

# MIAMI

FOOD DRINK | BITES | By Riki Almon



THE DISH

## In With the New

Just in time for 2012, Miami's serving up a smorgasbord of new restaurants, starting with **Edge, Steak & Bar** at the Four Seasons (1435 Brickell Ave., Miami, 305.358.3535). Replacing *Acqua*, this contemporary indoor-outdoor concept (check out the retractable roof above the terrace seats), helmed by Executive Chef Aaron Brooks, promises share-worthy apps, like scallop tartare and chorizo-cheddar croquetas, along with cowgirl-sized steak entrees for calorie-conscious carnivores. >>> Also new: **Mare Nostrum** in Brickell, Polaris World Development's first foray into the American dining

scene (1111 S.W. First Ave., Miami, 786.691.2770). Serious paellas, risottos and other Mediterranean stars are on the seafood-heavy menu, served against stunning interiors by the Baltus Collection. >>> We also confirmed that two restaurants are going into the new St. Regis Bal Harbour in January, one of which is Jean-Georges Vongerichten's **J&G Grill** (9703 Collins Ave., 305.993.3300). Jordi Valles, who has studied under three of Spain's master toques, will be the hotel's chef and award-winning master of all things sugary, Antonio Bachour, will be the executive pastry chef.

Chef Aaron Brooks (right) heads the kitchen at *Edge, Steak and Bar* (above)



### CHEF CHAT

#### Spreading His Wings

Long a bastion of wedding receptions, the **Rusty Pelican** (3201 Rickenbacker Causeway, Key Biscayne, 305.361.3818) is back after a \$7 million renovation with a fiery new chef who has certainly earned his stripes in Miami's cuisine scene: **Michael Gilligan**.



Did the name of the place throw you back at all? My favorite restaurants are *The Fat Duck* in England and *The Spotted Pig* in New York, so no. **What's the fate**

of the **Pelican's** seafood Caesar and prime rib au jus? Food wasn't the focal point here, so I'm not keeping anything from the old menu. **Will people recognize your style with the new menu?** I want it to be simple, honest food. I don't want you to go just for gimmicks. No *Harry Potter*. **Especially when you're going to be catering parties for hundreds of people at once...** I like doing events. [If] I'm cooking for somebody's wedding they're never going to forget me.



Baked Apple from *Yardbird*

### CHEERS!

#### Making Spirits Bright

Yes, we're in the tropics, but Miamians still love a warm cocktail on a brisk night. Here are some of our favorites around town...

##### WHAT Baked Apple

**WHY** Bourbon, hot cider, fresh citrus, spiced apple syrup and Jerry Thomas bitters served warm with a slice of apple in a Mason jar  
**WHERE** *Yardbird Southern Table & Bar*, 1600 Lennox Ave., Miami Beach, 305.538.5220

##### WHAT Warm Tea Punch

**WHY** Tequila, cloudy apple juice, lime juice, agave nectar and oolong tea served in a teapot and garnished with fresh lemongrass, apple slices and cinnamon sticks  
**WHERE** *Hakkasan, Fontainebleau Hotel*, 4441 Collins Ave., Miami Beach, 877.326.7412

##### WHAT Mexican Mandarin Hot Chocolate

**WHY** Mandarin Napoléon liqueur, cocoa and cayenne pepper kick served in a tall latte glass with a dollop of whipped cream, an orange rind twist and a sprinkle of cayenne  
**WHERE** *Haven Gastro-Lounge*, 1237 Lincoln Road, Miami Beach, 305.987.8885