



Biography

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Chef Colin Hazama **Executive Chef – The Royal Hawaiian, a Luxury Collection Resort**

There are many reasons why Colin Hazama feels right at home in the kitchen. Growing up in Hawaii taught him deep-rooted values he carries with him as he oversees the culinary operations of The Royal Hawaiian, a Luxury Collection Resort. Hazama made the move to the top position at the 528-room resort in August of 2015 after spending the better part of six years at the Sheraton Waikiki, first launching the successful RumFire restaurant, then most recently as the hotel's senior executive sous chef.

Throughout his career, Hazama has prided himself on working directly with farmers and local vendors to source the right farm-fresh products. The correct products, along with creativity and flair, helped in developing progressive menus and programs.

Hazama's signature culinary concept, "Chef's Table to Farm," was launched in October of 2014 as a landmark chef's dinner and farm tour series, along with former Starwood Waikiki Food & Beverage

Director Brian Hunnings. The March, April and July 2015 events sold out weeks in advance. And the partnership even expanded to Sheraton properties on Maui and Hawaii Island under Starwood's Flavors of Hawaii culinary program.

"My concept was to engage the community and showcase what great farmers and products we have in Hawaii," says Hazama. "The islands feature some of the best and most unique products, so it's a natural fit to combine an exceptional collaboration dinner, followed by a visit to the farms the next day."

As executive chef at The Royal Hawaiian, he's looking to take the popular concept to the next level and integrate the ocean into the collaboration dinners and work with those in Hawaii's aquaculture community. The ascension for Hazama to the hotel, affectionately known as the Pink Palace of the Pacific, marks a high point in his relatively young career. In 2015 at age 33, he also becomes the youngest executive chef in the 88-year history of the hotel. Earlier in the 2015, Hazama was named as one of Hawaii's brightest young stars by Pacific Business News for its Forty Under 40 Class of 2015.

Hazama is careful about remembering how he got to where he is today. After helping Sheraton Waikiki launch RumFire, he accepted a position at Kauai Grill Culinary Concepts by Jean-Georges Vongerichten at The St. Regis Princeville Resort. It was a homecoming in 2011 for Hazama as he returned to the Sheraton Waikiki as its senior executive sous chef. He credits Sheraton Waikiki Director of Culinary Operations Daniel Delbrel as one of his main mentors.

He also cites among his other culinary influences as renowned chefs Alan Wong, Roy Yamaguchi, and celebrated chefs Gary Danko, Jean-Georges Vongerichten, and Gregory Brainin (Jean-Georges' corporate chef).

"All of them opened my eyes to a whole new world of modern and classical cuisine," he says.

Over his career, Hazama has held various positions at Hoku's at The Kahala Hotel and Resort, Alan Wong's Restaurant in Honolulu, Roy's Restaurants in San Francisco, California Culinary Academy, and Restaurant Gary Danko in San Francisco, California.

A graduate of the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco, California with an associate degree in occupational studies, Hazama has actively participated in a wide variety of events in Hawaii and abroad, and has been critically acclaimed for his efforts in the kitchen.

Modern Luxury Magazine named Hazama one of the "Ten Top Chefs in Hawaii to Watch." He has also been a participant in the Annual Hawaii Food & Wine Festivals along with many other celebrity chefs. In 2011, he was invited as one of the featured guest chefs at the James Beard House in New York City representing the State of Hawaii, and was also selected as a semi-finalist in the 2010 James Beard Foundation Awards "Rising Star Chef of the Year."

In addition, Hazama was recognized with the "Hawaii's Top Young Chef" award in 2007 by *Hawaii Hospitality Magazine*. In 2006, Hazama won the Young Commis Competition in Hawaii and participated in the Chaine De Rotisseur National Cooking Competition at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York. Hazama has also participated in the "Food and Wine" consumer guide food event under Chef Alan Wong in San Francisco, California and "The Masters of Food and Wine" under Chef Gary Danko in Carmel, California.

During his free time, Hazama enjoys spear fishing, diving, and spending time with family and friends.