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Black Restaurant Group Announces The September 20th Opening of Pearl Dive Oyster Palace & Black Jack Bar

Washington, D.C., (September 20, 2011)—Black Restaurant Group Chefs/Owners Jeff and Barbara Black are pleased to announce their fifth restaurant, with two very distinctive spaces; the nautical, rustic Pearl Dive Oyster Palace and the dramatic, theatrical Black Jack located at 1612 14th Street, NW. On September 20th, guests can flock to the 78-seat Pearl Dive Oyster Palace to enjoy New Orleans-inspired cuisine and the freshest seafood in Washington indicative of the excellent quality found throughout Black Restaurant Group's award-winning restaurants. Black Jack, the intriguing 98-seat bar upstairs will quickly become a neighborhood favorite. This handsome bar is outfitted with a bocce ball court and spectator gallery. Pearl Dive Oyster Palace is open for lunch Friday through Sunday, and dinner nightly, while Black Jack will serve lunch Saturday and Sunday, and dinner Tuesday through Sunday.

Both Pearl Dive Oyster Bar and Black Jack are eco-friendly incorporating reclaimed furniture and fixtures. The potable water is filtered in-house and only fair trade organic coffee is roasted locally and served. Black Restaurant Group also aggressively sources local products from the Mid-Atlantic region in all its restaurants and this newcomer's electric power is wind generated, plus all its fryer oil is recycled as biodiesel.

Pearl Dive Oyster Palace has a 15-seat bar with views of 14th Street through the expansive front window, which flips up letting the outdoors spill in during nice weather. In the rear of the restaurant, a four-seat oyster bar showcases freshly shucked oysters and guests can also indulge in oysters dishes such as *Oyster Rockefeller*, *broiled oysters with spinach, bacon and aioli*; *Tchoupitoulas*, *oyster confit*, *Blue crab*, *Tasso ham*, *roasted corn and hollandaise*, and *Herb Saint Oyster Stew of rosemary, guanciale, salsify and local cream*, each offered for \$9. Additionally, a mix of cold plates including *Vietnamese*

Pickled Shrimp and hot plates like *Crawfish-Tasso Ravioli with roasted artichoke, toasted pistachio and Kentucky whiskey brown butter*, along with *Braised Pork Cheeks with Chipotle-ham hock broth and stone grits* are also offered. These small plates range in price from \$7 to \$15.

Gumbo fans will find plenty of great options incorporating saffron, okra, white rice with freshly baked garlic bread priced from \$19 to \$23. Noteworthy options include, *Seafood Gumbo of oyster, shrimp and blue crab; Oyster & Duck Gumbo; Florida Royal Red Shrimp Gumbo; and Que Sueno de los Gatos, "What Cats Dream of,"* a unique dish of *Pearl Dive Seafood Stew with shrimp, redfish, squid, mussels and saffron cream*.

Fried seafood and chicken will satisfy guests seeking comfort food. The *Pennsylvania Amish Chicken Dinner* and the *C.E.B.L.T Po-Boy made with fried catfish, farm egg, Benton's bacon, Bibb lettuce and tomato* are just two of the tempting options. All fried dinners are served with organic greens sprinkled with dirty rice, plus creamy slaw and priced from \$13 to \$19. Lighter options from the land and sea include *Wood-grilled Gulf Coast Redfish with sage-native pecan butter and stone grits; Grilled Rockfish with Blue Shell mussels, Andouille sausage, tomato, veal jus* as well as *Duck Confit with roasted duck sausage, French lentils and Creole mustard duck fond*. These entrées are priced from \$11 to \$26.

Upstairs Black Jack awaits guests with its bourbon bar and striking décor. Guests can play a game of bocce ball while enjoying a menu of pizza, sandwiches, salads as well as the changing *Blue Plate Special* offered daily and priced at \$16. Every Wednesday is *Taco Night* and Thursday is *Chicken Fried Steak*. "American Pie" pizzas like the *Green Goddess* made with rapini, artichoke, Black Jack greens, pesto and Fontina, along with the *Royal Red Shrimp Roll* are just some of the tempting bar munchies on the menu. Other favorites include *Pork Belly Nachos* and Addie's mussels. Prices range between \$6 and \$21.

Ari and Micah Wilder have been tapped to create the cocktail list at Pearl Dive Oyster Palace and Black Jack. Together they are taking classic recipes and transforming them into progressive new drinks. Through their research of the history and lure of the cocktail, they have identified lost ingredients and are now creating them on an exclusive basis for Pearl Dive Oyster Palace and Black Jack. These classic recipes are infused with the Wilder Brothers™ own locally produced flavored mixers including gomme syrups, smoked peach ice, and house-made seasonal tonic. Additionally, Pearl Dive serves four beers on tap while Black Jack serves nine beers on tap, and up to 40 beers by the can.

CORE architecture + design is responsible for working with the Blacks to transform the 5,670 square-foot space into an unforgettable yet comfortable dining spot on vibrant 14th Street. Downstairs, the space is meant to look as if layers of materials have been peeled away to reveal a local dive bar beneath. This was achieved through the use of carefully chosen materials such as weathered woods, a zinc bar top and vintage pieces, along with a distressed undersea wall mural. The restaurant's nautical theme is accented with small details throughout including an anchor chain light sculpture over the bar and mermaid figures that peer down from above the raw bar and from the bar's railing. Ships' portholes also give diners a glimpse into the staircase leading to Black Jack. Since seated is limited, the restaurant has a ticket system at the downstairs host stand. Guests can watch for their number to light up on LED screens found throughout both levels, alerting them their table is ready.

Black Jack is a sleek bar with a circus-like feeling. Setting the stage for patrons at the entrance is a screaming monkey holding a cocktail that is painted on the wood floor. Distressed plaster with a painted damask pattern weaves up the exposed brick wall where an artful bartender is spotlighted at the top of the stairs. The front bar panel showcases the Black Jack tattooed lady and various apothecary style bottles, while rich velvet drapes frame projected films at the back bar, enhancing the theatrical environment. A raised lounge area, standing stations and the indoor bocce court with its 19-seat spectator gallery create a variety of spaces and experiences. There is even an Art-O-Mat machine in the game room dispensing origin works of art priced at \$5 a piece.

Pearl Dive Oyster Palace and Black Jack are located in the hip 14th Street neighborhood at 1612 14th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. Pearl Dive Oyster Palace is open for lunch Friday and Saturday from 12 PM to 4 PM, Sunday 11 AM to 3 PM and dinner Monday through Thursday 5 PM to 11 PM, Friday and Saturday 4 PM to 12 PM and Sunday 5 PM to 11 PM. For more information or reservations at Pearl Dive Oyster Palace please call the restaurant directly at (202) 986-8778 or visit www.PearlDiveDC.com.

Black Jack is open for lunch Saturday and Sunday from 12 PM to 4 PM and dinner Tuesday through Thursday 5 PM to 12:30 AM, Friday and Saturday 5 PM to 1:30 AM and Sunday 4 PM to 12:30 AM. For additional information about Black Jack please call (202) 986-5225 or visit www.BlackJackDC.com.

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