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## **SBE'S KATSUYA RESTAURANT GARNERS RAVE REVIEWS IN LOS ANGELES' STYLISH BRENTWOOD DISTRICT**

*Restaurant Pairs Creativity and Talents of Internationally Acclaimed Designer Philippe Starck with Master Sushi Chef Katsuya Uechi*

The acclaimed **Katsuya** restaurant, which opened in June 2006 in Los Angeles' Brentwood neighborhood, represents a prodigious pairing of the supreme talents of master sushi chef **Katsuya Uechi** and world-renowned designer **Philippe Starck**. Open for lunch and dinner, the restaurant has proved an instant hit with discriminating diners as well as the press, with chef Katsuya being named "Chef of the Year" by *Angeleno* magazine, which also lauded the eatery as "the most watched restaurant in the country."

Owned by the Los Angeles-based **SBE**, Katsuya Brentwood is the first of several Katsuya restaurants to open nationwide in the coming years – with the second Katsuya to open in Hollywood in July 2007.

Katsuya unleashes the culinary wizardry of Chef Uechi, whose Los Angeles sushi restaurants have long been among the city's top-rated. Diners at the new Katsuya will be no less wowed by the spectacular environment created by Philippe Starck, whose trend-setting work is known the world over for its sheer brilliance and beauty. Katsuya represents the first Starck-designed property to open under a six-year exclusive signed in 2005 between the designer and **SBE** for nine distinct restaurant concepts in North America, Canada, the Caribbean and Mexico. In March 2006, this relationship was expanded to include a 15-year design exclusive with Starck for five hotel properties under a new luxury hospitality brand to launch in early 2008.

Offering a provocative interpretation of both Japanese design and cuisine, Katsuya stimulates the senses in every possible way – creating a dining experience like no other. Designed as a Japanese “Bento box” that echoes the simplicity and essence of Japanese cuisine, the all-wood interior features bold illuminated photographs and clever design touches at every turn, a signature of Starck’s playful and limitless imagination. Chef Uechi’s menu boasts a plethora of inventive sushi and Robata grilled dishes (seafood, meat, poultry and vegetables, all prepared in the restaurant’s central Robata Bar) that are veritable works of art in themselves – complemented with an extensive list of premier sakes and exotic cocktails.

Katsuya combines the service and quality of a fine dining restaurant with the casual vibe and lively energy of a neighborhood hotspot. While fairly intimate in size, accommodating up to 170, the restaurant features a variety of dining experiences – from two levels of dining (with tables as well as several cozy booths), outdoor terrace seating, a sushi bar, Robata Bar and a separate lounge-like dining room. The Robata Bar, anchored in the center of the restaurant, is named for the traditional small-fire grilling popular in northern Japan. Considered by Starck as a veritable “temple” to the art of Japanese cuisine, the Robata Bar symbolizes the importance and celebration of the meal preparation process -- truly theater in itself.

For the Katsuya menu, chef Uechi has created a unique and varied selection of inventive sushi and non-sushi dishes including delicate tempura, succulent warm and cold Japanese main courses (some traditional, some distinctly Katsuya creations), and an array of grilled selections from the Robata Bar. Longtime fans of Uechi will enjoy his signature classics such as *Crispy Rice with Spicy Tuna*, *Yellowtail Sashimi with Jalapeño* and *Spicy Albacore Sashimi with Crispy Onion*. As testament to the attention to detail in creating Katsuya, each dish is presented to diners on a different type of plate, the result of careful research throughout Japan to create the most exquisite presentation possible.

Lunch at Katsuya is quickly becoming as popular as dinnertime, with a varied selection of lunch items available throughout the week. The perfect setting for weekday business and “power” lunches, Katsuya offers a host of light, affordable menu items that are both delicious and time-efficient for those on a schedule.

One of only four Master Sushi Chefs in the Los Angeles area, Uechi brings over three decades of culinary artistry to Katsuya. His original Katsu-Ya sushi bars in Studio City and Encino are consistently rated at the top of the Zagat Guide Los Angeles' lists, earning such raves as simply "heaven" and "as good as sushi gets."

An equally extraordinary element of the Katsuya dining experience is its extensive list of premier sakes as well as a selection of specialty cocktails, created expressly for Katsuya by acclaimed mixologist Ryan Magarian, with exotic names such as *Burning Mandarin*, *Katsuya Fresh* and *Honey Basil Sling*.

While modern in tone, the restaurant features several dramatic nods to the timeless simplicity of Japanese design. Giant granite boulders, etched with the Japanese character, or *kanji* for "Katsuya," are topped with flames to flank the restaurant's all-glass exterior façade and teak terrace, and are also used as vessels throughout the dining room to hold chilled sake, like oversized ice buckets. Four large black Noren curtains surround the Robata Bar, again featuring the Katsuya *kanji* symbol.

