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NOTED RESTAURATEUR ALEX BRENNAN-MARTIN OF FAMED BRENNAN'S TO BRING TWO NEW DINING CONCEPTS TO HOUSTON'S HOTEL SORELLA AND CITYCENTRE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT IN JULY 2009

Launch of Bistro Alex and Café Rosé to Precede Reopening of Brennan's Midtown Flagship

HOUSTON, TX – March 3, 2009 – In a city with more than 10,000 restaurants, Brennan's of Houston is a name recognizable to a dizzying array of locals, as well as visitors from around the world. For more than 40 years, guests have joined in a culinary journey that has stayed true to the Louisiana roots and unrivaled service traditions of the Brennan's family, while infusing a stream of innovations from the kitchen. The result is a signature Texas Creole cuisine and experience that bridges generations with dishes as exciting and noteworthy – and ambience as welcoming – to this one as to its first.

When a tragic fire nearly destroyed the restaurant's landmark home in September 2008 during Hurricane Ike, the city mourned. In an article published by the Houston Chronicle hours after the devastation, the paper's restaurant critic Alison Cook noted, "I guess I thought Brennan's of Houston would always be there, a timeless bubble of ease and cordiality in a world where such qualities are vanishing."

If co-owner Alex Brennan-Martin has his way, Brennan's of Houston will serve generations to come. But loyalists and new devotees of Brennan's brand of Texas Creole won't have to wait until rebuilding of the institution is complete, as projected for late 2009. Prior to the event, the restaurateur and his team had quietly begun planning the development of two new concepts: a casual, yet sophisticated, neighborhood gathering place inspired by a regular hangout of Brennan-Martin while attending school and apprenticing in France, plus a modern bistro mixing Brennan's of Houston favorites with premium lighter fare in a sleek, design-forward fine dining setting unlike any Brennan's family establishments.

The 35-seat, 2,000-square-foot Café Rosé and the 160-seat, 4,000-square-foot Bistro Alex will open in July 2009 in tandem with Hotel Sorella (www.hotelsorella-citycentre.com), an inspired hospitality concept from Houston-based Valencia Group. The venues will occupy two prime retail spaces within the 244-room luxury property, a key anchor for the new CITYCENTRE mixed-use development on Houston's west side. Adjoining the affluent Memorial neighborhood and servicing both the Westchase and Energy Corridor business districts, CITYCENTRE, which is being developed by Midway Companies, will offer premium retail, elegant dining, Class-A office space, corporate penthouse residences, luxurious brownstones and lofts, upscale apartments and a world-class conference facility in a pedestrian-friendly setting with centralized valet.

A selection of items from both menus will be available for delivery to guestrooms and will also be offered at Hotel Sorella's European-style bar and lounge, and seasonally at the rooftop pool.

"The partnership between Alex Brennan-Martin, Hotel Sorella and CITYCENTRE offers ideal synergies from a food and beverage standpoint and will be a major asset for overnight guests, residents and visitors. We are thrilled to have a restaurateur of his caliber as part of this development," said Jodi Doughty, Hotel Sorella's director of marketing.

Dynamic and inviting, Café Rosé will be situated on the ground floor. Open seven days a week, menu offerings will include coffee and light breakfasts, a variety of well-priced and innovative salads and sandwiches plus premium domestic cheeses, salumi and great wines in the afternoons and evenings.

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Brennan-Martin hints at a mix of “quality and the quirky” with an in-house charcuterie – a lost art and specialty of Brennan’s of Houston – as well as cold drip iced coffees – perfect for the local climate. The large selection of wines by the glass and bottle will of course include French and American rosé wines. According to Brennan-Martin, “Real men aren’t afraid to drink pink! I’ve loved great rosé all my life, and I think a cool glass is the perfect retreat from a warm Houston day.”

