

USA CULINARY TEAM
CHOOSES FORTESSA CHINA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Sterling, VA -- The Culinary Team USA 2004-05 has chosen Fortessa china to showcase its food presentations at the IKA International Culinary Art Competition in Erfurt, Germany, next October.

As a sponsor of the U.S. team, fielded by the American Culinary Federation, Fortessa will provide the dinnerware used by the chefs in both preliminary and final events staged during the quadrennial cook-off, said Scott Hamberger, vice president of Fortessa, and Chef Edward Leonard, ACF president, in a joint announcement.

To set off their menus, the culinary experts selected Fortessa Bone China,™ including many pieces from Fortessa's Accentz™ collection. "China helps bring the food alive," said Chef Leonard, who also is captain of the U.S. team. "Beautiful china can enhance the presentation, carry out the concept and heighten the over-all impression of our foods. A presentation that's pleasing to the eye makes a favorable impression on the judges," he said.

In 2000, Chef Leonard led the USA team to the championship in the IKA competition, the world's most prestigious culinary event, with a sweep of six gold medals. Twelve chefs from around the country will lend their talents to compete for the title this year.

"We feel privileged to be able to support and contribute to the USA team," said Scott Hamberger. "Our dinnerware will help the chefs give variety to their food presentations, while keeping within a unified style scheme," he said. The Accentz collection features innovative shapes and sizes in designs that are multifunctional, capable of serving all courses, from appetizer to dessert.

The team's decision was based on three requisites, according to Chef Leonard: Creativity ("items that were refreshing, new, versatile"), simplicity, and elegance. "Fortessa's china met these requirements. We could feel confident and good about the effect it would create," he said. Another attraction was bone china's all-white color, "because we had decided on white, to focus on the food. We did not want patterns which might distract from the look of our foods," Chef Leonard said.

With its global reach, Fortessa will be able to have a full set of new china ready and waiting for the team's arrival in Erfurt, Mr. Hamberger said - eliminating the cost and burden of extra baggage. (In previous years, the chefs often bought seats on the plane to chaperon the tableware they would need in Germany.)

The Culinary Team USA first entered the IKA event in 1956. As the underdog in 1960, the American team startled the culinary world by capturing the championship and, since then, has set a new record for gold-medal wins.

Headquartered in St. Augustine, FL, the ACF is the world's largest chefs's organization, with some 250 chapters throughout the U.S. The ACF represents the



U.S. in the World Association of Cooks Societies, a 71-nation organization, based in Germany, which hosts the IKA Culinary Art Competition.

Fortessa, based in Sterling, VA, is the diversified designer, developer and marketer of trend-setting, quality-crafted tableware and accessories for the commercial foodservice industry throughout the world, and for the American consumer market.