef Quayle has 25+ years culinary management experience at AAA Five Diamond-rated restaurants and resorts along with three years as an instructor at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Boston, Los Angeles and Scottsdale. After receiving a degree in Culinary Arts from the British Columbia Institute of Technology and completing an apprenticeship at The William Tell Restaurant in Vancouver, Quayle joined Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, where he held Executive Chef positions at six different first-class properties in the US and Canada over a 19-year period. After that, he served as Executive Sous Chef at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino and Executive Chef at The Mirage in Las Vegas. A gold, silver and bronze medalist in the Hot & Cold competition, Quayle was awarded a Certified Executive Chef certification with the American Culinary Federation in 2013.

Alex Robinson – Executive Sous Chef

A graduate of Le Cordon Bleu Scottsdale with an associate degree in Culinary Arts, Chef Robinson has held positions at luxury hotel brands throughout the country during his 20+-year culinary career. Most recently the Executive Chef at Royal Palms Resort and Spa, Robinson also served as Executive Sous Chef of the Ritz-Carlton Laguna Niguel, where he oversaw multiple outlets and serviced 80,000 square feet of meeting space. Robinson also previously led culinary teams at Four Seasons properties in Troon North, Jackson Hole, Denver and Boston, and worked at The Ritz-Carlton in Chicago.

Richard Pelz – Chef de Cuisine – [Ember](#)

After graduating from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY, Chef Pelz began his culinary career in New York City at the four-star La Grenouille, followed by positions as Sous Chef at La Caravelle and Pastry Chef at AZ. He then worked at Restaurante Martin Berasategui in Spain and with Dimitri Roedoe in Amsterdam before returning to the US to serve as Executive Chef at Citrine (West Hollywood) and open Tintol (New York City). After launching his own restaurant, Goblin Market, with a partner in New York City, Pelz later worked at Bottega and Redd (Napa Valley), Alinea (Chicago), and Augusta Modern, Cuistot and Wally's Desert Turtle (Palm Springs area).

Roy Pell – Pastry Chef

Named one of the top 10 pastry chefs in America by Dessert Professional Magazine in 2010, Chef Pell represented the USA as a member of the 2004 Pastry team at the Culinary Olympics and was also a member of Team USA for the 2009 Coupe du Monde. Over the past 35 years, Pell has worked at Ritz-Carlton properties in San Francisco, St. Louis and Phoenix, as well as at Harveys restaurant and The Savoy (London), Amway Grand Plaza (Michigan) and Peter Island Resort and Spa (British Virgin Islands). Most recently, he was Executive Pastry Chef at The Phoenician in Scottsdale.

Dennis Payne – Sommelier

An Advanced Certified Sommelier with more than 30 years' experience at many of the world's premier vineyards and restaurants, Dennis Payne has a strong passion for wine, fine dining and hospitality. He is a Certified Wine Educator (CWE) and a Certified Specialist of Wine (CSW), and has overseen the wine and beverage programs for award-winning restaurants including Ruth's Hospitality Group (Ruth's Chris Steak House), Hilton Hotels, Fox Restaurant Concepts, The Iconic Collection (PARC, 220 Merrill, The Fountain Detroit), Different Point of View Restaurant, and Mancuso's. A graduate of Arizona State University, Dennis also represents eight highly regarded wineries from Argentina and the United States.

"When we first envisioned our upscale new casino resort, we knew we'd need top-tier professionals to open and manage our fine and casual dining restaurants," explained Zachary Gallo, Executive Director of food and beverage for the We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort. "I'm thrilled to lead a department with a culinary team that embodies the talent, creativity, attention to detail and craftsmanship to deliver a delicious, first-class dining experience for local guests as well as visitors to the area."

For more information, visit www.wekopacasinoresort.com.

About We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort

Owned and operated by the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, the spectacular new 166,341-square-foot [We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort](#) boasts state-of-the-art gaming, a variety of specialty fine and casual dining restaurants, and live entertainment. The attached AAA Four Diamond hotel offers 246 luxurious guestrooms and suites; 25,000 square feet of meeting space; relaxing spa treatments at the Amethyst Spa & Boutique; and two resort-style outdoor pools.

The new casino resort's proximity to the two highly acclaimed courses at We-Ko-Pa Golf Club and numerous outdoor activities at Fort McDowell Adventures make it the ideal destination for a vacation, business function or special event.

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