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For Immediate Release

Robyn Sills and Ed Coleman

The Story of Pacific Crest Grill and Pianeta Ristorante in the Making

With a wealth of collective experience, Robyn Sills and Ed Coleman are an innovative team of restaurateurs that have raised the bar for modern dining in historic downtown Truckee. Together, they own and operate Pacific Crest Grill (including Bar of America) and Pianeta Ristorante, notably some of the best dining establishments in the area.

Robyn Sills began her career in the restaurant business in the Bay Area where she worked for various upscale restaurants throughout the years and was influenced by the success of the innovative gurus that surrounded her, including Sandy Saxten and Rob Thibaut, owners of T.S. Restaurants such as Jake's on the Lake and Sunnyside in Lake Tahoe and Kimos in Hawaii. Drawn by the lifestyle and the infamous downhill skiing at Squaw Valley, USA, Sills found her way to Tahoe. Eventually the way of life that provided Sills the freedom to do the things she was passionate about evolved into a passion for creative cuisine. Her tenure in the restaurant business in the Truckee/Tahoe area includes many of the most highly respected restaurants on the scene, including Sunnyside Restaurant, River Ranch, Wolfdales and Cottonwood Restaurant. She was also a co-owner and founder of the bakery and catering services at Earthly Delights.

On the other side of the country, near Boston, Ed Coleman commenced his career in the restaurant business at the young age of 14. He started off working in the kitchen washing dishes, steadily making his way up the chain of command to prep cook and finally line cook by the time he was 16. Coleman continued his work in the kitchen through college, spending his winter breaks cooking at the ski resorts in Vermont. A cross-country road trip after college brought him to California and ultimately to Lake Tahoe.

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Coleman's experience in Tahoe, working with mentors such as Sue Dunsford, "Rosie" of Rosie's Café in Tahoe City, elevated his understanding of culinary techniques from a basic level to a more fun and dynamic approach. During the 1980's, Coleman was at the forefront of the wine scene as it was emerging in Tahoe. He helped develop wine lists with all the local restaurants, trained staff, facilitated tastings with owners and also spearheaded the inaugural Lake Tahoe Autumn Food & Wine Festival.

After owning and operating the former River Street Café in Truckee for two years, Coleman tackled the grand accomplishment of relocating the restaurant and renovating the Hilltop lodge into another one of Truckee's fine restaurants, Cottonwood Restaurant. After seven years at Cottonwood, Coleman was looking forward to the next challenge. Likewise, Robyn Sills was also seeking out a new endeavor and the two joined efforts in 1996 to transform a small coffee shop, Theresa's Kitchen, into Pacific Crest Grill, a Mediterranean-style bistro, which officially opened on New Year's Eve of 1996.

In just 28 days, Sills and Coleman had transformed the mom and pop coffee shop into a beautiful bistro with dark mahogany wood and classic furnishings. Sills and Coleman took special care in selecting the appropriate décor to create a particular ambience reminiscent of historic downtown Truckee. A special faux paint technique was used to create antique looking "museum walls" and special hi-tech lighting with low voltage was installed to create a warm and inviting atmosphere. They incorporated local design by showcasing pieces by Truckee artist, Pam Krone, and including an interesting ensemble of antique books and art from a private collection. An antique back bar, once located in an old famous Truckee saloon, the Coburn Station, also made for a beautiful focal piece augmenting the classic style and ambience of the restaurant.

After the renovation was complete, Sills and Coleman moved on to the menu, providing a progressive alternative to the continental "steak and potatoes" options formerly available. Sills and Coleman successfully introduced Truckee's first bistro-style cuisine, featuring a Mediterranean menu integrating big flavor from pure, local ingredients including Certified Angus beef, fresh seafood, artisan cheeses and seasonal vegetables. With the vision and hard work of the Coleman-Sills combo, Pacific Crest became the bustling hot spot on the corner of downtown Truckee, offering a casual yet

professional atmosphere and providing nurturing “upscale comfort food” with a sophisticated style. When Sills and Coleman purchased the space for Pacific Crest they also negotiated the option to purchase the adjoining bar, the Bar of America, and in two years they did just that. For three decades now, the Bar of America has been recognized as the iconic watering hole in historic downtown Truckee. Sills and Coleman revitalized the bar and created a casual, fun atmosphere catering to families and providing a perfect alternative and compliment to the white tablecloth dining in the adjacent Pacific Crest Grill. Synonymous with great live music, good food and plenty of free-flowing libations, the Bar of America has been a happy hour hangout and weekend watering hole for locals and visitors alike.

Only two years after opening Pacific Crest, Sills and Coleman were ready for their next project and decided to open yet another restaurant, Pianeta Ristorante. Again they tackled an inconceivable three-month remodel, transforming another old Truckee building into an intimate, attractive, Old-World style Italian restaurant. Sills and Coleman took great measures to create a classic, authentic-looking European décor and ambience. Evoking a 500-year-old semblance, the original brick walls were detailed with cement and stone while the adjacent walls were tinted with a special glaze to create a fresco-style look decorated with Leonardo da Vinci sketches replicated by local artist, Pam Krone. Pianeta successfully denotes fine dining, great food and a warm, cozy atmosphere and experience.

With the introduction of Pianeta, Sills and Coleman remained on the forefront of the dining scene providing Truckee with the first Italian/Mediterranean style restaurant featuring rustic, European flavors and healthy, pure ingredients. The opening of an additional restaurant allowed the Sills and Coleman pair to branch out and experience individual freedom professionally as Sills took on overseeing Pianeta while Coleman focused on Pacific Crest. Together Sills and Coleman have proven themselves to be culinary visionaries by evolving to meet the needs of the changing demographic and cater to today’s savvy clientele. They have been adventurous in their efforts, setting the tone and expectations for Truckee/Tahoe dining.

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