



For Immediate Release
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CHEF HARDING LEE SMITH CONTINUES SCORING REGIONAL PRESS ACCLAIM FOR PORTLAND'S FRONT ROOM RESTAURANT

Portland, ME – Harding Lee Smith, Executive Chef and Owner of Portland's Front Room Restaurant – revered for its innovative “comfort food” fare – is adding to his list of enthusiastic accolades from food press throughout the Northeast. The glowing coverage comes as no surprise to the capacity crowds which continue to fill his restaurant in Portland's scenic Eastern Promenade neighborhood every night of the week.

Most recently, Smith earned the coveted “Gold Plate” rating from New England Cable News Network's popular “TV Diner” series. TV Diner Host Billy Costa raved about Smith's Fish Chowder, calling it “one of the best he'd ever had,” and went on to praise Smith's “perfectly cooked” Grilled Flat-Iron Steak, a favorite menu item since Front Room's launch in November 2005. “The unique salmon BLT cooked to perfection, wrapped in bacon and topped with sun-dried tomatoes was simply out of this world,” Costa noted, and went on to single out the restaurant's “incredible” brownie sundae and top-notch service.

Smith's restaurant also earned a glowing review in the December 2006 issue of *Down East Magazine*, known for its popular “Inside Maine” feature which highlights a “Must Dine” location each month. “Casual comfort defines the Front Room,” according to the review, which lauded Smith's “very simple, honest, satisfying combinations” and concluded that at Front Room, “you don't feel hurried or harried, the food is great, the ambiance lively, and the menu prices don't make you mentally check your credit card balance.”

Front Room Restaurant has officially made a “sweep” among Portland area press, as well, having earned hearty acclaim from publications ranging from *The Portland Press Herald* and *Portland Magazine* to *MaineToday.com* and *The Forecaster*. And in a nod to the restaurant's nearly instant and very loyal fan base, *The Portland Phoenix* also recognized Front Room Restaurant as the city's Best New Restaurant of 2006.

Smith is given credit by many throughout the community for playing a key role in aiding his Eastern Promenade neighborhood's continuing resurgence. “We've just been overwhelmed by how consistently full the restaurant has stayed since Day One,” according to Smith, who trained both in Italy and at the prestigious CIA's Napa Valley campus. “Any restaurateur is fortunate to have that sort of instant take-off in their business. Our authentic ‘neighborhood restaurant’ dynamic plays a large role, but we routinely hear from our patrons that they're drawn to Front Room over and over again due to so many great menu selections on each of their visits. We're meeting the demand that residents and visitors to Maine had, plain and simple.”

Front Room Restaurant is located in the heart of Portland's scenic Eastern Promenade neighborhood, steps from the Casco Bay, at 73 Congress Street and the corner of Howard. The restaurant serves brunch daily from 8 am until 2:30 pm, dinner Monday-Saturday from 5 pm until 10 pm, and Sunday dinners from 4 pm until 9 pm. Drinks are served at Front Room's bar nightly until 11 pm.

For more information, or to read additional press reviews of The Front Room Restaurant, please visit www.thefrontroomrestaurant.com or call 207/773-3366.

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