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Photo Caption: The chef de cuisine for the 2010 Naples Winter Wine Festival is Dean Fearing of the award-winning Fearing's Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton in Dallas.

SUPERSTAR CHEFS REUNITE FOR 10TH NAPLES WINTER WINE FESTIVAL

Daniel Boulud, Tom Colicchio and Emeril Lagasse among chefs returning to charity event that helps tens of thousands of children each year

NAPLES, Fla. (Sept. 1, 2009) – The Naples Winter Wine Festival, ranked by Wine Spectator since 2004 as the most successful charity wine auction in the U.S., will bring together 15 of the nation's superstar chefs for the festival's 10th anniversary, to be held Jan. 29-31.

Altogether, the 15 participating chefs, 14 of whom are festival veterans, have amassed 88 James Beard awards and nominations, as well as many other culinary honors. Returning chefs include Daniel Boulud, chef-owner of some of the country's finest restaurants, cookbook author, and creator of kitchenware and gourmet products; and Emeril Lagasse, master chef, star of "Emeril Live," cookbook author and renowned restaurateur. This is the fourth festival for both chefs. Tom Colicchio, head judge on Bravo's "Top Chef" TV show and chef-owner of Craft Restaurants, will participate for a record sixth year.

"The chefs were very enthusiastic about coming back to the festival," said Adria Starkey, chair of the 2010 chefs committee and a trustee of the festival's founding organization – the Naples Children & Education Foundation. "They know their special gift of artfully cooking amazing food is an important ingredient in the success of the festival, helping to make a huge difference in the lives of children in need."

During the festival the chefs create intimate dinners for 450 festival guests at 15 trustees' homes. The cuisine is complemented by featured vintners' special wines, personally poured for guests. "When guests gather under the auction tent, and they've just had a fantastic dinner the night before, and hear the children begin the auction with a song, there isn't a dry eye in the place," according to NCEF Trustee Shirlene Elkins, who served as the festival's chair in 2004 and has chaired the chefs committee three times. "It's nothing short of magic, and the chefs are a big contributor."

More on the Chefs

Dean Fearing, making his first festival appearance, has been named the chef de cuisine for 2010. The honor, bestowed by NCEF trustees, celebrates a chef's culinary stature and support of the festival. Fearing's acclaimed restaurant, Fearing's Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton in Dallas, has won the 2009 Zagat Guide award for No. 1 in Hotel Dining, the 2009 Silver Spoon Award from Food Arts and was named one of the world's top ten restaurants by Hotels Magazine for 2009. His restaurant was also a nominee for the 2008 James Beard "Best New Restaurant" award, and received Esquire's 2007 award for Restaurant of the Year. "I am thrilled to be a part of such a successful festival that gives back to at-risk children and area charities through doing what I love to do - it is a true honor," said Fearing.

"We are absolutely delighted to have Chef Fearing participate in our 10th festival and present him with the honor of chef de cuisine. His larger-than-life personality and bold-flavored culinary style are a superb addition to the festival," said The Hon. Francis Rooney, NCEF trustee and co-chair of the 2010 festival with his wife Kathleen. "My trustee colleagues and I are deeply grateful to Chef Fearing and all the other chefs for so generously giving of their time and talent to help raise money for children whose needs are skyrocketing in this difficult economic environment."

2010 Naples Winter Wine Festival Celebrity Chefs

Daniel Boulud

James Beard “Outstanding Service” Award 2009
Daniel
New York City

Tom Colicchio

James Beard “Outstanding Chef” nominee 2002 – 2007 and 2009
Craft
New York City

Dean Fearing

Zagat Guide “No. 1 in Hotel Dining” Award 2009
Fearing’s Restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton
Dallas

Lee Hefter

James Beard “Best Chef: Pacific” Award 2005
Spago
Beverly Hills

Douglas Keane

James Beard “Best Chef” Award 2009
Cyrus
Sonoma Valley

Thomas Keller

Seven-time James Beard Award winner
The French Laundry
Napa Valley

Mark Kiffin

James Beard “Best Chef: Southwest” Award 2005
The Compound Restaurant
Santa Fe

Emeril Lagasse

Food Network “Lifetime Achievement” Award 2009
Emeril’s
New Orleans

Christopher Lee

Food & Wine “America’s Best New Chef” Award 2006
Aureole
New York City

Tony Mantuano

Eight-time James Beard Award winner or nominee
Spiaggia
Chicago

David Myers

Wine Spectator “Grand Award” winner 2006 – 2008
Sona Restaurant
Los Angeles

Nancy Oakes

16-time James Beard Award winner or nominee
Boulevard
San Francisco

Richard Reddington

San Francisco Chronicle “Rising Star” Award 2004
REDD
Napa Valley

Bill Telepan

Zagat Guide “Best Newcomer” winner 2007
Telepan
New York City

Rick Tramonto

Nine-time James Beard Award winner or nominee
TRU
Chicago

Other Festival Events

Vintner dinners are preceded by a tour of children’s charities, which gives festival attendees an up-close look at festival proceeds at work. There is also a luncheon wine tasting, which features famous vintners and their wines. The festival's second day begins on the grand lawn of The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort, Naples, where the resort's Executive Chef Derin Moore, Certified Master Chef, oversees culinary action stations prepared by the distinguished team of chefs of The Ritz-Carlton Resorts of Naples. After the luncheon, the festival’s main event gets under way: a world-class auction of rare wines, one-of-a-kind trips and other exciting packages, followed by an evening “wine-down” party. On day three, executive chefs from WCI Communities prepare the farewell celebration brunch. The Ritz-Carlton and WCI are both founding sponsors of the festival.

The Naples Winter Wine Festival is hosted annually in Naples, Fla., by trustees of the Naples Children & Education Foundation. Their mission is to support charitable programs that improve the physical, emotional and educational lives of underprivileged and at-risk children in Collier County.

Festival ticket packages are \$7,500 per couple; \$20,000 for reserved seating at the same vintner dinner for two couples. For a schedule of 2010 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.