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Demand for Ethnic and International Foods Reflects a Changing America

National Restaurant Association 2005 Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show to Satisfy Popularity

CHICAGO, IL (May 2, 2005) - Foods from around the world are becoming so popular that many of them have entered American mainstream diets, and the nation's 900,000 restaurants are providing a host of options on their menus from coast to coast. This surge in demand for ethnic foods spurred the National Restaurant Association to create the International Cuisine Pavilion to debut at its 2005 Restaurant Hotel-Motel Show, held May 21-24 at McCormick Place in Chicago. The Show will serve as an inspiration to U.S. restaurant companies and a venue for foreign companies looking to open new doors for their products in the U.S., as well as for authentic cuisine featured by companies that either import or manufacture traditional ethnic food and beverage products domestically.

Delegations from Brazil, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, China, El Salvador, Nigeria, Mexico, Ukraine, Kuwait, Ghana, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Uruguay, Barbados, and Bulgaria and Spain, and many others will be coming to the 2005 Show - the largest restaurant-and-hospitality industry trade show in North and South America - to showcase and provide samples of traditional and authentic ethnic food and beverage products. The Show's 73,000 expected attendees will find a one-stop, global marketplace designed to provide them easy access to the foods that will satisfy their customers.

"Everyone in the restaurant industry is looking for ways to stand apart, while providing the quality dishes their guests want. What once seemed foreign is now becoming mainstream, and the craving for more and different foods continues to grow as the palates of American diners become more sophisticated. Ethnic foods and fusions will increasingly appear on menus everywhere," said Association President and Chief Executive Officer Steven C. Anderson.

Highlights at the 2005 Show include Kitchen Innovations, an industry-first initiative that focuses on groundbreaking back-of-the-house products and features live, hands-on demonstrations of the

most innovative kitchen equipment as selected by a panel of experts; the Ask The Design Experts clinic will provide opportunities for attendees to receive free advice from leading back- and front-of-the-house design experts; more than 60 educational sessions targeting key industry topics and issues.

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The Show will provide opportunities for a broad range of restaurant industry organizations from single-unit entrepreneurs to multi-unit operators, and from those already offering ethnic items but wanting to expand, to those looking for new winning menu concepts. The Show is on both the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Buyer Program and the U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) list of sponsored trade shows.

Restaurant industry sales are expected to reach a record high of \$476 billion in 2005, an increase of 4.9 percent over 2004, according to the National Restaurant Association. Driven by consumer demand, the ethnic food market reached record sales in 2002, and has emerged as the fastest growing category in the food and beverage product sector, according to USBX Advisory Services. Minorities in the U.S. spend a combined \$142 billion on food and by 2010, America's ethnic population is expected to grow by 40 percent.

The Association tapped California-based International Trade Information, Inc., (ITI) to assist in creating and marketing the Pavilion. ITI is an international trade show company specializing in the U.S. domestic ethnic audience and international exhibitor and visitor marketing. It is one of few trade show marketing companies focusing on this audience. For more information about ITI, visit its Web site at www.internationaltradeinformation.com.

Celebrating its 86th year, the Association's annual Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show is the largest single gathering of restaurant, foodservice and lodging professionals in North and South America. The Show will be held May 21-24, 2005, at McCormick Place in Chicago, Ill. Each year, the Show serves as the industry's premier international marketplace, attracting more than 2,000 exhibiting companies and 73,000+ attendees from all 50 states and more than 100 countries. For the latest information, please visit the show web site at www.restaurant.org/show.

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The National Restaurant Association, founded in 1919, is the leading business association for the restaurant industry, comprised of 900,000 restaurant and foodservice outlets and a work force of 12.2 million employees - making it the cornerstone of the economy, career opportunities and community involvement. Along with the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation, the Association works to represent, educate and promote the rapidly growing industry. For more information, visit our Web site at www.restaurant.org.