



## Media Release

### Guillaume at Bennelong

Nestled under the iconic sails of the Sydney Opera House, one of Australia's most celebrated chefs, Guillaume Brahimi has created a masterpiece of international acclaim, and a bar with Australia's most spectacular view.

In just one year, since the restaurant opened in November 2001, Guillaume at Bennelong has received accolades from restaurant reviewers world-wide. *Conde Naste Traveler* ranked it one of the "World's Top New 50 Restaurants", Sydney's pre-eminent restaurant guide, *Good Food Guide 2003* named it Sydney's "Best New Restaurant", *Australian Gourmet Traveller Restaurant of the Year* gave the restaurant its maximum three star rating and the French newspaper, *Le Figaro*, exulted Guillaume, saying the expatriate French Chef had "all the virtues of a star".

Three-star Michelin-trained, Guillaume Brahimi was awarded the prestigious contract to assume control of the restaurant by the Sydney Opera Trust, which sought to attract a proprietor who shared their vision for fine-dining comprising exceptional food and service but that was accessible and inviting to both locals and tourists. Guillaume had established a reputation in Sydney as one of the country's most awarded Chefs, having moved to Australia in 1989 and taken the helm at a number of Sydney's best restaurants.

"The new Bennelong is a celebration of the meeting of two Sydney icons. The first is Joern Utzon's dramatically ribbed, vaulted space in one of the smaller wings of the Opera House; the second is French expat *Guillaume Brahimi*, a former three-hat chef when he worked at Quay," *Good Food Guide 2003*.

The restaurant is set inside the southern-most shells of the Opera house where diners sit beneath Joern Utzon's vaulted concrete "ribs" swathed in syrupy yellowed lighting. Sensuously curved, chocolate-coloured banquettes surround generously-spaced tables which overlook the Harbour, Harbour Bridge, Royal Botanic Gardens and the city.

The architect responsible for the refurbishment of the restaurant, Dale Jones-Evans redesigned the space using warm tones, earthy textures and intelligent lighting. Fritz Hansen's famous "swan" padded armchairs cluster invitingly in the bar; a spectacular space where a 360 degree view of the Harbour and Harbour Bridge is standard with every cocktail.

The refurbishment of the site, which was first developed into a restaurant 30 years ago with the launch of the Opera House, has also introduced an aboriginal theme which continues right down to Aboriginal artist, Barbara Weir's "Grass Seed Dreaming" inspired table lights and five imposing aboriginal memorial poles which stand in sand at the entrance to the restaurant.



Guillaume at Bennelong is now one of the most enviable places to dine in Australia. Guillaume applies his European training to Australian produce to create modern French-inspired cuisine that is as memorable as the view.

"His (Guillaume's) famous craftsmanship is evident in every dish – a brilliant duck confit with a praline tuille and sauce aigre doux; yabbies cooked in their own jus served with roasted veal sweetbreads deglazed with Sauternes; his wicked crumbed foie gras "bomb"; the spectacular chocolate cadeau. An intelligent wine list, and dedicated staff under the experienced direction of Craig Hemmings, put the ribbon around the new Guillaume at Bennelong." *Australian Gourmet Traveller Restaurant of the Year.*

The *bennelong bar*, which sits elegantly, mezzanine style beside the restaurant, offers the opportunity to enjoy cocktails and the restaurant's impressive wine list - plus the architecture, and stunning view. Try the house special; a cinnamon apple martini, or the amazing Absolut Lust champagne cocktail topped with gold leaf. A bar menu is also available with tapas from \$40.

Guillaume at Bennelong infuses glamour with art. The restaurant and bar are open Mon – Sat for dinner, and pre and post theatre dining. Lunch is served on Thursday and Friday.

ENDS

**Guillaume at Bennelong**

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