

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

## French chefs, under LVMH auspices, invite pandemic-tackling hospital employees for thank-you meal

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By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

LVMH has debuted a new program for French chefs to invite hospital employees to their restaurants to thank them for their work combating the COVID-19 coronavirus outbreak.

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Called *table, les soignants!* (Dinner is served, caregivers!), the program was launched by Arnaud Donckele, chef at three-star restaurant La Vague d'Or in the LVMH-owned Cheval Blanc Saint-Tropez hotel. The idea is to offer these caregivers a free meal at participating restaurants as a thank-you.

"Going to a restaurant is the promise of a wonderful time," Mr. Donckele said in a statement.

"After the incredibly difficult weeks that medical staff went through, my fellow chefs and I wanted to do what we do best to say thank you, namely prepare dinner for two, a gift of really good food prepared with a spirit of generosity from the heart," he said.

"We want to express our deep gratitude and admiration to all those who have taken care of us."

A treat

To make the idea a reality, LVMH and Cheval Blanc joined forces to create an online platform that connects healthcare workers and partner restaurants.

Hospital personnel sign up through an association called "Solidarit avec les soignants" ("Solidarity with caregivers") that centralizes donations to transform them into available reservations for dinner as part of the program.

Put simply, hospital medical personnel can sign up and select a restaurant, and restaurants are invited to join the list of participating establishments.

Simultaneously, the Michelin Guide is reaching out to its impressive network of chefs and *matres d'htel*, as well as its millions of readers to push the initiative.

The dining guide also debuted "Le Bon Menu," a menu created by partner chefs whose restaurants will donate 10 percent of the price to help fund as many dinners as possible for the "*table, les soignants!*" program.

The public can therefore get involved in this operation and be a strong support for "*table, les soignants!*" by choosing to order "Le Bon Menu," LVMH said.

In other words, the site lets companies make donations to support the initiatives. An individual who wish to participate can choose one of the restaurants offering "Le Bon Menu."

Some 224 tables for two have been reserved since the June 12 launch of the program.

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