

# Loyal Customers

An Interview with Sirio Maccioni,  
Director, Le Cirque

**EDITORS' NOTE** Sirio Maccioni lives in New York and Montecatini, Italy. He operates Le Cirque and Osteria del Circo in New York, as well as Le Cirque and Osteria del Circo in Las Vegas and Le Cirque in Mexico City. A native of Italy, Maccioni completed restaurant and hotel training programs in Paris and Hamburg. After a series of apprenticeships, he held a variety of positions with hotels and restaurants in Italy, France, and Germany, including the Grand Hotel & La Pace in Montecatini Terme (Italy), the Hôtel Plaza Athénée in Paris, and the Hotel Atlantic Kempinski in Hamburg. After serving as the maître d' of Colony restaurant in New York, he opened Le Cirque at the Mayfair Hotel in 1974. The restaurant subsequently moved to the New York Palace Hotel, and was ultimately reopened in May 2006 in the Bloomberg Building. In May 2004, Maccioni released his biography, cowritten with Peter Elliot and entitled Sirio: The Story of My Life and Le Cirque.



Sirio Maccioni

**RESTAURANT BRIEF** Opened in May 2006 in midtown Manhattan's Bloomberg Building, Le Cirque ([www.lecirque.com](http://www.lecirque.com)) is a 16,000-square-foot, Adam Tihany-designed restaurant, featuring a main dining room, bar, and private event mezzanine. Offering innovative continental cuisine, the 27-foot-high, semi-circular main dining room features polished ebony panels and abstract "big top" light fixtures. An all-glass, 65-seat bar is topped by a 27-foot wine tower.



The restaurant's tables feature Reidel stemware, Villeroy & Boch china, and silver by Greggio and Ricciarelli.

**Have you been happy with the strength of Le Cirque's business over the past year, and are you optimistic for continued growth as you look to the future?**

Yes, and we are very optimistic for continued growth, in part because of our newly renovated wine lounge café.

**Has the new location in the Bloomberg Building met your expectations? What feedback have you received from your long-time customers on the new building?**

We have high expectations for our new location, and most of our long-time customers love the modern space and new location.

**One of the things that sets Le Cirque apart from other restaurants in New York is that you and your sons are at the restaurant on a regular basis. Why is it so important for you to be present each night, and has this been the key to your success?**

In the restaurant business, it is better to be there than not.

**It must be a special feeling to have your sons in the business with you. What roles do they play, and will they continue to assume more responsibility?**

It is always nice having my sons in the business with me; it is great having them play major roles and making sound decisions with the future in mind.

**You have been known**

**for your loyalty and integrity over the course of your many years in the business. Do you get frustrated by the fact that all restaurateurs are not held in such a high regard?**

I'm happy with the recognition I have.

**Many of Le Cirque's customers dine with you two or three times a week. How**



**have you been able to build this customer loyalty through the years and with the moves to different locations?**

Our loyal customers have always been great patrons. Moving can add a little challenge to the business, but as long as you recognize your guests and keep trying to do your best, the new locations are not problematic.

**Do you enjoy the business as much as you did in the early days?**

Yes, but I admit, I do enjoy my time off.

**Could you have imagined in the early days that you would have achieved this level of success and become such a major part of the New York community?**

Not to sound presumptuous, but I always had high expectations for myself. ●

Le Cirque's main dining room (top); a pear tart with ice cream (above); sea bass with caviar (left)