

MEMORANDUM

FROM: VERMILION
10 West Hubbard St.
Chicago, Ill. 60610

CONTACT: Rohini Dey/Maneet Chauhan
(312) 527.4060
Vermilion10west@sbcglobal.net

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*connotes the essence and ebullience of the indian and latin american peoples
also literally translates into sindoor, a core symbol of indian femininity
and a celebration of the beauty of women*

We invite you to explore Vermilion in Chicago, Ill., whose distinctive concept presents a journey through the confluence of contemporary *Indian* and *Latin American* cuisines. As the restaurant approaches its third successful year this December, Owner Rohini Dey and Executive Chef Maneet Chauhan have continued to advance popular thinking towards contemporary fusion dining and maintain a post at the forefront of innovative culinary trends.

- **Why *indian-latin* cuisine?** Always asked the rationale for this pioneering concept, Vermilion ascribes it to three factors:
 - **Intellectually provocative** – Just the sheer joy of creating something new and celebrating the bold flavors and cuisines the “Women of Vermilion” (Rohini and Maneet) are passionate about and Rohini’s travel and innovative concept vision. And definitely as an antithesis to both the stereotypical Indian restaurant (\$8.99 all-you-can-eat, sitar, and grease) to the “French overhang,” which nullifies the rich traditions and culinary histories of large parts of the globe (where over 85% of our population reside that do not hold the Escoffier as the end-all handbook of culinary technique). “It’s interesting, but I’m quite sure if we had stuck to Indian-French, no one would have asked why,” says Rohini. The “latin” component helps introduces a level of familiarity that drives more guests to experiment here (including a spectrum of corporate events and clientele), distinct evidence of the evolving American palate. Vermilion also introduces its diners to a selection of *authentic* and ever-changing Indian *regional* cuisine, currently from Hyderabad, in the *Heat* section (Kashmiri, Rajasthani, Kerala, and the street foods of Bombay in the past).
 - **Historical** – India and Latin America are replete with cross-flows: the Portuguese influence on the western Malabar coast of India and on Brazil’s Bahian region; Indian migration to large parts of Central and South America (eg. West Indies, Trinidad & Tobago) created further cross-pollination of cuisines. Going even further back historically, the Persians deeply influenced Spain and New World Latin America via the Moors (bringing ingredients such as sharbats/agua frescas, pilau/rice, cilantro, mint, cumin, cloves, saffron, rose, nuts). Persia has also had a deep and prevalent influence on Indian cuisine through the Muslim Mughal era.
 - **Geographical** – By virtue of Latin America and India being sub-equatorial, the regions share many common ingredients, herbs and spices in their cuisines, such as a heavy usage of mango, plantain, black beans, rice, tamarind, papaya, coconut among many others....

- **Vermilion Shares its Heat.** The women of Vermilion's contemporary take on Indian and Latin cuisine has not gone unnoticed by their peers. In 2005, Vermilion hosted a Beard dinner in January and was honored to be invited back in November as the first restaurant to host a *Diwali* (the Indian Festival of Lights and Indian New Year) *dinner at the James Beard House and to set a tradition*. In March 2007, the duo will continue to trailblaze, having been invited back to the House to present yet another dinner, *this time in the spirit of Holi, the Indian festival of spring and color...another James Beard first*. Rohini and Maneet also just returned from the 2006 Expo Comida Latina/All Asia Food shows in New York, where Dey led a sold-out presentation on fusion dining in the U.S. while Chauhan brought it to life with a spirited cooking demonstration. They are no strangers to delivering keynote presentations on their unique approach to innovation and restaurant-building at the National Restaurant Association's annual convention, with the Culinary Historians, the upcoming IACP and not to mention a host of business forums (fueled by Dey's background that spans a Ph.D., The World Bank, McKinsey & Co. and now entrepreneurship; and Chauhan's impeccable CIA-Hyde Park and WelcomGroup India culinary background). Vermilion has, in its three years, also earned accolades including "*best new restaurants*" by *Travel & Leisure, Town & Country, Chicago Magazine, Bon Appetit, Wine Enthusiast, USA Today, Citysearch, and Gayot*. For innovation and the rarity of its woman owned and woman executive chef, Vermilion has also been featured in Oprah magazine, Fortune, FSB, Business Week, Crain's Business.
- **Contemporary Cultural Celebrations.** Vermilion is also an active destination for lifestyle and cultural events showcasing the rich panorama of Indian and Latin American traditions. The restaurant has celebrated Indian and Latin festivals – such as *Diwali, Carnivale, Holi, Cinco de Mayo* and others – in addition to offering distinctive, "herb and spice" Indian-latin "herb & spice" interpretations of *Thanksgiving* and *Christmas* (lauded by Bon Appetit, Crain's, Chicago Tribune). Vermilion has also hosted *book launches* for Pulitzer finalist Suketu Mehta and Pen award winner Chitra Divakaruni. This December, Dey and Chauhan will continue along this vein in *welcoming James Beard Award-winning author and acclaimed actress Madhur Jaffrey* for a panel discussion on Indian cuisine in the U.S. Vermilion has also hosted a fashion show featuring some of the top contemporary Indian and Latin designers in conjunction with the City of Chicago and Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road project; an Indian fashion photography gallery event with the Art Institute of Chicago; a celebration of Bollywood and Indian street foods...and many more affairs that evoke the spirit of the rich Indian and Latin American cultures.

2006 has been a year full of excitement at Vermilion, including a Deeper Bolder new menu and its introduction of over twenty Interactive Tableside elements that continue to celebrate the vibrant flavors of India and Latin America.

We hope you will keep us in mind as you plan restaurant or travel editorial coverage in the months to come, and that you will join us for lunch or dinner upon your next visit to Chicago. In the meanwhile, please be in contact for any clarifications. Vermilion may be reached at (312) 527. 4060 or vermilion10west@sbcglobal.net. Thank you.