



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nation's culinary center shifts to Naples, Fla. for Jan. 25 – 27 Naples Winter Wine Festival

NAPLES, Fla. (Sept. 26, 2012) – Naples Winter Wine Festival, the most successful charity wine festival in the world, will bring together 16 celebrity chefs – 15 U.S. culinary greats and a highly respected Milan chef – for the Jan. 25 – 27 festival in Naples, Fla. The star chefs will join world-renowned vintners to create intimate dining experiences the first evening of the festival, with each dinner uniquely choreographed to fit the festival's theme: When Stars Align. Participating chefs include Barbara Lynch, Lee Hefter, Christopher Lee, Marco Canora and Chef de Cuisine Michael Anthony.

"We are thrilled to welcome the leading lights of today's culinary world," said Karen Scott, chair of the festival's chefs committee with her husband Bob. "Their food styles are highly diverse and they come from different locales. Yet they all share our passion for raising funds at the festival for underprivileged and at-risk children." Bob added, "These chefs are in high demand: running top kitchens, opening new restaurants and writing cookbooks. We are truly grateful for their generous donation of time and talent for our cause."

Collectively, the chefs have won or been nominated for an astounding 64 James Beard Foundation Awards and earned stars from The Michelin Guide 23 times. Three chefs, Andrea Ferrero, Carmen González and Perry Hoffman, are first-time festival participants, while Tony Mantuano is back for the sixth time and Lee Hefter for the fifth time.

Trustees of Naples Children & Education Foundation, creators of the festival, host the three-day affair and open their homes for the chef-and-vintner dinner experiences. The dinners range from 24 to 40 guests and are created collaboratively by the hosts, chefs and vintners.

Chef de Cuisine

The festival's 2013 Chef de Cuisine is executive chef/partner of New York City's Gramercy Tavern, Michael Anthony. His culinary career began in Tokyo, followed by five years in renowned restaurants in France. Upon returning to the U.S., Anthony worked in the kitchen of Restaurant Daniel, was Chef de Cuisine at March Restaurant, co-chef at Blue Hill and executive chef at Blue Hill Stone Barns. He came to Gramercy Tavern in 2006, and he and the restaurant have received numerous awards including the James Beard Foundation Award for Outstanding Restaurant 2008. Earlier this year, Anthony won the James Beard Foundation Award for Best Chef: New York City.

"We are so pleased to honor Michael as the festival's Chef de Cuisine," said Terry Edwards, festival chair with her husband Bob. "He is well known for his fresh, seasonal cuisine and creating a welcoming spirit of community – a perfect match up for the festival." Anthony remarked, "The festival is a seriously fun concentration of wine and food lovers, so it is an ideal place to showcase what we do at Gramercy Tavern to like-minded people, outside the restaurant and in a beautiful setting."

2013 Naples Winter Wine Festival Celebrity Chefs:

Michael Anthony – Gramercy Tavern, New York City, NY

James Beard Award Best Chef: New York City 2012

The Michelin Guide: One Star 2005 – 2012

Marco Canora – Hearth, New York City, NY

James Beard Award Best Chef: New York Semi-finalist 2012

Travel + Leisure: The 50 Best New Restaurants in the USA (Terroir Tribeca) 2008

Andrea Ferrero – Bvlgari Hotel Milan, Milan, Italy
Former student of the award-winning Quique Dacosta

Carmen González – Carmen at the Danforth, Portland, ME
The Portland Press Herald: Four Stars 2012
TV's Top Chef Masters: Champions' Round 2010

Kerry Heffernan – New York City, NY
James Beard Award Outstanding Service (Eleven Madison Park) 2004
Esquire: Best New Restaurant (Eleven Madison Park) 2004

Lee Hefter – Spago, Beverly Hills, CA
The Michelin Guide: Two Stars 2008
James Beard Award Best Chef: California 2005

Perry Hoffman – étoile Restaurant, Yountville, CA
Food & Wine: Best New Chef: California 2012
James Beard Award Rising Star Chef Finalist 2010 and 2011

Christopher Lee – Huntington Social, Huntington, NY
The Michelin Guide: One Star (Aureole) 2009
James Beard Award Rising Star Chef of the Year 2005

Joseph Lenn – The Barn at Blackberry Farm, Walland, TN
James Beard Award Best Chef: Southeast Finalist 2012
Food & Wine: Best Chef: Southeast Finalist 2012

Kelly Liken – Restaurant Kelly Liken, Vail, CO
James Beard Award Best Chef: Southwest semi-finalist 2009 – 2011
TV's Top Chef contestant 2010

Barbara Lynch – Menton, Boston, MA
James Beard Award Outstanding Wine Program (No. 9 Park) 2012
AAA Five-Diamond Award and Forbes Five Stars 2012

Tony Mantuano – Spiaggia, Chicago, IL
Nine-time James Beard Award winner or nominee
The Michelin Guide: One Star 2010

Vitaly Paley – Paley's Place, Portland, OR
James Beard Award Outstanding Chef Semi-finalist 2012
James Beard Award Best Chef: Northwest 2004

Richard Reddington – REDD, Yountville, CA
James Beard Award Best Chef: Pacific semi-finalist 2012
Travel + Leisure: America's Hottest New Hotel Restaurants (Redd Wood) 2012

Julian Serrano – Picasso at the Bellagio, Las Vegas, NV
Ten-time James Beard Award winner or nominee
AAA Five Diamond Award 2002 – 2012

Michael Tusk – Quince, San Francisco, CA
James Beard Award Best Chef: Pacific 2011
San Francisco Chronicle: Four Stars 2012

Festival Highlights

The festival begins with a trip to supported charities and one-on-one conversations with children aided by festival proceeds. A luncheon wine tasting follows, with wines poured by top vintners. That evening, limousines take guests to vintner dinners.

The next day, the festival's 550 guests gather under spacious pavilions on the grand lawn of The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples, where The Ritz-Carlton Resorts of Naples Executive Chef George Fistrovich oversees culinary action stations featuring cuisine from the resorts' multiple distinctive dining experiences and prepared by his team of award-winning chefs. After the luncheon, the festival's famous, world-class auction begins, with 65 lots available for bidding. Rare wines, exotic trips with unique experiences, excursions providing unparalleled access, fine jewelry pieces and a special automobile are among the treasures.

The festival comes to a celebratory close on the third day when The Ritz-Carlton Resorts of Naples host a farewell brunch in the golf resort's pavilion. The Ritz-Carlton Resorts of Naples are founding sponsors of the festival.

Since 2001, the festival has raised \$107 million to improve the physical, emotional and educational lives of underprivileged and at-risk children. Proceeds have helped more than 150,000 children through yearly grants to nonprofit organizations and collaborative funding of major projects including a pediatric dental center and early learning center. The festival has been ranked the most successful charity wine auction in the nation by Wine Spectator since 2004 and a top 10 event for wealthy Americans by the Luxury Institute.

The festival ticket package is \$8,500 per couple or \$20,000 for a two-couple package with reserved seating at the same vintner dinner. For a schedule of 2013 festivities and more information about the Naples Winter Wine Festival, visit www.napleswinefestival.com or call 888-837-4919. For more information on the participating chefs, visit www.napleswinefestival.com/celebrity-chefs.php.

-30-

Contacts:

Andrea Steffy, Public Relations Counsel, Gravina, Smith, Matte & Arnold Marketing and PR,
239-275-5758, andrea@gsma.pro

