

CASE STUDY: CULINA, MODERN ITALIAN

Launching a New Paradigm for the Four Seasons



THE GOAL:

Launch an entirely new food and beverage concept for the storied Four Seasons hotel brand.

The Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills broke the mold of the traditional luxury hotel dining room by elevating its food and beverage program to modern, approachable new heights. By tapping into the demand for food-focused concepts in hotels, the Four Seasons led the way for a refreshing perspective on the brand's next era, as well as an entirely untapped local and national dining audience.

Bullfrog & Baum would leverage the uniqueness of the hotel brand's new approach to dining in Culina, Modern Italian to pursue a multi-platform media relations campaign that surpassed the challenges of a relatively unknown chef and a menu built around simplicity.

THE PROCESS:

Bullfrog & Baum worked closely with management to develop a restaurant brand that evoked a modern sensibility and neighborhood approachability in all aspects, from collateral to media communications to menu organization. Pre-opening efforts included buzz building that centered around the primary message of Culina, Modern Italian as a new food and beverage model that would forge an independent path for the Four Seasons brand.

A focus on food publications, both national and local, was designed to usher in a new demographic of diners. The mix of steady placements between online media outlets and national lifestyle publications positioned Culina as an 'it' restaurant that is both accessible and trend-setting. In pre-opening, Bullfrog & Baum organized a steady stream of local and national opening announcements. Post-opening, the agency formulated marketing initiatives for key areas of business, targeted concept and chef-driven placements to extend the brand awareness of Culina and its key personalities and executed continuous season-specific pitches in order to keep the restaurant top of mind. Awards and accolades were encouraged to further solidify messaging, while the restaurant's participation in targeted local tasting events and charity auctions established it as a mainstay in the food community.

THE RESULTS:

B&B secured long lead opening placements including *C*, *HOTELS*, *Los Angeles Magazine*, *Wall Street Journal* and *Robb Report* as well as influential local short lead media outlets such as *Daily Candy*, *Urban Daddy*, *Tasting Table*, and *Zagat Buzz*. Local and national broadcast segments such as *FOX Good Day LA*, *KTLA Morning Show*, and *Martha Stewart Radio* positioned the chef of Culina, Modern Italian as an expert and local spokesperson, along with chef-driven stories in *Maxim*, *AOL*, *Variety* and *The New York Times*.

A layering of lifestyle and hospitality publications, national and local, told the key message of Culina as a new paradigm in food and beverage for the Four Seasons brand, with placements ranging from *Fast Company* to *Food Arts* to *Angeleno* to *Esquire*. Following the initial launch of the restaurant and key concept messaging, Bullfrog & Baum generated marketing initiatives to drive business to key areas of the restaurant, including neighborhood outreach for lunch, awards season event opportunities for private dining and family-style dinners for Sunday business. Notable awards and accolades ranged from *Esquire's* "Best New Restaurants" to *Los Angeles Magazine's* "Best New Restaurants" to *Virtuoso Life's* "Top 20 New Restaurants in the U.S."

