



**HALEKULANI LIVING PRESENTS MASTER TEA TASTER
MIKE HARNEY, OF HARNEY & SONS, FOR EXCLUSIVE AFTERNOON TEA**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HONOLULU, June 30, 2009. Halekulani is pleased to welcome Vice President and Master Tea Taster, Mike Harney of HARNEY & SONS for an elegant afternoon called *Tea Travels & Traditions* on Saturday, July 11, 2009 from 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the Garden Terrace of Halekulani. This special Halekulani Living Connoisseur event is available for \$65.00 per person and includes a master's discussion, three course afternoon tea and an autographed copy of Harney & Sons "Guide to Tea." Reservations are available at (808) 931-5040 and valet is courtesy of Halekulani.

As Vice President of family pioneered business HARNEY & SONS, Mike Harney, is a connoisseur of the world's finest teas, having researched and tasted this iconic culinary tradition for more than two decades. Perpetuating the artisan agriculture of harvesting teas, Harney is pleased to unveil his favorite global selections during this elegant Halekulani Afternoon Tea.

Halekulani Specialty Blend is created by Harney & Sons. The tea is available in each restaurant and in the Halekulani boutique.

About Harney & Sons (www.harney.com)

It was 25 years ago that John Harney made the decision to found Harney & Sons. He had worked for others all of his life and felt (at the age of 53) it was time to run his own show. Since he had worked with Stanley Mason at Sarum Tea for 13 years, he understood the basics of tea. However "tea" back then was much different. China had opened only recently and there few teas coming out there in 1983. So Taiwan was the source of the basic "Chinese" teas: Gunpowder, Oolongs, and keemun. These teas did not taste like the real thing, but rather, were a version. The Taiwanese had not yet begun to make the great greenish oolongs that they do today. India's teas were still strongly influenced by the British, so Darjeelings and Assams were dark and monotone, just right for milk and sugar. The Indians had only just begun to experiment with changing style of teas to make the teas taste more seasonal and more flavorful. Japan kept its Senchas to themselves. So back in 1983, the tea world did not offer many great teas. And that was fine, because few people drank tea. How that has changed, and for the better.

Who would have thought this is possible? All those years ago, when we had tea chests (when they still used those bulky wooden boxes) down in our basement, I surely did not. Our youngest, Paul, was still in school, so he would have to lug them down the narrow stairs. I would take the light boxes back up to be shipped out to those few people that bought from us in 1983. It seemed busy at the time (little did I know). I remember the phone call from this guy who said his name was Chuck Williams, and he said he had some cook shops and wanted to carry my teas. Williams-Sonoma still is a valued customer. After a few years, I convinced my son Michael to join me. Now there were two full-time employees! We moved to a new house with old sheds, and we grew. And we grew. My only daughter, Lyse, did sales calls in New York one college vacation. She walked into the Waldorf=Astoria Hotel in New York. She told the manager that they had to use Harney & Sons. And they still do.

Baby Paul got bigger, but he never lost his love of machines. When he joined the company (after being a USMC officer) he brought us into a new world: one of tea packing machines. I still do not know how to turn one on, but they are efficient and help the company grow. They allow us to offer the best tasting teas in convenient ways. Michael travels the globe in search of the best tasting teas. Now the next generation is coming on board. Alex manages the restaurant at our Tasting Room, while a few of my other grandkids (Emeric, Mallory, & Bert) worked at various jobs throughout the business this summer.

While they were hard at work, my wife Elyse and I toured central Europe. Yes, we toured some sights and took in some culture, but the real highlight was visiting Harney & Sons customers throughout that area. It was humbling to be welcomed at great European hotels and restaurants. Such a change. When I started in the business, I considered Boston a trip!

For someone who devoted himself to tea at 53 years of age, it is a dream come true. My mentor, Stanley Mason, taught me so much. I loved learning about British Legacy teas from a Brit. He taught me how to make the best Earl Grey. Stanley started me down this long road, but now we sell teas which he never even considered. The world of tea has expanded considerably in the last 25 years. I stay committed to offering the finest teas. My love of tea has spread to my family and our customers worldwide. I know that we have a tradition of tea that will endure.

We make our teas for your enjoyment, so if you have any questions please call **(800) TEA-TIME** or e-mail us at HT@Harney.com. We always love to discuss our favorite subject!

MEDIA NOTE: Media event attendance welcome and advanced reservations required. For Halekulani Living information contact Erika Kauffman, Director of Public Relations at (808) 535-0623 or Erika.Kauffman@halekulanicorp.com.

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About Halekulani Living

Halekulani Living was crafted to provide guests an immersive, authentic and memorable Halekulani experience showcasing the Hotel's dynamic offerings in cuisine, the arts and wellness. Halekulani Living is founded on the hotel's unwavering philosophy to and commitment of an enriched lifestyle, sophisticated elegance, innovative guest programming and award-winning hospitality.

About Halekulani

Since its inception in 1984, Halekulani has received more than five hundred accolades, awards and honoraria, and is consistently ranked among the world's finest hotels. *SpaHalekulani*, amongst many others, earned the coveted Mobil Four-Star rating, the highest bestowed upon any spa by the Mobil Travel Guide, and was ranked the #2 Best Resort Spa in North America by *Conde Nast Traveler*. Halekulani's fine dining restaurant, La Mer, is Hawaii's longest ranked AAA-Five Diamond restaurant. Halekulani is managed by the Hotels and Resorts of Halekulani, a brand management division of the Honolulu-based Halekulani Corporation, which also manages newly redesigned Waikiki Parc Hotel. Halekulani is a member of The Leading Hotels of the World and is aligned with Tokyo's legendary Imperial Hotel. For reservations and information, please contact a travel planner, call Halekulani at (800) 367-2343 / (808) 923-2311 or visit the Halekulani website (www.halekulani.com).

For Further Information:

Hotels and Resorts of Halekulani

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