



## Legendary Austrian chef Eckart Witzigmann to be awarded Lifetime Achievement Award at the S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants Awards 2010

The renowned Austrian chef, Eckart Witzigmann is today announced as the 2010 winner of the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' which will be presented at the S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants Awards on Monday 26th April at the Guildhall in London.

The Austrian chef, whose restaurant Aubergine was one of the first restaurants outside of France to receive three Michelin stars, is to be given this prestigious award for his outstanding contribution to the European restaurant scene over the last 30 years.

Eckart Witzigmann will be joining a prestigious group of chefs. Past winners of the Lifetime Achievement Award include Joël Robuchon, Gualtiero Marchesi, Paul Bocuse, Albert and Michel Roux and Alice Waters.

The winner of this award has been selected by the World's 50 Best Restaurants Academy Chairs, which consists of 26 renowned and influential international food journalists and publishers. Thomas Ruhl, chairman of the German Academy, said of Witzigmann's award: "Eckart Witzigmann has been more influential than any other chef in recent times. His style is unique and his influence is felt throughout Europe and he has done more than anyone else to raise Bavarian cuisine to haute cuisine by using simple ingredients. He also has an unconditional passion for his job and an enormous energy that has not yet left him."

Paul Wootton, editor of Restaurant Magazine, which founded and runs the awards said: "Eckart is one of the great pioneering chefs of our time, a formidably talented cook and an extraordinary innovator of concepts. We are delighted to be adding him to our prestigious group of the world's most respected chefs."

### Biography:

Born in Bad Gastein, Austria, in 1941, Witzigmann's success spans the breadth of the industry; a restaurateur, culinary expert and cookery book author, he also launched a renowned training school and has cooked for, amongst others, Queen Elizabeth II in his



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Palazzo in 2002.

He began his career with an apprenticeship in Austria at the Hotel Straubinger in Bad Gastein, before spending a total of 13 years perfecting his skills across Europe including a period studying under Paul Bocuse in France. (Bocuse was the World's 50 Best's first 'Lifetime Achievement' award winner in 2005.)

He worked at Tantris in Munich from 1971 before opening his first restaurant Aubergine, also in Munich, in 1978. At Aubergine he achieved instantaneous success. In 1979 he became the first German-speaking chef to win three Michelin stars. Aubergine held three stars until the restaurant closed in 1993.

In 1989, the Gault Millau guide awarded him the title chef of the century. Only three other chefs have been honoured in this way: Paul Bocuse, Joel Robuchon and Frédy Girardet.

Following Aubergine, Witzigmann proved himself an early pioneer of the now popular 'restaurant plus cookery school'. Within two years his establishment in Mallorca, Spain, had established itself as one of the best culinary venues on the island.

More recently he founded the Austrian Restaurant Ikarus - Hangar 7, which is regarded as one of the best restaurants in Austria. It now plays host to a series of guest chefs from around the globe throughout the year.

Witzigmann's most ambitious project of the last decade was the 'Eckart Witzigmann Palazzo' in Munich which he launched in 2002. The Eckart Witzigmann Palazzo offered a truly outstanding culinary experience, entertaining over 150,000 visitors a year. Each evening event accommodated up to 450 people in 19th century style antique mirrored tents. Diners were entertained by some of the world's best performing artists accompanied, of course, by a lavish multi-course tasting menu.

Well known guests of the Palazzo included Elizabeth II, King Hassan of Morocco, the Belgian Royal Family and George W. Bush. With such a pedigree it's no surprise The New York Times called Witzigmann the 'Chef of Kings and Gods' and also why he is affectionately known by his protégées as 'The father of all chefs'.

## PR contact details

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### Notes to editors:

Restaurant Magazine is the UK's leading publication for restaurateurs and chefs, and has been running The World's 50 Best Restaurants since 2002. Restaurant Magazine is solely responsible for organising the awards, collating the votes and producing the list.

S.Pellegrino is continuing its successful partnership as title sponsor of the awards. S.Pellegrino and Acqua Panna are the leading natural mineral waters in the fine dining world. Together they interpret the Italian style worldwide as a synthesis of excellence, pleasure and well-being.

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