

JW MARRIOTT®
HOUSTON DOWNTOWN



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**AWARD-WINNING PASTRY CHEF PLINIO SANDALIO JOINS JW MARRIOTT
HOUSTON DOWNTOWN**

Sandalio Puts New Twist on Southern Sweets at Soon-to-Open Luxury Hotel

HOUSTON, April 30, 2014 – JW Marriott Houston Downtown announced today that award-winning chef Plinio Sandalio will join the hotel’s culinary team, led by executive chef Erin Smith, as the property prepares to open in summer 2014. As pastry chef, Sandalio will develop and execute dessert menus and a bread program for the hotel’s Main Kitchen restaurant, 806 Bar & Lounge and catered events.

Sandalio will tap into locally sourced ingredients to create artfully crafted desserts, influenced by regional and international cuisines, French technique and his mixology experience. He is known for reinventing classic desserts by adding unexpected ingredients such as cocktail bitters and herbs, as exemplified in his signature grapefruit sorbet with Campari pop rocks and angostura bitters mousse.

“Plinio is a diversely talented chef who pushes boundaries between savory and sweet to create one-of-a-kind desserts,” said Erin Smith, JW Marriott Houston Downtown executive chef. “Together, we hope to develop an exceptional culinary program for Main Kitchen and 806 Bar & Lounge that will become a staple of Houston’s thriving restaurant scene.”

Named *Main Kitchen* to reflect its location on Main Street and the goal of becoming a staple on Houston’s culinary scene, the restaurant will seat 120 and boast an exhibition kitchen providing guests with insight into the creative culinary process. The open concept will provide a seamless transition to the hotel’s 806 Bar & Lounge. The welcoming décor will pay homage to the building’s history, with warm earth tones, and wood and stone finishes, evoking the understated elegance and approachable luxury that has become synonymous with the JW Marriott brand around the world.

Sandalio, who was born in Bolivia and grew up in Houston, has gained a following in Houston and Austin with his innovative desserts and cocktail pairings. He served most recently as the executive pastry chef for the AT&T Center in Austin, where he oversaw all pastry production for the hotel and its three venues, The Carillion, Gabriel's Café and One Twenty 5 Café.

Sandalio's creations have earned him awards, including "2013 Grand Champion" of the Star Chefs SMOKE@ICC competition at the International Chefs Congress and "2012 Star Chefs Pastry Rising Star," as well as a nomination and being named a semifinalist for the 2010 James Beard Award for the "Best Pastry Chef."

Sandalio studied culinary arts at The Art Institute of Houston. He further developed his talent in sweets, savories and mixology working as a sous chef at Rickshaw and Soma, as pastry chef at Noe, Gravitas and Textile, and as a bartender at Anvil Bar & Refuge. In 2010 he moved to Austin to work as pastry chef at David Bull's Congress and joined Carillion in 2011.

About JW Marriott Houston Downtown

Housed in the beautiful historic landmark Samuel F. Carter building, the JW Marriott Houston Downtown is the brand's first adaptive reuse project in Texas, celebrating the flavor of the city with refined design, intuitive service and thoughtful amenities that have become synonymous with the brand worldwide. Guests will enjoy a one-of-a-kind stay in an artfully crafted environment with their every need met graciously and authentically. Located at 806 Main St., the hotel will feature 328 guest rooms, more than 14,000 square feet of meeting space, a restaurant and full-service bar, a spa, health club, and an executive lounge. See www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/houdj

About Pearl Hospitality

Founded in 2000, Pearl Hospitality is built on the belief that by investing in the growth of its people, it is investing in the future of the company. The focus on both personal and professional growth of the Pearl team results in a level of performance that far exceeds industry averages. Unlike many hotel companies, Pearl develops, constructs, and operates its properties to maintain the highest standards and dramatically increase the functionality and comfort of its hotels. See www.pearlhospitality.com for more information.

About JW Marriott Hotels & Resorts

JW Marriott is part of Marriott International's luxury portfolio and consists of beautiful properties in gateway cities and distinctive resort locations around the world. These elegant hotels cater to today's sophisticated, self-assured travelers, offering them the quiet luxury they seek in a warmly authentic, relaxed atmosphere lacking in pretense. JW Marriott properties artfully provide highly crafted, anticipatory experiences that are reflective of their locale so that their guests have the time to focus on what is most important to them. Currently, there are 64 JW Marriott hotels in 26 countries; by 2016 the portfolio is expected to encompass more than 92 properties over 36 countries. Visit us online, jwmarriott.com, [@jwmarriott](https://www.facebook.com/JWMarriott) and [facebook.com/JWMarriott](https://www.facebook.com/JWMarriott)

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