

### **HOKU'S HIRES NEW RISING STAR CHEF ERIC OTO**



**KAHALA, HAWAII** – August 1, 2017 –The Kahala Hotel & Resort is pleased to announce the appointment of Eric Oto as Chef de Cuisine of *Hoku's*. Oto will be responsible for overseeing the overall culinary direction of the award-winning restaurant with the guidance of The Kahala's Executive Chef and longtime Hawaii Regional Cuisine culinary leader, Wayne Hirabayashi.

Oto brings over a decade of culinary experience to The Kahala Hotel & Resort. Most recently, he served as Sous Chef at The Four Seasons Koolina's *Fish House* on the restaurant's executive opening team. Prior to his position at The Four Seasons, Oto was a Chef for ten years at Halekulani working at *Orchids* restaurant and he also handled the hotel's culinary program for events and banquets.

Born and raised on Oahu, Oto grew up with strong roots from Hawaii's *Mauka* and *Makai* (land and ocean). He is a fisherman, craftsman, farmer, planter and cultivator of soil and food. Oto learned these skills, the philosophies of respecting the sea and nurturing the land and his appreciation of the earth from his father who is a life-long gardener, farmer and fisherman. Oto's

love and passion for the culinary arts began when he was four years old and he caught his first fish with a bamboo cane pole sparking his interest in cooking. He is an active fisherman and enjoys shoreline and offshore fishing and free diving. His passion for the ocean has carried through into his culinary journey. In Oto's free time, he prepares the fish he's caught by drying, smoking or pickling it. He is a graduate of the Leeward Community College's Culinary Program and a recipient of the *Kapa'a Rotary Club Alan Wong Scholarship*. Oto gives back to the community by volunteering for the *Hawaii Culinary Education Foundation's* Chef Mentor program for James Campbell High School and also cooks and volunteers at fundraiser events such as the *Hawaii Food & Wine Festival*, *Great Chefs Fight Hunger* for the Hawaii Food Bank and Bishop Museum's *Ulupono Awards*.

#### **About The Kahala Hotel & Resort**

The legendary Kahala Hotel & Resort is an oceanfront, destination luxury property known for its gracious Hawaiian hospitality. Located just minutes from Waikiki, The Kahala offers an exclusive ambiance of a neighbor island experience. The Kahala has been Honolulu's social address for weddings and gatherings since its opening in 1964. World leaders, royalty, rock bands and Oscar winners call the 338-room resort their Hawaiian home-away-from-home. The Kahala is a member of The Leading Hotels of the World and Preferred Hotels & Resorts. The resort is home to *The Kahala Spa*, lush tropical gardens and a natural ocean-water lagoon with the hotel's own resident dolphins cared for by *Dolphin Quest*. The Kahala also has five restaurants: *Plumeria Beach House*, *Seaside Grill*, *The Veranda*, *Arancino* and the award-winning *Hoku's* restaurant. Stay connected with The Kahala via [www.kahalaresort.com](http://www.kahalaresort.com), on Instagram at [kahala\\_resort](https://www.instagram.com/kahala_resort) or on Facebook at The Kahala Hotel & Resort and Twitter at [@KahalaResort](https://twitter.com/KahalaResort). Share your Kahala moment #AtTheKahala.

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