

FOOD ARTS

Musical Menu Mix

West Hollywood, California—There's just no stopping **Hard Rock Cafe** co-founder **Isaac Tigrett** and his plans for his **House of Blues** chain, now in Cambridge, New Orleans, the L.A. area, and soon to expand to New York.

Take the West Hollywood branch, for instance. No sooner had Tigrett opened the 1,200-seat nightclub and restaurant last spring and lured former **La Toque** chef/owner **Ken Frank** to be chef of the elegant upstairs Foundation Room (sponsorship fees go to educating kids through music) than he turned around and, working with Shep Gordon's **Alive Culinary Resources** (which gets guest chef and endorsement gigs for chefs), launched an ambitious guest chef series, signing up **Emeril Lagasse**, **Dean**



Michael Douglas, Sharon Stone, Emeril Lagasse, Sammy Hagar, and Shep Gordon at "Emeril's Bayou Blowout."
Photo by Eric Charbonneau/Berliner Studios.

Fearing, **Todd English**, **Sam Choy**, and **Larry Forgione**. More chefs will be announced.

Each chef will cook in the Foundation Room kitchen for three days; after he leaves, approximately ten of his dishes will remain on the House of Blues's à la carte menu for the remainder of the month.

On June 14, Lagasse launched the series and broke in the new kitchen (the paint was barely dry and the health inspector had given the go-ahead just two days prior) with a gala kickoff dinner, "Emeril's Bayou Blowout." (In true Hollywood fashion, the invite was headlined: "Live from New Orleans, Louisiana, the one and only chef Emeril Lagasse!") The seven-course menu served to 200 guests included Lagasse's cold-smoked salmon on cheesecake with green-onion coulis; an eggplant and garlic potato sandwich with grilled tomato sauce; crawfish-stuffed petite filet of beef with a crawfish and toasted garlic reduction; and chocolate pecan terrine. Everyone who attended (including Michael Douglas, Sharon Stone, Rodney Dangerfield, Sherry Belafonte, Sammy Hagar, Emelio Estevez, Arsenio Hall, and chefs **Susan Feniger**, **Mary Sue Milliken**, and **Lisa Stalvey**) got an autographed copy of Emeril's cookbook and a bagful of House of Blues goodies.

"The House of Blues is dedicated to the origins and legacy of American music," says Gordon. "And it's wonderful that Isaac Tigrett had the vision to incorporate all of the artists of America into his concept. So you can hear the best music, performed by its original makers, experience original American art, and taste the food of Amer-