

CHOCOLATE JOURNEYS

Cruise passengers who believe there never can be too much of a good thing can test that belief when Princess Cruises introduces its Chocolate Journeys this fall. Princess will be tempting guests with an array of chocolate treats available at dining venues and receptions, chocolate beverages available at the ships' bars and even a chocolate-based body treatment offered at the spa.

Princess has teamed up with noted chocolatier and pastry designer Norman Love to offer the program, which will be launched on the Regal Princess in November and is slated to roll out to the rest of the fleet in the coming months. Love, who said he was approached by the cruise line to create the program, explained that he agreed "because of the challenges the project presented, and the passion displayed by Princess."

Love said his major concern was the ability of the Princess team to maintain the integrity of the program after its launch. "Ultimately the program will succeed or fail based on the talent and dedication of the staff to sustain it," he said. "It be-



Norman Love, chocolatier and pastry designer

came clear during the training period that the commitment to excellence was there."

Love first created several desserts for the new project, and Princess pastry chefs were invited to Love's facilities in Florida for a series of cooking lessons and preparations. The program was tested on Princess ships operating in Alaska this summer, because the eight ships there represented the highest percentage of ships in the Princess fleet.

"The pastry chefs proved to be very resilient and intent on success," said Love, who noted that offering the program on a ship should not pose any particular problem. "The ships have all the necessary equipment and space to ensure quality control," he said.

The 15 desserts, which include a chocolate tart with vanilla mousse and tiramisu with chocolate and gelato, will be offered on a rotating basis in the main and specialty restaurants. Chocolate Journeys will feature libations such as chocolate chili margaritas; pairings of wine and chocolate; chocolate truffles served at the captain's reception; and a Chocolate Indulgence body treatment at the Lotus Spa. Some offerings are free, while others require a fee.

Love, who has created similar programs for several notable hotels, said he has no plans to work with another cruise line. "My objective was to expand our brand globally and to help make the Princess cruise experience more pleasurable for passengers," he said. — *Joel Fishman*