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Former Chef to the King of Norway Appointed Executive Chef at Turtle Bay Resort

NORTH SHORE, OAHU, HI (July 19, 2006) – Hector J. Morales Jr., whose experience includes a stint as the banquet chef for the King of Norway, has been appointed executive chef at Turtle Bay Resort, responsible for the oversight and management of the award winning resort kitchens and the Palm Terrace, Hang Ten Grill and 21 Degrees North restaurants.

Chef Morales immigrated to the United States from Puerto Rico at the age of 4. He credits his interest in cooking to his mother, who was an accomplished chef in her own right. He began cooking at an Italian restaurant in New Jersey at the age of 14. He was later accepted into the coveted Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts program and, upon graduation in 1981, served as the chef saucier at the Americana Snow King Resort in Jackson Hole, Wyo. He then moved to Hawaii, serving as the chef saucier on the S.S. Independence.

In 1985 Chef Morales moved to Europe, where he continued his education under the direction of master Swiss, German and Norwegian chefs. He served as the banquet sous chef at the S.A.S. Hotels Scandinavia in Oslo Norway, banquet chef for the King of Norway, and banquet sous chef at the Sheraton Hotel in Oslo. In 1987 Chef Morales became the senior sous chef at the Sydney Regent, Australia's premier Five Diamond Resort. He returned to Hawaii to serve as the executive chef on the S.S. Independence and the S.S. Constitution, American Hawaii Cruises and as chef de cuisine at the Stouffer Wailea Beach Resort before joining Turtle Bay Resort as its executive sous chef in 1996.

Chef Morales has made a significant impact at Turtle Bay Resort over the past 10 years, helping to raise the level of its cuisine to its present day levels. In his new position, he looks forward to now raising the bar even higher.

Dining at Turtle Bay Resort is a feast for the senses. The chefs prepare gourmet cuisine with style and skill unique to the islands of Hawaii. 21 Degrees North is an upscale dining experience unlike any other on the North Shore. Drink in the spectacular sunset while sipping one of 21 signature martinis or a glass of wine from the far corners of the world. Contemporary island dishes and the five course tasting menu are prepared with fresh, local north shore beef and produce.

The Palm Terrace restaurant offers daily breakfast, lunch, and dinner buffets, featuring local delicacies such as macadamia nut crusted chicken breast and pan-seared calamari. The family-friendly menu offers nightly themed dishes, pizzas cooked in a traditional Italian-style brick oven, and tender prime rib.

The Hang Ten Grill serves cold cocktails poolside. A lunch menu featuring pupus, burgers, and fish tacos are enjoyed while watching surfers in the famed Kawela Bay.

Located on the North Shore of Oahu, the 880-acre Turtle Bay Resort is operated by Benchmark Hospitality International and is a Preferred Hotels® & Resorts Worldwide property – a collection of the world’s finest independent luxury hotels.

Famous for world-class surfing, pristine white sand beaches, and its charming country setting, the North Shore also offers colorful cultural attractions, innovative ecological endeavors, and environmental adventures.

For reservations or more information, visit www.TurtleBayResort.com; e-mail TBRreservations@benchmarkmanagement.com or call toll free (866) 827-5327.

Benchmark Hospitality International, an independent hospitality management company based in The Woodlands (Houston), Texas, operates resorts, conference centers, hotels and condominium resorts both domestically and internationally. For locations of Benchmark Hospitality properties and for additional information, visit Benchmark’s Website at www.benchmarkhospitality.com.

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