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## **Zagat Survey Ranks Maison Blanche "#1 for French Cuisine" for Tampa-Sarasota Region**

### **James Beard Award Nominee for Top Chef (South) 2010 Receives Coveted Distinctions**

(Sarasota, December 2012) Maison Blanche is receiving an outstanding special distinction of "#1 for French Cuisine" for the entire Tampa Bay region by Zagat, one of America's prestigious and valued dining guides. The restaurant on Sarasota's sister islands has been ranked "America's TOP Restaurants" for several years, but it is the ONLY Longboat Key restaurant Zagat chose to list in the 2013 guide because of "extraordinary to perfection for food and service."

The Review Highlights state: "Chef-Owner Jose (in French: Joe-Zay) Martinez 'lovingly prepares' 'exquisite' 'classic French cuisine with modern twist' at this 'charmer' on Longboat Key with "simple but elegant setting" that allows you to 'concentrate on flavors' for a 'fabulous fancy night out' with 'impeccable service' to match.

Maison Blanche, which features New French, American, and seafood items on its menu, is also receiving top distinctions, honors, and ribbons in virtually all categories by popular online restaurant and travel reservation sites such as "Open Table," "tripadvisor" and others based on patron satisfaction, reviews, and extraordinary praise. To cap a wonderful year and as a thank you, Chef Jose has created an exemplary seven-course French tasting menu for New Year's eve. Maison Blanche, which is typically closed on Mondays, will also open its doors on Christmas Eve, Monday, December 24th.

"We want to welcome our very valued patrons and dear friends to their 'White House' while they are here in Florida," said Chef/proprietors Jose and wife Victoria Martinez, who plan to close the restaurant on the following Tuesdays instead. "Their appreciation and praise makes this labor of love well worth of it." The husband-wife team owned their original restaurant by the same name in Paris overlooking River Seine, Champs-Elysees, and the Eiffel Tower, where Chef Jose won a coveted Michelin Star for nuanced cooking.

Chef Jose Martinez in June showcased his cuisine at the prestigious James Beard House in New York City, which was a unique invitation extended only to a handful in the Tampa area. The menu dubbed "French Elegance" was re-created at Maison Blanche on Longboat Key in October with patrons ranting and raving about the five course wine paired menu as being "over the top." The Martinez' has sponsored a James Beard Foundation scholarship fund for a dedicated student to attend culinary school.

Chef Jose's accomplishments, experience and awards are chronicled this year alone in the The Herald Tribune, Longboat Key Journals, SRQ, Sarasota Magazine, "EDEN," "Style," "Edible Sarasota," "REAL" Sarasota News Network, among others.

### **About Maison Blanche**

Praised by connoisseurs, food critics and patrons as "Sarasota's Best," Chef Jose Martinez has a Michelin Star for his Paris restaurant, and was a James Beard Foundation nominee for Best Chef (South) 2010. The restaurant dining room is designed by award winning architect, Franck Hammoutene in simple and elegant contemporary white for Longboat Key's "White House" where food, company, and conversation are central focus. The extensive wine list has an award of excellence. Website: [www.themaisonblanche.com](http://www.themaisonblanche.com) Phone: (941) 383-8088