Open for lunch and dinner as well as Sunday brunch, the contemporary/traditional juxtaposition of Bistro Alex will be reflected in all aspects of the restaurant. Patrons will have access through the lobby of Hotel Sorella or Café Rosé, which will be located directly below. Designed by Atlanta based The Johnson Studio, a design firm responsible for Fearing’s in Dallas and Commander’s Palace in Destin FL, great care was taken to conceptualize a space that would accomplish one primary purpose: complement the sophisticated hotel interior design while creating a distinct identity for the Brennan’s family of restaurants. As a departure from the Brennan’s flagship, Bistro Alex takes its inspiration from nature and balances contemporary design elements with comfort through a color palette of brown, blue and green. The design is centered on an open kitchen which features stainless steel accents, a blue tiled oven and a graphic tile wall mimicking foliage. The sleek design elements of the kitchen are balanced with materials native to Texas such as rough hewn mesquite lumber on the walls and ceiling which become the central feature of the dining space.

The ambience, however, will resonate with the original, honoring the impeccable service standards that are a Brennan’s family hallmark. Classic dishes will welcome traditionalists, but as in all Brennan’s family restaurants, cutting-edge cuisine will delight the ‘foodies’ with creative dishes and wine pairings. An array of roasted selections, as well as creative entrée salads for those wanting something lighter, will be Bistro Alex signatures. While pricing will be on par with Brennan’s of Houston, Brennan-Martin aims to provide good value both in wine pricing and menu items. Many entrees will be paired with tastes of three to four seasonal sides. At this time, no chef candidates have been named.

“The opportunity to come back to the market so quickly after Brennan’s of Houston was nearly destroyed is a joy,” said Brennan-Martin. “Equally exciting is the opportunity to introduce our cuisine to a broader audience with Café Rosé, and through Bistro Alex, delight our regulars with evolutions of Texas Creole in a comfortable, fun space.”

About Hotel Sorella

Slated to debut in July 2009, the 244 room, luxury property with globally influenced design cues, will serve as the flagship for the Sorella brand, an inspired hospitality concept from Valencia Group. Hotel Sorella will also act as a key anchor for CITYCENTRE, a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development in close proximity to Houston’s Westchase and Energy Corridor business districts, in addition to the affluent Memorial residential area. Property highlights will include dramatic, residential-style guestrooms with dark hardwoods floors; a European-style bar featuring a central fireplace, active seating and starlit ceiling; rooftop pool with draped cabanas and lush courtyard; spa and health club; state-of-the-art meeting and event facilities; plus Café Rosé and Bistro Alex restaurants. For more information, please call 713-973-1600 or log onto www.hotelsorella-citycentre.com.

About Valencia Group

Valencia Group, a Houston-based company, develops and operates full-service luxury hotels - most notably Hotel Valencia Santana Row in San Jose, California, and Hotel Valencia Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas. Set in the cultural heart of each city, Valencia Group hotels fuse globally-inspired modern design with Mediterranean influences, becoming popular destinations for both guests and visitors. Other properties within the Valencia Group include Hotel Sorella (Houston, Dallas, TX); Hotel Georgia (Vancouver, Canada) and Lumière (Telluride, CO). Valencia Group continues to forge its position as a mixed-use anchor with projects under development in Vancouver, Houston and Austin, where the right balance of residential, retail and office are creating irreplaceable assets in great urban settings. For more information, please visit www.valenciagroup.com.

About CITYCENTRE

Developed by Midway Companies, CITYCENTRE is a thoughtfully planned and meticulously executed self-contained community of sophisticated retail, elegant dining, Class-A office space, 22 corporate penthouse residences, luxurious brownstones and lofts, upscale apartments and the 244-room Hotel Sorella, a world-class hospitality and conference facility. Surrounded by European-style open-air plazas and beautifully designed green spaces, CITYCENTRE is also home to Life Time Athletic, a state-of-the-art urban fitness facility and spa, and Studio Movie Grill, a nine-screen premier cinema. For more information, please visit www.citycentrehouston.com. For more information about Midway Companies, please visit www.midwaycompanies.com.