

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact
Laurie Cairns
cairnslaurie@gmail.com
312-607-0016

THE CHOCOLATE SANCTUARY ANNOUNCES RE-OPENING, NEW EXECUTIVE CHEF

Popular Lake County Restaurant & Event Space Opens July 8 with New Menu

--

Chef Stefan Markov, Formerly of Restaurant Valor, Now Helms the Kitchen

Lake County, IL – July 8, 2020 – [The Chocolate Sanctuary](#) has opened its doors for indoor and outdoor dining after naming Chef Stefan Markov their new executive chef. Chef Stefan will oversee all restaurant culinary activities at this elegant yet casual restaurant and event space. Chef will oversee dinner and brunch service, as well as private events and lunch once the restaurant’s operations resume pre-pandemic hours. Chef will work in close collaboration with Pastry Chef Hailey Marsiniak to bring innovative desserts and chocolates to the dining experience.

Prior to joining the Chocolate Sanctuary, Chef Stefan served as the executive chef at [Restaurant Valor](#) in Glencoe where he centered the menu around classically inspired dishes with an elevated twist. Chef Stefan is a graduate of *La Cité Collégiale*, Ottawa, Canada, with a degree in Culinary Management. He kicked-off his career working as guest cook for the *Governor General of Canada* and the *Embassy of the Republic of France*, followed by two years as Chef de Partie at *Sterling Steakhouse*, Quebec Canada. Stefan discovered a love for pastry while completing an internship in the French Alps region at the world-renowned *Abbaye de Talloires*. For the next two years, Stefan worked as a pastry chef at *Maison Chaloin*, a patisserie in Quebec, Canada alongside restaurant owner Christian Chaloin, a fourth-generation chocolatier. Upon moving to Chicago in 2011, Stefan worked for the prestigious [BOKA](#), prior to settling at *Restaurant Michael*. After two years, Stefan assumed the honor of *Restaurant Michael’s* Sous-Chef.

“The Chocolate Sanctuary has rethought the role of cacao in savory dishes,” says Chef Stefan. *“Cacao is an ingredient with an intense flavor that I love to use as a compliment in many dishes, bringing the natural sweetness from ingredients like the scallops, helping to elevate the flavor profile of any given dish.”*

Chef Stephan’s new menu includes Sanctuary classics such as their Fresh Fried Calamari drizzled with Cocoa Balsamic, Butternut Squash Soup, Mole Chicken and more. New items include:

- Sticky Pork Ribs – Sweet and Spicy Sauce, peanuts, cilantro, chilies, scallions
- Popcorn Cauliflower – Cilantro, scallions, sesame seeds, sriracha aioli
- Olives and Almonds “À la Poêle” – Marinara, parmesan, garlic croustini

- Half Roasted Chicken with grilled spring vegetables, garlic-chili crushed potatoes
- Whole Grilled Branzino with Fresh spring salad, navy beans, grilled lemon

Chef Stefan is also preparing all pastas in-house, has added a plant-based burger and several new sides. In addition, he has updated the restaurant's Pan Seared Scallop Risotto with Lobster Butter Squash Risotto.

The restaurant's Covid-19 hours are as follow. Reservations are recommended.

Monday-Tuesday: CLOSED

Wednesday – Sunday: 3:30PM-9PM

Sunday Brunch: 10AM–2PM

About the Chocolate Sanctuary

Opened in 2015, The Chocolate Sanctuary celebrates the cacao bean in its many forms. Menu selections include a variety of beautifully plated main courses, appetizers, drinks and desserts that incorporate the restaurant's namesake ingredient alongside delicious options where cacao is optional — or non-existent. The food is complimented by a selection of craft cocktails and a carefully curated selection of wine and craft beer. The restaurant offers indoor and outdoor seating, as well as private event space that can accommodate from 10–250 guests (up to 190 during Covid-19 Restrictions).

###

Contact Laurie Cairns for photos and more info | 312-607-0016 | cairnslaurie@gmail.com