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**HOUSTON'S TOP CHEFS COMPETE AT 8TH ANNUAL
INTERNATIONAL RISOTTO FESTIVAL**

*Stylish Culinary Event To Benefit Conrad N. Hilton College
of Hotel & Restaurant Management*

HOUSTON, TX (August 5, 2010) – Executive Chef John Sheely of Mockingbird Bistro will defend his title against 19 of Houston's hottest chefs on Sunday, October 17 from 2 – 6 p.m. at the 8th Annual International Risotto Festival at The Houston Design Center, 7026 Old Katy Rd.

Fans of risotto and fine wine will enjoy *The Grand Soiree* event which includes sampling all the risotto entries; award-winning wines; live music and entertainment; exotic cars; silent auction and raffle; children's play area with activities for kids; and designer showroom tours. In fact, more than 600 people attended the Risotto Festival in 2009.

Advanced tickets may be purchased online at RisottoFestival.com for \$65 per person. A limited number of tickets are available at the door for \$75. VIP tickets (\$125) are also available which include special parking and access to the VIP lounge where guests can mingle with participating chefs and judges, sip fine wines and enjoy a selection of antipasti and desserts.

20 of Houston's top chefs are expected to participate including those representing Mockingbird Bistro, Philippe, Trevisio, Arcodoro, Pesce, Grotto, Carmelo's, Damians Cucina Italiano, Quattro (Four Seasons Hotel), Branch Water Tavern, Zelko Bistro, Eric's Restaurant (Hilton University of Houston Hotel) and Viking.

This year's culinary competition benefits the University of Houston's Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel & Restaurant Management, one of the top hospitality programs in the world. Sponsors include The Greater Houston Restaurant Association (event underwriter) and the new Embassy Suites Houston Downtown opening in February 2011. Additional supporters include the Food and Beverage Managers Association, HILL - A Marketing Design Group, Inc., Casa Vinicola Zonin USA, Acqua Panna and San Pellegrino.

The 8th Annual International Risotto Festival is part of *The Grand Soiree*, a month-long series of stylish events scheduled from September 25 – October 27. For more information, call 713-864-2660 or visit RisottoFestival.com.

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