

**Signature Restaurant at La Cantera Resort & Spa Welcomes New Trio to the Kitchen**

*Lead by Executive Chef John Carpenter, Signature is bringing back old hits and creating fresh takes for the menu.*

## SAN ANTONIO (January 2022) – La Cantera Resort & Spa, the award-winning destination set atop the highest elevation point in San Antonio, has welcomed a new trio to the kitchen of its Signature Restaurant. Lead by San Antonio local John Carpenter as executive chef, the team also includes Executive Sous Chef Jaime Torres and Pastry Chef Stéphane Leopoldo.

Since joining Signature in September of this year, Chef Carpenter has united with Chef Andrew Weissman. The result of their work is a new menu with some of Weissman’s greatest hits, plus new creations by Chef Carpenter and Chef Torres like the Hamachi Crudo and Spanish Octopus.

## While their paths crossed most recently at Signature, Carpenter was inspired by the four-time James Beard-nominated Weissman long before. “Ten years ago, I visited Andrew Weissman’s Osteria Il Sogno and had an eye-opening experience. That meal taught me a lot about keeping things simple and letting the ingredients shine. I still consider it one of the best meals of my life.” Now, Carpenter is bringing that guiding principle to the seasonally driven fare at Signature.

Chef Carpenter and Chef Torres have worked together since 2015 when Carpenter was the Chef at San Antonio’s Culinary Institute of America restaurant, then-known as NAO. The two say that guests can look forward to the Signature experience they already know and love: beautiful scenery, high end service and delicious, traditionally inspired food made with fresh ingredients. They also say guests can expect a few surprises with Asian and Latin American influences gleaned from their own culinary adventures making its way to their plates.

“Joining the team at Signature is an incredible opportunity for me. I’ve really enjoyed the creative process behind our new menu and am energized by the different style of service we offer here. Signature’s unique, French-brigade style in the kitchen is exciting and collaborative for us and for the guests looking into our open kitchen. I’m looking forward to exploring what we can do in the future while staying true to the spirit of Signature,” said Executive Chef John Carpenter.

Signature’s namesake, Chef Andrew Weissman added, “Chef John’s presence at Signature gives me the space and confidence to expand my presence in San Antonio and step away from Signature. We are thrilled to have him, Chef Torres and Chef Leopoldo on our team and look forward to providing our guests and the greater community with memorable culinary experiences.”

For more information on Signature, visit [www.signaturerestaurant.com](http://www.signaturerestaurant.com) and for more information on La Cantera visit [www.lacanteraresort.com](http://www.lacanteraresort.com) or call (855) 499-2960.

***About La Cantera Resort & Spa***

*La Cantera Resort & Spa is situated atop the highest elevation point in San Antonio, Texas, on a 550-acre tranquil oasis near the city’s finest attractions including shopping, dining, amusement parks, the River Walk, UNESCO World Heritage sites and Texas Hill Country wineries. The Resort is home to five sparkling pools, heated year-round, to include Topaz, the adults only Infinity Edge Pool overlooking the Texas Hill Country. Additional amenities include the award-winning Loma de Vida Spa & Wellness - a 25,000 square foot destination spa with outdoor Sky Loft Treatment Suites, and a Championship Golf Course, La Cantera Golf Club, designed by Tom Weiskopf and Jay Morrish. For foodies, there are 12 outstanding dining options including Signature Restaurant. The 496-room resort offers an insightful concierge staff to help uncover authentic local experiences, activities for young travelers and reserve private poolside cabañas. The Villas feature 34 highly appointed guest rooms and suites nestled among the trees, offering seclusion, privacy and luxurious touches. SEVEN, a 46-room "adults only" guest floor experience includes complimentary valet, personal concierge and private check-in. The resort has been named the #1 Resort in Texas and the Southwest in the Condé Nast Traveler Readers’ Choice Awards, a Top Ten Texas Resort in Travel + Leisure World’s Best Awards and continues to garner recognition both locally and nationally for their outstanding cuisine and services. Reservations are available online at*[*http://www.lacanteraresort.com/*](http://www.lacanteraresort.com/)*or call (855) 499.2960. Follow us on Facebook: [LaCanteraResort](https://www.facebook.com/LaCanteraResort) or tag us on Instagram @*[*lacanteraresort*](https://www.instagram.com/lacanteraresort/)

***About John Carpenter, Executive Chef, Signature Restaurant***

*Chef John Carpenter was born on an American Airforce base in Germany, but is a proud San Antonio local since the age of three. Always a fan of cooking as an adolescent, he began cooking as a professional upon earning his Associates Degree in Culinary Arts from St. Philip’s College. He worked his way up the ranks in the kitchens of some of the top restaurants in the city including Beat Street Bistro and NAO Gastro Bar. Carpenter earned his first job as Head Chef at the age of 24 in 2011, and in 2015, Carpenter joined The Culinary Institute of America as Executive Chef. Prior to joining Signature, Carpenter was Executive Chef at Botika Chifa Nikkei restaurant in the Pearl Brewery.*

***About Jaime Torres, Executive Sous Chef, Signature Restaurant***

*Chef Jaime Torres’ love for food began in his Abuela’s kitchen where, as a child, he watched her prepare classic dishes from her home of Guadalajara. His love for food and cooking persisted throughout his pursuing a degree in Kinesiology at The University of Texas at San Antonio, working as a football referee and then as an insurance agent. After years of rushing to the kitchen during his off-time and consulting on new recipes with his chef father, Torres decided to pursue a career in food and secured his first job in the kitchen as a dishwasher.*

*Jaime worked his way up through the ranks of different kitchens, absorbing all he could while studying every aspect of food outside of work in the kitchen. In 2015, he joined The Culinary Institute of America where he earned the rank of Sous Chef. After CIA, Torres joined Botika Chifa Nikkei as Chef de Cuisine, where he stayed for four years before joining Signature at La Cantera Resort & Spa. In 2020, Chef Torres won the Grand Championship at the San Antonio Paella Challenge.*

***About Chef Stéphane Leopoldo, Executive Pastry Chef, Signature Restaurant***

*Chef Stéphane Leopoldo began his career as a pastry apprentice Paris, France at 15 years old. In just two years, he was awarded the 1998 “Best Apprentice of the Year” by the city of Paris. With Associates Degrees in both pastry and chocolate, Stéphane decided to continue his training and earned his Bachelor of Baking and Pastry Arts in 2001. Leopoldo developed his skills at many of Paris’ best pastry shops including Patisserie Joubert and Boulangerie Julien, awarded the “Best Baguette in Paris” three times. In 2009, Chef Stéphane opened his own pastry shop in Paris, while taking on his own apprentice Julien Gagnereaux, who earned the title of “Best Apprentice of France in Plated Desserts 2010.”*

*In 2012, he set out on a new challenge, leaving France and traveling to the United States to help train future pastry chefs at the Culinary Institute Lenotre in Houston, Texas. During this time in Houston, he also won first place with his chocolate showpiece in the Martin’s pastry competition. He has consulted with the Culinary Institute of America in New York, and has held San Antonio-local positions at Central Market as the Bakery Manager and, most recently, as Executive Pastry Chef at The Argyle.*