

## Addison chef named Beard Award semifinalist

Twenty chefs are competing for Pacific region prize

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**CARMEL VALLEY** – William Bradley, executive chef for Addison Restaurant at The Grand Del Mar resort, has been named a semifinalist for the James Beard Foundation's 2010 Awards, the restaurant and cooking industry's most prestigious honor.

Bradley, 34, a Carmel Valley resident, is one of 20 chefs competing for the top

prize of Best Chef in the Pacific region, and the only chef selected from San Diego County.

Jessica Cheng, a spokeswoman for the James Beard Foundation, said there were more than 21,000 nominations for Beard awards this year. Those entries were narrowed to a semifinalist list that included 20 chefs in each of 10 regions around the country, as well as awards for top regional and national restaurants, the

nation's Best Chef and Rising Star Chef awards and several other categories. The semifinalists were chosen by a panel of 400 judges, including past Beard winners, board members, industry peers, food critics and writers.

On March 22, the five finalists in each region will be announced. And the winning chefs will be honored May 3 at New York's

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**Chef William Bradley in his kitchen at the Addison in Carmel Valley in 2008. North County Times file photo**

# Addison

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Lincoln Center, Cheng said.

This is only the third year the foundation has publicly announced its semifinalists, Cheng said, so it's difficult to determine whether any other San Diego-area chef has risen this far. But a search of the Beard awards archive turned up no other names, and Bradley said he wasn't aware of any other past San Diego finalists. (Former San Diego chef Gavin Kaysen, who left Rancho Bernardo's El Bizcocho in 2007 for New York's Cafe Boulud, won the Beard Rising Star Chef award in 2008.)

When the list was announced, Bradley said he was on a plane and he got a cryptic congratulatory email from a colleague but didn't know what it was for (though the Beard staff did call him two weeks earlier to verify where he lived and worked). When he landed, he was inundated with e-mails and calls from friends and family.

"I was humbled by it and



**Chef William Bradley prepares salmon with pecans, dates, and orange at Addison at The Grand Del Mar. North County Times file photo**

"I'm very happy," he said. "It's nice to see all the hard work pay off. I do what I do for the pleasure of pleasing other people, and I love to cook, so to be recognized on top of that is a bonus."

Born in Chula Vista, Bradley got his first restaurant job in Bonita at age 16.

Beginning at age 20, he was mentored in the French techniques by chef James Boyce, formerly of the Loews Coronado Restaurant. At age 24, he followed Boyce to Arizona. There, Bradley was nominated three years in a row for Beard's Rising Star Chef

award while working as executive chef at Vu restaurant at the Hyatt Regency in Scottsdale, Ariz. He was also honored by the Arizona Republic as Rising Star Chef for 2006. He returned to San Diego that same year for the opportunity to create his own restaurant at the Grand Del Mar. Since then, Addison has become Southern California's only Forbes five-star and AAA Five Diamond restaurant.

Bradley said he's proud to be in the company of the 19 other Pacific region chefs selected as semifinalists. "It's a tough bracket. I know many of these chefs and they're all great."

He said the Beard foundation has done an amazing job over the years forecasting who will be the next great American chefs, so he feels that just making it to the semifinalist level is a great honor.

And if he wins?

"I'd be over the moon forever," he said. "It would mean the world to me and would absolutely be the pinnacle of my career. And if it doesn't happen, then at least I know I got this far."