

FOODSERVICE CONSULTANT



Wylie creative

CELEBRATING THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF CHEF
WYLIE DUFRESNE'S INNOVATIVE RESTAURANT, ALDER

— NEW YORK CITY, USA —

- **DISNEY DINES** Feeding the Magic Kingdom
- **FORM v FUNCTION** Combine both for best results
- **COLD CUTS** Blast chillers and ice machines
- **TOP CHEFS** Maneet Chauhan, Steve McHugh and Jeff Tunks

REVAMP FOR TWO SEASIDE HOTELS AS RHODE ISLAND'S TOURISM ROCKETS

Rhode Island, known for its strong leisure and hospitality culture, has seen its tourism rocket in recent years, thanks to both senior travellers and residents 65 and older – a group showing the greatest growth in the region of 2.2% since just 2012 – and younger travellers 25 and over, according to the New England Economic Partnership. Two historic seaside hotels in a popular vacation area of the State have recently undergone renovations – Ocean House in Watch Hill and its just re-opened sister property, The Watch Hill Inn.

At the newly renovated Victorian-era Ocean House, the only AAA Five Diamond and Forbes Five Star hotel in Rhode Island, classic décor, historic stone fireplace and open exhibition



kitchen provide a dining experience at Seasons – the property's main, on-site restaurant – that harkens back to tradition and luxury with the benefits of a modern, contemporary appeal. The resort's food and beverage programme centres on Northeastern classics such as Rhode Island Bouillabaisse and other comfort dishes using fresh, local and seasonal food with a menu that changes daily. To add to the farm-to-table appeal, an on-staff 'food forager' leads regular cooking classes and workshops for guests, and just last fall, Ocean House

released its first hardcover cookbook, *Ocean House: Living and Cooking Through the Seasons*. This summer, the property unveiled its collection of cottage-style residences as well as a TownHouse Suite.

Ocean House's Watch Hill Inn has also undergone major renovations to become a luxury, all-suite boutique affiliated with Relais & Châteaux and boasting a more contemporary design to appeal to a younger clientele. As the oldest original structure in Watch Hill Village, the Watch Hill Inn was built in 1845 and is reported to be the oldest of its kind – an inn built from the ground-up – in the country. Along with the Ocean House, the Watch Hill Inn was one of only two Watch Hill original hotels to survive the hurricane of 1938. Current renovations build on a 2007 restoration by combining several units into luxury duplexes, ranging from 650 to 4,000 square feet and each with terraces, just steps away from Watch Hill harbour.

Satisfied customers

Olive Garden leads as McDonald's falls in customer satisfaction rates, ACSI reports

Olive Garden, Papa John's and Pizza Hut took the lead among chains with the highest customer satisfaction rates, according to the American Customer Satisfaction Index's (ACSI) annual restaurant industry survey on what people like best and least about their dining experiences.

The Italian-inspired eatery led the pack with an 84 satisfaction score on ACSI's 100-point scale, followed closely by the pizza chains at 82, according to the survey. Chili's (74) and McDonald's (71) fell to the bottom of the scale.

Overall, restaurant satisfaction declined 0.9% to 78.5% this year.

In fact, smaller restaurant chains such as Panera and Chipotle, full-service eateries and fast casual outlets are gaining customer satisfaction over larger chains and fast food, according to the survey. Customers' satisfaction with full-service restaurants went up 1.2% with an ACSI score of 82, holding a slim lead over fast food at 80. Limited-service restaurant satisfaction remained steady at 80. And although Olive Garden took the lead, it still slipped



in satisfaction at about a 4% rate since last year. Red Lobster took the biggest fall – down 6% – and Chili's patrons were the least satisfied overall. Scores for Subway and Dunkin' Donuts fell 6% and Starbucks 5%.

Americans are also eating out more often, with a 60% increase among consumers eating out an average of four meals per week in 2013, according to ACSI.

"In a weaker economy, consumers respond to price, but as the economy improves, quality becomes more important to restaurant customers," says Claes Fornell, ACSI chairman and founder. "This is good news for smaller chains and individual restaurants that customers associate with higher quality food and better service."