The restaurant's wooden interiors are punctuated with oversized, glowing, beautifully shot photographs of a Japanese woman – her eyes, her lips, a hand, a tattoo – which add a provocative, decidedly sexy feel to the space. Many of the tabletops and both bars are also lit from underneath, adding a beautiful glow to the room. A separate dining room, enveloped in dark wooden walls adorned with ornate Venetian mirrors, is located adjacent to the main dining room, offering a cozy, seductive vibe and providing patrons with a place to dine, drink or socialize. Other mischievous, supremely Starck touches that add to the magic and mystery of the space include mirrors in the restrooms which reveal 'hidden' images on closer inspection.

Commented Starck, "Katsuya Uechi understands better than anyone the magic of Japanese cuisine and honors the very essence of each ingredient. For the restaurant's design, I wanted to evoke both the spiritual, humble simplicity of this culture as well as its flesh and humanity."

Katsuya, located at 11777 San Vicente Boulevard in Brentwood, is open weekdays for lunch from 11:30am – 2:30pm, and for dinner Sunday through Thursday from 5:30 to 11:00pm, and Friday and Saturday from 5:30 to 12:00am.

Reservations and more information can be had by calling 310-207-8744, or visiting <http://www.sbe.com/katsuya> .



#### **ABOUT KATSUYA UECHI**

As one of only four Master Sushi Chefs in Los Angeles, Chef Uechi brings over three decades of culinary artistry and restaurant operation experience to the SBE team. Known for his distinctive style and first-rate execution of high quality traditional sushi, Uechi is recognized as one of the major style setters in the sushi world and was recently named "Chef of the Year" by Angeleno Magazine.

Recently tied for #1 ranking for Top Food in the 2006 Zagat Los Angeles guide, his namesake locations Sushi Katsuya in Studio City and Encino have long been acknowledged as among L.A.'s top restaurants. He partnered in 2006 with SBE Restaurant & Nightlife Group to open the first Katsuya by Starck restaurant in Brentwood, which became an overnight success. Born in Japan, Uechi was raised by parents active in the restaurant business. Developing a love for the business as a youth, he went on to hone his skills in kitchens of Okinawa at the Harbor View Hotel, Kappo Yama Kawa and Hotel Rainbow. Upon arriving in the United States, Uechi served as Executive Chef at Tatsumo (Seattle), Kabuki Sushi and Seaward Sushi.

#### **ABOUT PHILIPPE STARCK**

Philippe Starck is widely recognized as the world's leading designer of luxury restaurant, hotel and real estate properties and has established a global following of clients and devotees. Born in Paris, M. Starck developed his eclectic style at a young age and studied his trade at Ecole Nissim de Camondo. In 1979, he created Starck Products, where he introduced fun and stylish designs into everyday products. Several of Starck's masterful creations are exhibited at the most prestigious museums around the world including Paris, New York, London and Barcelona. Recognized as one of the world's most powerful style makers, his extensive resume of world-class hotel destinations includes Felix restaurant at The Peninsula Hotel in Hong Kong, the Mondrian in Los Angeles, Delano in Miami's South Beach and the Teatron in Mexico. Starck has received numerous accolades throughout his career such as Grand Prix for Design, the Oscar of the design world, the Officier des Arts et Lettres and many more. Additional information on Philippe Starck can be found at [www.starck.com](http://www.starck.com).

#### **ABOUT SBE**

Founded in 2002, the Los Angeles-based SBE brings exquisite balance to the worlds of hospitality, real estate development and independent film production. As a privately held company founded and helmed by CEO Sam Nazarian, SBE acquires, develops and manages exceptional projects through its divisions – Hotels, Restaurant and Nightlife, Real Estate, Bolthouse Productions and Element Films. With a mission to redefine standards of excellence and innovation, SBE has harnessed the creativity and innovation of the best minds in the business, including design visionary Philippe Starck, with whom the company has an exclusive agreement for the creation of hotels, restaurants and lounges in the U.S., Canada, Caribbean and Mexico. SBE's Restaurant and Nightlife division constantly stays ahead of the curve, creating and expanding trend-setting restaurant and nightlife concepts, which currently include Katsuya, Foxtail, The Abbey, Hyde Lounge, S Bar and Area. As the cornerstone of its synergistic approach, SBE has also completely rethought and re-imagined the luxury hotel experience. SBE will debut its first luxury hotel brand, SLS Hotels, with the Fall 2008 opening of SLS Hotel at Beverly Hills featuring a Starck design and an innovative culinary program by chef José Andrés. Also in the SBE Hotel collection are Miami's Ritz Plaza hotel, to debut in late 2009, and Las Vegas' Sahara Hotel & Casino, which will undergo a complete redevelopment for completion in early 2011.