



CARIBBEAN  
HOTEL & TOURISM  
ASSOCIATION

For Immediate Release

Source: Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

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**Chef Richardson Skinner**

## **CALL TO TAKE CARIBBEAN CUISINE TO GLOBAL HEIGHTS**

*Chef hails upcoming culinary and cultural celebration in Miami*

ST. LUCIA (May 8, 2017) - Celebrated Trinidadian chef Richardson Skinner asserts firmly that the Caribbean can do much more to promote its cuisine to attract interest and travel to the region.

"In the past, visitors came to the Caribbean for sand, sun and sea ... and the food was just simmering on the back burner," reflects Richardson Skinner, the executive chef at Ti Bananne Caribbean Bistro and Bar, located at the award-winning Coco Palm hotel in Rodney Bay Village in St. Lucia.

Now, however, the chef, with over 20 years' experience in Trinidad, Martinique and St. Lucia, points out that travelers go out of their way for fresh culinary experiences, particularly for meals with a savor of the Caribbean.

"As crazy as it sounds, it's actually what's driving business right now," Skinner affirms. "Look at TripAdvisor, and see what visitors say in their reviews. More often than not, they're talking about what they ate on their vacation. Food matters."

The former auto mechanic, who is now a leading authority on Caribbean cuisine, tips his toque to the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), lauding them for launching Caribbean305, the region's newest culinary and cultural celebration taking place at Miami's Jungle Island on Saturday, June 3, 2017 at 8 p.m.

"This is huge," Skinner says, explaining that efforts to spotlight Caribbean culinary excellence need reinforcing. "This event showcases what I have always believed - that Caribbean cuisine can step up to the plate against any other in the world."

"People have high respect for Caribbean cooking," he says, recalling the inevitable flurry of questions about the region, its culture and its culinary arts whenever he hosts cooking demonstrations at events in New York and Toronto.

Skinner believes food can set the region apart from its global rivals: "Caribbean cuisine is right up there with the classic cuisine of the French or the Italians - right there, ripe and ready to be plucked."

Skinner encourages aspiring chefs to "use the techniques of your grandparents and don't abandon your roots" when crafting contemporary recipes for the global palate. He strives to do just that at Ti Bananne, where his menu offers dishes that combine St. Lucian Creole heritage and classic French cooking techniques. "Respect your culture, your style of doing things. Be innovative - and then take it to the next level."

Caribbean305 brings together top chefs and bartenders from across the region for a celebration filled with delicious food, fun and festivities. It features culinary professionals from 16 Caribbean nations and territories, such as Anguilla, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bonaire, the British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Martin, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, each adding its *soupcou* of *je ne sais quoi* to the shared Caribbean stock pot.

Caribbean305 tickets are \$95 for general admission, which includes access to the event from 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. for an all-inclusive experience of unlimited drinks, food and entertainment. VIP tickets are \$140, featuring early access to the event at 7 p.m. and a VIP lounge area with an exclusive bar, food station and additional seating. The VIP Reception is presented by Cane Run Rum.

Caribbean305, produced by the CHTA, is supported by Host Sponsor Sandals Resorts. Sazerac Company has signed on as a Platinum Sponsor, serving Cane Run Rum, Black Magic Black Spiced Rum, Fris Vodka, Tuaca Originale Italiano, and Paddy Irish Whiskey; while Gold Sponsors include Visit Barbados, the Jamaica Tourist Board, and the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism.

About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the Caribbean's leading association representing tourism interests for national hotel and tourism associations. For more than 50 years, CHTA has been the backbone of the Caribbean hospitality industry. Working together with 1,000 hotel and allied members and 32 National Hotel Associations, CHTA is shaping the Caribbean's future and helping members to grow their businesses. Whether navigating new worlds like social media, sustainability, legislative issues, emerging technologies, data and intelligence or looking for avenues and ideas to better market and manage businesses, CHTA is helping members on matters that matter most.

For further information, visit [www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com](http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com).

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