

# Professional Spotlight

## Robert LeCrom Executive Chef, The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver



A fixture at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver since November of 1989, Robert LeCrom has earned a solid place in the heart of the city and the hotel during his reign as Executive Chef; delighting restaurant guests, molding young culinarians, and serving as mastermind behind the food and beverage served at Vancouver's most prominent events.

Born and raised in Brittany, France, Chef LeCrom remained in his beloved country to pursue his culinary education at Tours Hotel School in the Loire Valley. He began cooking in 1962, honing his culinary skills while working his way through France, England, Spain and Japan before finally settling in Canada.

Overseeing the culinary operations at The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, his philosophy is "cook fresh. Cook simple. Cook seasonal." True to his French roots, Chef LeCrom insists on maintaining a fully functioning pastry shop — a rarity in Vancouver hotels today. He feels his most challenging event is "Bacchanalia," an annual winemakers' dinner for 600 at The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver in April. A committee chooses the wine and Chef must complement the wine with his menu. Usually this is done for a maximum number of 50-60 people; however Bacchanalia is for 600. On the other hand, he also believes that his most successful event is "The Lover's Ball," held each February, as close to Valentine's Day as possible, at The

Fairmont Hotel Vancouver. One of the most talked about events in the city each year, and the major fundraiser of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, each detail is a visual and sensory treat — every element is orchestrated to perfection quite literally, including the "symphony" of cuisine. As Chef LeCrom puts it, "It is one of the defining events for The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver — we can create an artistic event from start to finish!"

In the true tradition of *la Chaîne*, Chef LeCrom is perhaps most passionate about the Fairmont culinary apprentice program he introduced in British Columbia in 1990. Young culinarians are provided the opportunity to receive on-the-job training in the six Fairmont kitchens in the Pacific Northwest while they earn their Red Seal at Vancouver Community College. Each September, the apprentices also have the unique opportunity to take over the kitchen at The Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, preparing a five-course banquet for the 250 attendees of "The Apprentice Dinner."

Chef LeCrom's latest addition to his long list of accomplishments was his selection to be one of two top Vancouver chefs to attend the 2008 Beijing Olympic Summer Games as an official member of the Canadian Olympic Team. In August of 2008, he spent the month in a Beijing kitchen to ensure the Canadian athletes were fuelled throughout the games.

When not in the kitchen, Chef can be found sailing with his wife and working on his saltwater aquarium.