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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2012

10th anniversary at Lacroix at the Rittenhouse



All the chef's men - and a few women. Photo: SHOLA OLUNLOYO

Sept. 23, 2002 - a Monday - saw the debut of Lacroix at the Rittenhouse, a luxe redo of the Rittenhouse Hotel's second-floor TreeTops restaurant into a posh showcase for Jean-Marie Lacroix.

Lacroix had been the longtime chef at the archrival Four Seasons Hotel, and Rittenhouse owners were delighted at their coup. (Officially, Lacroix retired from the Four Seasons in May 2001 and surfaced a few months later at the Rittenhouse to supervise the almost one-year construction of Lacroix.)

Flash forward to Sept. 24, 2012. "Papa," who left his namesake restaurant in 2006, returned as 10 chefs from Lacroix's past feted him with 10 courses on the 10th anniversary. Jon Cichon and Fred Ortega, now at Lacroix, plus Jason Cichonski (Ela), Michael Fiorello (Garces), Matt Levin (Square Peg), Matt Ridgway (PorcSalt), Peter Scarola (R2L), Brinn Sinnott (Talula's Garden), Lee Styer (Fond), and Townsend Wentz (McCrosen's Tavern).

Lacroix, now 71, consults with Brulee Catering.

Aside from helping out during the evening, chef Shola Olunloyo photographed the action in the kitchen. See his photos at his Flickr here.

The \$350-a-head feed supported the first-ever Lacroix at the Rittenhouse Scholarship given out by the James Beard Foundation.

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About Michael Klein



Michael Klein, the editor/producer of Philly.com/Food, writes about the local restaurant scene in his Inquirer column "Table Talk." Have a question? Email it! See his Inquirer work here.

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