

BMW supports International Eckart Witzigmann Award

International Eckart Witzigmann Award Society to present the 'Eckart' in cooperation with BMW for the first time

Munich/Germany. On October 15, 2012, the International Eckart Witzigmann Award is presented in cooperation with BMW for the first time. The award gala takes place at the BMW Museum in Munich. The 'Eckart' – as the award is renamed after its founder's first name from this year on – honors outstanding achievements in the art of cuisine in three categories: excellent culinary skills, innovation, and projects in the field of sustainability and social responsibility. The jury, which is composed of the award-winners of the past seven years, will announce this year's laureates in early September 2012.

In the run-up to the 'Eckart 2012' function, the International Eckart Witzigmann Award Society will host a symposium with global experts and students. One of the key questions at the event will be: What is a good, healthy and sustainable diet at a cafeteria? Just like in haute cuisine, food decisions in everyday life increasingly focus on quality, sustainable spending and regionally sourced products. Top chefs are experts in such matters. The importance of food, cuisine as well as cooking and consuming habits have changed significantly over the past few years. The trend is toward a new awareness of nutritional issues.

"A healthy diet also plays a crucial role at the BMW Group's staff cafeterias," comments Martin Straubinger, Head of BMW Group's Restaurant Services. "We set great store by using regional ingredients and aligning our menus with the demands of people at the different locations worldwide. A balanced choice of foods is important to people's motivation and health."

The International Eckart Witzigmann Award has been presented since 2004. The list of previous winners includes Daniel Bould (New York City), HRH Charles Prince of Wales (Highgrove), Elena Arzak (San Sebastian), Anne-Sophie Pic (Valence), Harald Wohlfahrt (Tonbach), Dieter Kosslick (Berlin), Ferran Adria (Barcelona), and Marc Haeberlin (Illhaeusern), to name a few.

Eckart Witzigmann (71) is a pioneer of German haute cuisine. A disciple of Paul Bocuse and Paul Haeberlin, he started his career at Tantris, Munich, in 1974,

Media Information

Date 30 July 2012

Subject BMW supports International Eckart Witzigmann Award

Page 2

bringing about a revolution in German cuisine. As the first chef in Germany and one of the first two chefs worldwide outside of France, he was awarded three stars by the Guide Michelin in 1979. Until 1994, he ran his famous restaurant Aubergine, located on Munich's Maximiliansplatz which soon became a legend in its own right. Together with Paul Bocuse, Joël Robuchon and Frédéric Girardet, Mr. Witzigmann is one of four chefs honored by the Gault&Millau as 'Chef of the Century'. Throughout his career as a top chef, he cooperated with numerous colleagues who represent German top cuisine today. Besides his own restaurant activities, Eckart Witzigmann cooked at various state receptions for distinguished personalities such as Queen Elisabeth II, King Hassan of Morocco, King Carl Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden, for the Presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and George W. Bush.

Eckart Witzigmann emphasizes the fact that all award-winners convey an important message: "Enjoyment is crucial to living life to the full. It is particularly important that parents impart this art of living on children and teenagers and let them know how important a good and healthy diet is. This is a great concern that we all share."

Eckart Witzigmann: "I am delighted that many of my colleagues in the cooking profession dedicate themselves to supporting cities and communities in their efforts to provide at least one good, healthy and affordable meal a day to every child." Referring to the book "Gartenland in Kinderhand" (Gardens in the Hands of Children), Mr. Witzigmann highlights the publication's wide range of tips on how to set up and foster kitchen gardens in preschools.

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Media Information

Date 30 July 2012

Subject BMW supports International Eckart Witzigmann Award

Page 3

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The BMW Group

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI, Husqvarna Motorcycles and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 29 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2011, the BMW Group sold about 1.67 million cars and more than 113,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2011 was euro 7.38 billion on revenues amounting to euro 68.82 billion. At 31 December 2011, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 100,000 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last seven years.

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