

# HOTELS

**WHAT'S  
HOT**

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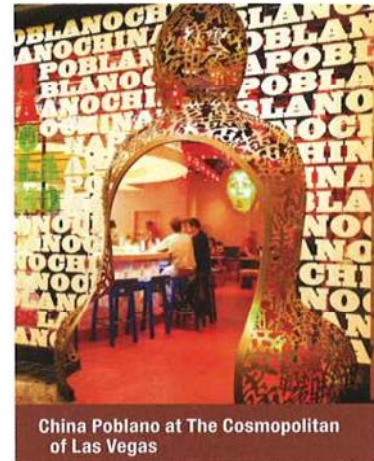
THE INTERVIEW: KINGDOM'S SARMAZ ZOK

THE PIPELINE: ALILA HOTELS & RESORTS



**about the cover**

While Las Vegas has struggled in the tough economy to maintain its overall hotness, at least the new Cosmopolitan made a big splash with its accessible entrance right at the curb of the Strip as well as a hip vibe to take over the role as the place to be. Trendy F&B offerings (seven in total) come from the likes José Andrés, who created China Poblano. Seed Design's ambience is about red concrete bleacher seating and a ceiling composed of 100 bicycle wheels enlivened with red lanterns. The takeaway: Layer texture, furnishings and lighting to create a distinctive framework for the food and to raise the bar of the overall dining experience.



China Poblano at The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas

**{The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas}**

**THE CONCEPT:** Name-dropping

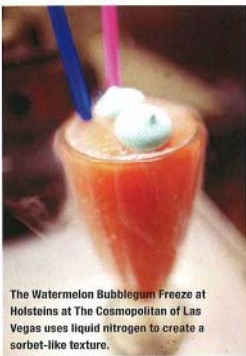
**CASE IN POINT:** P3 Commons at The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas

**WHY IT'S HOT:** The hotel's seven restaurants showcase a galaxy of star chefs and culinary design giants. "When you bring chefs like José Andrés, Scott Conant and David Myers, restaurateurs such as The ONE Group and designers like Adam Tihany, Rockwell Group, Seed Design, Jeffery Beers, iCrave and Studio Gaia together, you are really raising the bar in terms of the cuisine, design and overall dining experience," says John Unwin, the hotel's CEO.

**THE TAKEAWAY:** For restaurants, one trend never fits all. For Andrés' Jaleo, Rockwell Group introduced a Spanish feel in doors decorated in calligraphy, hand-crafted embroidery that recalls a mantilla and an art installation that sets wood patterns against images of the Spanish countryside. But in Andrés' China Poblano, Seed Design's ambience is about red concrete bleacher seating and a ceiling composed of 100 bicycle wheels enlivened with red lanterns. Tihany uses oak walls, amber glass chandeliers and mosaic-tiled floors to update the French brasserie for Myers' Comme Ça. It's all good, as long as the aesthetic frames the fare.

**WORDS OF WISDOM:** Layer texture, furnishings and lighting in order to create a distinctive framework for the food. Plan level changes to offer different destinations without over-consuming space.

**WHAT'S HOT:** F&B



The Watermelon Bubblegum Freeze at Holsteins at The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas uses liquid nitrogen to create a sorbet-like texture.

**COCKTAILS GET CREATIVE**

The hotel bar is hardly the realm of a simple gin-and-tonic anymore. Holsteins at The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas, for example, recently introduced a cocktail with quite a quirky secret ingredient: liquid nitrogen. The Watermelon Bubblegum Freeze, which menus for US\$11, blends watermelon and bubblegum vodka with liquid nitrogen, which instantly creates a sorbet-like effect without adding flavor or volume.

Creativity doesn't always seem a little crazy, though. Pan Pacific Hotel Seattle focuses on artisanal liquors and fresh juices to set its bar offerings apart. The Smoked Whiskey Margarita (US\$12) features locally

distilled Pendleton's Whiskey along with Cointreau, lime juice, simple syrup and an applewood-smoked sea salt rim.

Sometimes food pairings make spirits special. In addition to more familiar wine-pairing dinners, Maui's Grand Wailea Resort's monthly TOAST! also includes dishes paired with scotch, tequila and sake. The dinners, which are limited to about 40 guests, typically sell out up to a week in advance, according to Chef de Cuisine Isaac Bancaco. "Our food goes with a myriad of different spirits," Bancaco says. "And our guests understand spirits and wine so much more clearly than they did 10 years ago."