

AAA Adds 10 Hotels, Six Restaurants To Coveted 2007 Five Diamond List

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Ten hotels and six restaurants attained the hospitality industry's highest rating for 2007: the AAA Five Diamond Award.

The total 151 AAA Five Diamond Award winners for 2007, which includes 93 hotels and 58 restaurants, comprises just 0.25 percent of the nearly 60,000 AAA Rated(R) properties across the United States, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean.

First-time Five Diamond hotels for 2007 include two properties in Las Vegas and one each in Ojai, Calif.; Miami; Greensboro, Ga.; Farmington, Pa.; Kiawah Island, S.C.; Teton Village, Wyo.; Nuevo Vallarta, Mexico; and Playa del Carmen, Mexico. New restaurant winners for 2007 include two establishments in Chicago and one each in Phoenix; Healdsburg, Calif.; Washington, DC; and Las Vegas. For more information on AAA Diamond ratings and the complete list of 2007 Five Diamond Award winners, visit AAA.com/Diamonds.

The Four Seasons Resort Jackson Hole, a 2007 Five Diamond hotel, marks the state of Wyoming's first entry to the AAA Five Diamond Award list.

Just three lodgings have maintained the distinction as AAA Five Diamond Award winners for 31 consecutive years, since the Diamond ratings were first applied to hotels: Camelback Inn, A JW Marriott Resort & Spa in Scottsdale, Ariz.; The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, Colo.; and The Greenbrier in White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.

Just two restaurants have maintained the Five Diamond Award for 19 consecutive years, since the Diamond ratings were first applied to restaurants: Le Bec-Fin in Philadelphia and The Inn at Little Washington Dining Room in Washington, Va.

'Important aspects of quality service are consistency and hospitality,' said Michael Petrone, director of the AAA Diamond Rating(R) program. 'These five establishments have maintained the Five Diamond level of service excellence longer than other establishments in the industry. That's an amazing achievement.'

Interesting Five Diamond Award Trends

œ Chicago is now the leading destination for Five Diamond dining. It has seven Five Diamond restaurants with the addition of Alinea and the Avenues restaurant in the Peninsula Chicago.

œ Las Vegas doubled its number of Five Diamond hotels from two to four, adding the Skylofts at the MGM Grand Hotel and Wynn Las Vegas, indicating the city's continued development as a premiere luxury destination. Las Vegas also has four Five Diamond restaurants (Alex, Joël Robuchon at The Mansion, Le Cirque, and Picasso)

œ Scottsdale, Ariz., a city of just 237,000 residents and 67 hotels, has four Five Diamond hotels œ the Camelback Inn, A JW Marriott Resort; the Phoenician; the Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North; and the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess œ on par with Las Vegas and more than Chicago, Miami, San Francisco, Washington, DC, and the entire state of Hawaii.

To become AAA Approved and Diamond rated, hotels and restaurants undergo a thorough inspection by one of AAA's 65 full-time, highly trained professional evaluators. Five Diamond establishments complete a more extensive review that includes a series of inspections and final committee review. Some 60,000 hotels and restaurants will be listed in the 2007 TourBook(R) guides, in print and on AAA.com, where the Diamond ratings are published.

AAA first started listing accommodation information in its travel publications in the early 1900s. In 1937, the first field inspectors were hired to inspect hotels, motels, and restaurants. In 1963, AAA began to rate all accommodations as good, very good, excellent or outstanding. The Diamond Rating Process, introduced in 1977 for hotels and 1989 for restaurants, continues to be recognized as the most trusted rating process for North American travelers.

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