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FAVORITE FRENCH RESTAURANT REOPENS AS COLETTE BAR & BISTRO

Colette's traditional French focus gets sleek, cutting-edge upgrades

Minneapolis, MN (February 10, 2010) The new **Colette Bar & Bistro**, formerly Chez Colette, opens today at the French luxury hotel Sofitel Minneapolis after a month of renovations, just in time for Valentine's Day. The popular French restaurant's new name comes along with a hip, modern redesign, cutting-edge technology and an additional private dining area.

"We at Sofitel are thrilled by the new amenities and improvements, and the design is perfect — traditional with an edge," says Eric Lemaire, General Manager of Sofitel Minneapolis. "We are looking forward to offering our guests an even more exquisite dining experience with Colette Bar & Bistro."

Colette Bar & Bistro was designed by **Shea, Inc.**, one of the nation's top 200 design firms. The Minneapolis-based firm, which specializes in restaurant, retail and corporate office design, aimed for a balance between Chez Colette's traditional French focus and sleek, cutting-edge upgrades. The goal was to have a 21st Century restaurant that Chez Colette devotees would find familiar and welcoming. For every new element Shea's designers added there was something they kept, from the brass coat hooks and white marble table tops to the wall paintings and ceiling mural.

Colette Bar & Bistro's sleek new design, including vibrant red upholstery and added windows for more natural lighting, also incorporates unique spaces that blend traditional French dining with modern technology. Several tall, dark, wood credenzas throughout the dining area will be used as bread and wine stations, enhancing the focus on French wine and bread rituals. There is also a private dining area complete with state-of-the-art audio-visual technology perfect for lunch meetings and business presentations.

In the Colette Bar, high-top tables and "signature booths" create a comfortable and sexy ambiance, while a "community table" makes intermingling and networking the focal point. Trendy lighting and shelving over a refinished countertop complete the bar's makeover.

"With the exception of a few minor tweaks, the Colette Bar & Bistro menu will be the same as Chez Colette's," said Sofitel's executive chef Serge Devesa. "Chez Colette's menu proved to offer exquisite and popular items at reasonable prices for 35 years. Why change a good thing?"

Colette Bar & Bistro presents classic French cuisine with a modern twist. In addition to an extensive wine list, Colette also offers a wide-ranging cheese menu with cheese flights from all over the world. Servers are trained to give detailed recommendations about wine pairings with both cheese and dinner.

In celebration of St. Valentine's Day, Colette Bar & Bistro will be offering "**A Parisian Affair**" **special four-course meal** in addition to its regular menu items **Friday, February 12 through Sunday, February 14**. For only \$39.95, guests can choose from two main entrees – Roasted Top Sirloin, gratin Dauphinois with a red wine sauce, or Pan-seared Salmon, potato "fondant" with a white wine sauce – along with a tomato bruschetta in a port reduction as appetizer, a warm goat cheese salad with strawberry balsamic vinaigrette, and a special "Aphrodisiac Cocktail" paired with a lovely red fruit Napoleon with white chocolate for dessert.

Colette Bar & Bistro is located inside Sofitel Minneapolis at 5601 West 78th Street, Bloomington, MN, 55439. Colette Bar & Bistro is open Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 7:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

For more information on Colette Bar & Bistro or to make reservations, please call (952) 835-1900 or visit www.sofitelmplsdining.com.

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The complete Colette Bar & Bistro menu and photography available upon request.

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