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**SEVENTEEN NATIONALLY ACCLAIMED CHEFS TO CREATE
THE ULTIMATE WINE-AND-DINE EXPERIENCE**

NAPLES, Fla. (Aug. 24, 2007) – Seventeen of the nation’s most talented, highly-regarded chefs will come together in Naples, Fla., Jan. 25 to prepare their legendary cuisine for the eighth annual Naples Winter Wine Festival. One of the main attractions of the three-day festival, which has raised millions of dollars since 2001 for underprivileged and at-risk children through the Naples Children and Education Foundation, begins when a top chef and esteemed vintner team up to create the ultimate dining experience at 17 of the most elegant homes in Naples.

“It is truly rare to gather such a renowned group of culinary artists for a single event,” said Shirlene Elkins, chairman of the chefs’ committee and an NCEF trustee. “These chefs preside over the finest restaurants; all of them have received top culinary awards; and all are celebrities in their own right. Their presence and tremendous talents will help preserve the Naples Winter Wine Festival’s place as the most successful charity wine event in the world.”

Chef de Cuisine

For the 2008 festival, Tom Colicchio has been named the Chef de Cuisine. Colicchio, head judge on Bravo’s “Top Chef” TV show and chef-owner of Craft Restaurants, won the 2000 James Beard Best Chef: New York Award and has been a nominee for numerous James Beard awards since 1997. He was also named 2002 Chef of the Year by both Bon Appétit and Food Network, among other accolades. In addition to creating one of the lavish Friday evening vintner dinners, the Chef de Cuisine takes the lead in securing other top chefs for the festival.

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According to Elkins, this will be Colicchio's fourth year as a participating chef. "We are very excited to welcome him back and present him with the Chef de Cuisine honor. He is an extraordinary person whose culinary greatness is equaled only by his philanthropic spirit." She added, "Tom's reality TV show is such a big hit, we're hoping he'll arrange for one of the season's winners to join him in preparing a vintner dinner. Our guests would love it."

At the 2007 festival, Daniel Boulud was named Chef de Cuisine. He was the first chef to receive this honor. Boulud is chef-owner of some of the country's finest restaurants. He is also a noted cookbook author and creator of kitchenware and gourmet products.

Among other celebrity chefs for the upcoming festival are two James Beard award winners for 2007: Michel Richard of Citronelle in Washington, D.C., who received the Outstanding Chef Award, an honor given to the year's top chef; and Celina Tio of The American Restaurant in Kansas City, who was awarded Best Chef: Midwest. Georges Perrier of Philadelphia's Le Bec-Fin, winner of the Mobil Five Star Award for 25 years, is also on the festival's celebrity chef lineup.

2008 Naples Winter Wine Festival Celebrity Chefs

Michael Cimarusti
Providence
Los Angeles

Christopher Lee
Gilt
New York

Michel Richard
Citronelle
Washington, D.C.

Tom Colicchio
Craft
New York

Tony Mantuano
Spiaggia
Chicago

Julian Serrano
Picasso at the Bellagio
Las Vegas

Damien Dulas
Restaurant Guy Savoy
Las Vegas

Luciano Pellegrini
Valentino
Las Vegas

Ana Sortun
Oleana
Boston

José Gutierrez
Encore Restaurant
Memphis

Georges Perrier
Le Bec-Fin
Philadelphia

Frank Stitt, III
Highlands Bar & Grill
Birmingham

Lee Hefter
Spago
Los Angeles

Thierry Rautureau
Rover's
Seattle

Bill Telepan
Telepan
New York

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Celina Tio

The American Restaurant
Kansas City

Scott Warner

Bistro Don Giovanni
Napa

Other Culinary Highlights

Throughout the festival, luminaries of the culinary world will prepare the finest cuisine paired with exquisite wine to complement each menu item. Saturday's magnificent lunch, which precedes the festival's world-famous auction of rare wine lots, exotic trips and ultra automobiles, will be prepared under the direction of Henry Heng, Chef de Cuisine of The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples. His team includes distinguished chefs from The Ritz-Carlton resorts throughout Florida, one of whom is a Certified Master Chef. The gifted team of executive chefs from WCI Communities, led by Rob DeFrancesco, executive chef for WCI's Tiburón Golf Club, will prepare the farewell celebration brunch on Sunday. The Ritz-Carlton and WCI are both founding sponsors of the festival.

The Naples Winter Wine Festival is the most successful charity wine auction in the world. Ranked by the Luxury Institute as a top 10 arts and entertainment event for wealthy Americans, it was founded by and is hosted annually in Naples, Fla., by trustees of the Naples Children & Education Foundation. Their vision was to create an exquisite event that would raise funds for area charities that assist underprivileged and at-risk children. Since the first festival in 2001, more than \$55 million has been raised toward making a profound and sustainable difference for children in need.

Attendance at the festival is limited to approximately 550 individuals. Ticket packages are \$7,500 per couple; \$20,000 for reserved seating at the same vintner dinner for two couples. For a schedule of 2008 festivities and more information about the Naples Winter Wine Festival, please visit www.napleswinefestival.com, or call the wine festival office at 888-837-4919.