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PRESS RELEASE

**AURORA INN'S NEW CHEF, GREG RHOAD,
ENHANCES ALL-AMERICAN MENU**

Lakeside Restaurant Features Nightly Roasts, Seasonal Specialties

AURORA, New York — Within months of reopening this spring following an extensive renovation, the Aurora Inn has attracted two of central New York's top chefs: Greg Rhoad and Rupert Robbins.

The duo has been busy fine-tuning the dining room at the upscale country inn on the eastern shore of Cayuga Lake and recently unveiled a new all-American menu featuring slow-cooked roasts and seasonal specialties.

Rhoad, who built a loyal following during his seven-year tenure as head chef at Rosalie's Cucina in Skaneateles, has served as Executive Chef for the Aurora Foundation since early September. Robbins, formerly with The BoatYard Grill in Ithaca, has been on board as Assistant Executive Chef since mid-September. In addition to the Aurora Inn, the chefs also oversee food and beverage operations at the Restaurant MacKenzie-Childs, Pizzaurora and Dorie's.

"The Aurora Inn has always served traditional American country fare," Mr. Rhoad commented. "Our aim in refining the menu is to offer quintessential American cuisine, inspired by the changing seasons and fresh regional products that go from the garden to the table. Because the menu is so simple, so nostalgic and so lacking in pretension, everything must be done to perfection," he asserted. "This is comfort food at its very best."

Nightly roasts, such as carved roast pork loin, sirloin of beef and leg of lamb, are mainstays of the new menu. Roast duck, veal osso bucco, steamed lobster and baked ham are served on other designated nights. The inn's popular meatloaf with mashed potatoes and gravy remains a signature dish at only \$12. Among new entrees on the menu are a classic chicken pot pie and pumpkin ravioli tossed with sage rosemary and cider cream.

New Rhoad-created starters include Boston seafood chowder, smoked trout with plum and sweet onion relish with horseradish cream, and a seafood trio consisting of a petite crab cake, shrimp cocktail and salmon mousse. Three different salads and seasonal soups are other appetizers. Desserts range from a five-layer coconut cake and cream-filled devil's food cake to rice pudding and old-fashion ice cream sundaes with homemade hot caramel or fudge sauce.

Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner, the restaurant has been doing a brisk lunch business with offerings such as curried chicken salad, chopped Cobb salad, lobster roll and classic turkey club sandwich. Breakfast favorites include New Hope Mills pancakes with fresh strawberries, hand-dipped French toast, omelets and a classic preparation of biscuits and gravy. A special sit-down brunch is served on Sundays.

Restaurant Offers Fireside Dining Overlooking Lake

Drawing rave reviews for its stunning décor and romantic atmosphere, the restaurant has a bank of windows and French doors that open onto a porch and expansive stone veranda overlooking the lake for al fresco dining. Beige and black wall coverings with a harvest motif are accented by rich red fabrics on the chair seats. Cherry tables, banquettes and booths provide seating for 55. During cooler months, a fire blazes in the hearth. In the lounge, a pair of unusual Orkney chairs flank the fireplace, and leather booths and chairs combine with the handcrafted mahogany bar to create

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a stylishly informal atmosphere. The bar serves wines and spirits from around the world and showcases wines from the Finger Lakes region.

A native of Baltimore, Rhoad began his career in the kitchen when he worked at his uncle's restaurant as a teenager. His formal training was at Johnson & Wales University, where he earned degrees in culinary arts and food service. After a short stint with Harrah's Hotels and Casinos, he found work as one of the chefs at the Inn at Little Washington outside of Washington D.C. One of America's most renowned country retreats, the Relais & Chateaux inn was rated as having the best restaurant in the country while Rhoad was in the kitchen.

During the early 1990s, Rhoad opened and worked at a series of restaurants in Virginia, Maryland and Michigan before his former colleague at the Inn at Little Washington called him in 1996 and asked him to help run Rosalie's, a new upscale restaurant in Skaneateles specializing in rustic Tuscan cuisine.

When asked why he took the job in Aurora, Rhoad replied, "I was ready for a new challenge and the job as Executive Chef of the Aurora Foundation is extremely multi-faceted with three restaurants and an active wedding and special events business to run. It also meant I could stay in the Finger Lakes region, where the quality of life is much better than urban areas where other opportunities like this might exist."

Rupert Robbins first arrived on the upstate New York culinary scene as chef at Joe's, a popular eatery in Ithaca. He worked as sous chef with Rhoads for several years at Rosalie's before being named Executive Chef at The BoatYard Grill in Ithaca.

For more information about the Aurora Inn, call (315) 364-8888 or visit www.aurora-inn.com.