

NEWS **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



Hérons Receives First AAA Five Diamond Award

The Umstead Hotel and Spa's signature restaurant elevated from four to five diamond rating

Cary, N.C. (June 17, 2011) – Herons is proud to announce it has received its first AAA Five Diamond Award, one of North America's most respected symbols of culinary excellence and the highest honor bestowed by AAA for a restaurant establishment. This marks the first year that Herons, under the leadership of **chef de cuisine Steven Devereaux Greene**, has received AAA's top distinction. Previously recognized with the Four Diamond Award for the past four years, Herons has now solidified its position as a restaurant renowned for world-class dining experiences, exceptional service and cutting-edge refined menus which utilize only the finest ingredients.

AAA evaluated more than 26,000 restaurants for its Diamond Awards distinction, and awarded the Five Diamond rating to less than one-quarter percent. This prestigious award recognizes superior establishments and highly acclaimed chefs whose combination of ingredients and techniques is extraordinary, reflecting the chef's impeccable artistry, with an expert service staff that effortlessly and unobtrusively attends to each diner, consistently exceeding expectations.

"We are thrilled that AAA has recognized Herons with this award, which has been a goal of **executive chef Scott Crawford** and mine since I joined the culinary team two years ago," said Greene. "By sourcing amazing local products and working closely with our own farmer at The Umstead, as well as our staff's dedication and gracious service, we have elevated the dining experience at Herons to the exquisite Five Diamond level."

With this honor, Herons now joins The Umstead Hotel and Spa, which has received the AAA Five Diamond Award annually since 2007, in providing the ultimate in luxury for each guest. Nestled on 12 acres of lakeside grounds, The Umstead Hotel and Spa celebrates a passion for artful public spaces, nature's beauty, Southern sophistication and genuine hospitality. Guests are also invited to relax at the plush Umstead Spa, featuring a full menu of services which incorporates botanical products into its signature services, creating an experience to savor.

To experience Greene's artful, refined American cuisine at Herons, call 919.447.4200 or visit www.theumstead.com.

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Hérons

Hérons is located in The Umstead Hotel and Spa at 100 Woodland Pond Drive, Cary, N.C. 27513. Helmed by chef de cuisine Steven D. Greene, the restaurant serves refined American cuisine for breakfast, lunch and dinner seven days a week, along with brunch on Saturday and Sunday. Herons has been lauded with a Forbes Four Star Award, AAA Five Diamond Award and Raleigh's *News & Observer's* Restaurant of the Year honor, as well as earning recognition in publications including *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Southern Living* and *Food & Wine*.

The Umstead Hotel and Spa

Nestled lakeside on 12 acres of beautiful grounds in Cary, N.C., The Umstead Hotel and Spa is a calming retreat and luxury destination conceived and constructed to highlight and explore art and nature. Founded on genuine hospitality and Southern sophistication, The Umstead features 150 oversized guest rooms, elegant furnishings and signature amenities. The Umstead welcomes and inspires guests to find comfort, tranquility and indulgence in the meticulously landscaped property and the adjacent Umstead State Park, as well as the plush Umstead Spa and contemporary American cuisine of chef de cuisine Steven D. Greene at its signature restaurant, Herons. Independently owned and operated since opening in 2007, The Umstead Hotel and Spa is North Carolina's first full-service hotel to receive the coveted AAA Five Diamond Award and is a Forbes Five Star rated property, was named to the *Travel + Leisure* T+L 500 list in 2011 and is a member of Leading Hotels of the World. For reservations and information, call 866.877.4141 or visit www.theumstead.com.

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