

NoMI EXECUTIVE CHEF CHRISTOPHE DAVID

Born in Dijon and raised in Lyon, France, Christophe David was first inspired by legendary French chef Paul Bocuse from the seat of his bicycle at age 10. Living but a few meters away from the time-honored l'Auberge du Pont de Collonges, David would peddle by and observe the hustle and bustle at this legendary restaurant. This early exposure to the world of fine dining soon led David down his own culinary path. Now as executive chef of NoMI, the venerable contemporary French restaurant atop the Park Hyatt Chicago, David has ushered in a new era by presenting a menu which reflects his own modern touches while subtly integrating the rich history of French cuisine.

David, a teen in the early 1980s, came of age at a time when French cooking was still extremely conservative and, at times, exasperatingly hierarchal. But as time would tell, his strict training would serve him well, providing a solid appreciation of every aspect of the dining experience from proper butchery and secrets of the boulangerie to fine wine and the importance of superlative service.

Upon completion of his studies, fate led David to his first job working for Bocuse himself. He labored in the kitchen at *La Tour Rose* in Lyon when the culinary world was in the midst of revolutionizing itself, and the age of nouvelle cuisine was born. In place of heavy sauces, chefs were presenting unconventional reductions and mixing the sweet with the savory. The predictable old-world style was giving way to the other extreme - something young chef David observed while working the line with eyes wide open.

After five years in Lyon and with his mandatory military service in the French archipelago of Guadeloupe complete, David spent a few years abroad working on the island of Saint-Martin and then, at the luxurious Relais & Château resort *Borgo San Felice* in a small Italian town outside Sienna, Italy. Although significantly changed by his travels abroad, in 1993, he found himself back in Lyon serving as sous chef at the recreated thirteenth-century castle of *Château de Bagnoles*, the first Aman Resort, under Phillippe Lechat.

Although preferring the environment of quaint villages, David soon recognized the importance of cooking in Paris and gradually embraced the world's culinary Mecca. Serving as sous chef for renowned three-star Michelin restaurant *Lucas Carton*, it was arguably, under the guidance of chef/owner Alain Senderens, where he came into his own. The experience broadened his knowledge both as a chef and manager, learning how to develop his palate, as well as motivating his team. A year later, David continued to master yet another culinary challenge – working at the illustrious *Taillevent*, another three-star Michelin restaurant. As sous chef under chef Phillippe Legendre, he worked on mastering Escoffier-style and truly honed in on his leadership skills, expediting more than 200 covers a day while managing a team of 50-plus kitchen staff.

In 1997, David was approached by Hyatt Hotels to open a new property, the Hyatt Regency Madeleine. Lured by the cornucopia of resources and unwavering support that luxury hotels could provide, he exercised creative freedom through a dedication to procure the very best of everything, from china and stemware to the freshest seafood and produce. Throughout more than a decade in properties large and small, he continuously championed quality for travelers and locals alike seeking elevated cuisine from restaurants located in world-renowned Hyatt properties.

After opening Park Hyatt properties as executive chef in Melbourne in 1999 and Buenos Aires in 2000, and serving as regional executive chef at Paris-Vendôme in 2002, David arrived at NoMI in the fall of 2005 with the challenge of advancing the menu at a restaurant that was already among the top-tier in the city. Leading his team through a new era at NoMI, David has pushed the boundaries even further by continually incorporating the myriad of influences he has gathered over his two-decade career while seamlessly guiding every facet of the NoMI experience.

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