New Study: 4 in 10 U.S. Adults Feel Preparing Their Taxes is More Stressful Than Coping With the Winter Holidays

ORLANDO, Fla., April 4, 2005 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- It is generally accepted that the winter holiday season is the most stressful time of year for Americans. However, a new national survey released today reveals that U.S. adults find preparing their taxes to be nearly as stressful.

The survey of U.S. adults fielded last month showed the following:

* 42 percent agree preparing their taxes is one of the most stressful things they'll do this year.

* When comparing which is most stressful, half (49 percent) of adults responded that coping with the winter holidays is most stressful, while 40 percent responded preparing their taxes is most stressful.

"When compared to each other, the winter holidays only slightly edge out taxes as being the most stressful," said Michael Newman, director of health care and policy research at Harris Interactive(R).

The research was sponsored by Bahama Breeze, an island-inspired restaurant company. Bahama Breeze commissioned the survey to get a better understanding of what "stresses out" Americans. The 32-restaurant company is positioning itself as the casual dining restaurant that provides a Caribbean escape without having to actually travel to the Caribbean.

Last year, Bahama Breeze began offering call-ahead seating in its restaurants after a December 2003 Harris Interactive survey conducted for the restaurant company revealed that 75 percent of U.S adults felt long table waits were one of the most stressful aspects of dining in a restaurant.

As a result of the most recent survey, Bahama Breeze will hire steel drummers to play island music outside selected post offices on April 15, the deadline for filing taxes.

"Understanding the most stressful times of year is important to Bahama Breeze because we want our restaurants to be known as a place where consumers can get away from life's stresses and escape to an island state of mind," said Laurie Burns, Bahama Breeze president.

According to this year's poll, when respondents were asked what they would most feel like doing after filing their taxes, 37 percent chose eating out at a restaurant, as compared with 25 percent who chose taking a vacation, 17 percent who chose sleeping and 10 percent who chose having a drink.

"When you look at all these results together, the good news for Bahama Breeze is that guests can unwind in our restaurants after filing their taxes and feel like they've escaped to the islands without spending their entire tax refund on a Caribbean getaway," Burns said.

About the Survey

Harris Interactive(R) conducted the survey for Bahama Breeze by telephone between March 10 and 13, 2005 among a nationwide cross section of 1,013 U.S. adults ages 18 and over. Figures for age, sex, race and region were weighted where necessary to align them with their actual proportions in the population. In theory, with a probability sample of this size, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a sampling error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

About Bahama Breeze

Bahama Breeze is known nationally for delicious, fresh seafood, beef and chicken dishes accompanied by refreshing, hand crafted tropical drinks served in a vibrant Caribbean atmosphere. The company is owned by Darden Restaurants, Inc. (NYSE: DRI), the nation's largest casual dining restaurant company. Darden also owns 1,300 Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Smokey Bones Barbeque & Grill and Seasons 52 restaurants.

About Harris Interactive(R)
Harris Interactive Inc. (http://www.harrisinteractive.com), the 15th largest and fastest-growing market research firm in the world, is a Rochester, N.Y.-based global research company that blends premier strategic consulting with innovative and efficient methods of investigation, analysis and application. Known for The Harris Poll(R) and for pioneering Internet-based research methods, Harris Interactive conducts proprietary and public research to help its clients achieve clear, material and enduring results.

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