

Contacts:

Gita Sweeney/Leah Goldstein

Susan Magrino Agency

Tel: (212) 957 3005 - Fax: (212) 957 4071

gita@smapr.com/leah@smapr.com

Sonja Toulouse

Alain Ducasse at the Essex House

Tel: (212) 265 6989 - Fax: (212) 265 4320

s.toulouse@alain-ducasse.com

**“ALAIN DUCASSE AT THE ESSEX HOUSE”
IN NEW YORK CITY**

(NEW YORK, NY) In November 2005, Alain Ducasse, was honored with three stars by the Michelin Guide New York City 2006 for **Alain Ducasse at the Essex House**, making Alain Ducasse the only chef ever to have three restaurants (the celebrated Alain Ducasse at the Plaza Athénée, Paris, and Louis XV in Monaco are the other two) with three stars each from the prestigious guide. Alain Ducasse opened his first American fine dining restaurant, **Alain Ducasse at the Essex House** in 2000 and since its opening five years ago, the restaurant has received the 2004 and 2005 AAA Five Diamond Award, Mobil Guide’s Five-Star Award since 2002, James Beard Foundation’s “Best New Restaurant of 2000” Award, was named one of Food & Wine’s 2002 “America’s Best Hotel Restaurants” and one of Condé Nast Traveler’s 2001 “100 Hot Tables.”

Alain Ducasse was the recipient of the 2002 GQ “Men of the Year” Best Chef Award, inducted into the James Beard Foundation’s 2002 “Who’s Who of Food and Beverage in America,” awarded the highest note of 19/20 in Gayot.com’s Restaurant Issue as one of the top 40 restaurants in the world, named Bon Appétit’s 2001 “Chef of the Year,” received the “Finest Chef in the World” award from the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences in March 2003 and was most recently voted the “French chef American cooks most idolize” in Food and Wine Magazine’s July 2005 Chefs Poll.

Located on Central Park South, **Alain Ducasse at the Essex House** is the realization of Ducasse’s vision to create an American showcase for the artistry of his food while using local produce. “The restaurant is the result of my long-time admiration for American products,” explains Ducasse. “Along with Paris, New York is probably one of the most challenging cities in the world; however, it is undoubtedly the most spectacular restaurant city due to its synthesis of international cultures. It is my love for food which leads me on a continuous search for new flavors and gives me the will to share this passion with others.”

Alain Ducasse at the Essex House consists of a 65-seat dining room; a *Petit Salon* or lounge; the *Salon de Soie*, an exquisite private dining room; and the Chef's Table or *Aquarium*. The 65-seat main dining room is open Monday through Saturday for dinner, with only one seating per evening, and offers Mediterranean-influenced and contemporary classic cuisine ranging from three- to six-course prix-fixe tasting menus.

Alain Ducasse and Essex House owner Laurence Geller of Strategic Hotel Capital invested a \$2 million capital to transform former *Les Célébrités* into the current restaurant.

In the renovation process, Alain Ducasse, with the help of designer Paul Valet, refurbished the former restaurant's gilded wood paneling, granite columns and rosewood walls; however, he decided to break away from the formal or minimalist side and bring new life to this universe dedicated to the pleasure of the guests. Resolutely colorful, each room has its individual identity, with particular attention given to the acoustics. The decor is enriched with some of Alain Ducasse's private collection of antique objects, contemporary photographs and works of art.

As food preparation and technique are an integral element of Alain Ducasse's philosophy, he worked with Paul Valet to design a kitchen that met his precise specifications. This required the shipping of a *Molteni* 3,000-pound stove from France, and outfitting the kitchen with the latest induction, vacuum-pack, spit roasting, griddle, wok, grilling and optic-fiber technology.

In Alain Ducasse's eyes, every guest is a 'star' and he insists on treating each and everyone as such. No matter what day of the week, what country or whether or not Alain Ducasse is in the restaurant, he believes there is only one criterion for success – quality. To maintain this level of excellence, Alain Ducasse relies heavily on strong teams in whom he has confidence; he gives the tempo and inspires the energy to continue his incessant quest for perfection. Tony Esnault, former Chef de Cuisine at The Ritz Carlton in Boston, joined Alain Ducasse at the Essex House as *Executive Chef*, Yannis Stanisière, the restaurant manager, carefully looks after the guests, while Gérard Margeon, the wine director, and sommelier, André Compeyre, are responsible for selecting the most superb international wines.

*The **ALAIN DUCASSE AT THE ESSEX HOUSE** restaurant is located at 155 West 58th Street, between 6th and 7th Avenues, New York, NY 10019. For further information and reservations, please call (212) 265 7300, fax (212) 265 9300 or e-mail maitred@alain-ducasse.com*

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