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ALTON BROWN, LIDIA BASTIANICH AND WOLFGANG PUCK TO HOST 2010 JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION AWARDS ON MAY 3, 2010

Kelly Choi and Andrew Zimmern to Host 2010 James Beard Foundation Media & Book Awards on May 2, 2010

New York, NY (March 2, 2010) – The James Beard Foundation announced today that Food Network star and James Beard award-winner Alton Brown and two esteemed James Beard Outstanding Chef award-winners, Lidia Bastianich and Wolfgang Puck, will host the 2010 James Beard Foundation Awards, the nation's most prestigious recognition program honoring professionals in the food and beverage industries. The highly anticipated **Awards Ceremony and Gala Reception** will take place on **Monday, May 3, 2010** at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in New York City. The night before, on **Sunday, May 2, 2010**, Kelly Choi, host of Bravo's *Top Chef Masters*, and Andrew Zimmern, host of the Travel Channel's *Bizarre Foods*, will co-host the annual James Beard Foundation **Media & Book Awards Dinner** at New York City's Espace. This year marks the first time awards for the Books category will be handed out along with other media awards, a change from years past when Book award-winners were announced at the Monday evening Awards Ceremony.

The theme of this year's Awards is "The Legacy Continues," a tribute to the enduring impact of the standards of culinary excellence set by James Beard himself and all the talented professionals who keep those traditions alive. In the 20 years that the Awards have taken place, the Foundation has bestowed more than 1,000 awards to the industry's most esteemed chefs, restaurants, wines and spirits professionals, cookbook authors, journalists, culinary television programs, and more. In a nod to this year's theme, at the Awards Ceremony on Monday, May 3, 2010, each of the Outstanding Chef winners honored over the years, including Mario Batali, Thomas Keller, Jean-Georges Vongerichten, Daniel Boulud, Nancy Silverton, Rick Bayless, Grant Achatz, Alfred Portale, Dan Barber, Larry Forgione and David Bouley, will serve as award presenters throughout the evening. At the Gala Reception immediately following the Awards Ceremony, guests will enjoy a dine-around gala prepared by notable chefs from across the country, each of whom was personally selected by a past Outstanding Chef winner.

"We are honored to welcome this prestigious group of culinary luminaries to the stage at this year's awards," says Susan Ungaro, President of the James Beard Foundation. "It's a wonderful opportunity to celebrate many of the culinary world's brightest stars while tipping our toques to top talent, which our awards continue to recognize year after year. It's gratifying to think that it's been 20 years since our first awards. As a Foundation, we have grown along with the culinary community, and our awards present a great moment to toast the people who make food an important part of American culture."

Established in 1990, the James Beard Foundation Awards recognize culinary professionals for excellence and achievement in their fields and continue to emphasize the Foundation's mission: to celebrate, preserve, and nurture America's culinary heritage and diversity. The annual James Beard Foundation Awards honor the best and the brightest talents in the food and beverage industries, celebrating outstanding achievement in each of the following categories: Restaurant and Chef, Restaurant Design and Graphics, Books, Journalism, Broadcast Media, and special achievement awards. Each category has an individual Awards Committee made up of industry professionals who volunteer their time to oversee the policies, procedures, and selection of judges for their respective Awards program. All award winners receive a certificate and a bronze medallion engraved with the James Beard Foundation Awards insignia. There are no cash prizes.

On **Monday, March 22, 2010**, the James Beard Foundation will announce the final nominees for all award categories during an invitation-only breakfast at Dickie Brennan's acclaimed *Palace Café* in New Orleans' French Quarter. The nominations will also be announced live via the James Beard Foundation's Twitter page at <http://twitter.com/beardfoundation>. The annual James Beard Foundation **Media & Book Awards Dinner**, an invitation-only event honoring the nation's top cookbooks, food journalists and culinary broadcast programs, will take place on **Sunday, May 2, 2010** at Espace in New York City. This year's event will honor winners of the Journalism, Broadcast Media and Books categories, a new format from previous years' Media Awards ceremonies, which did not include the Books category. The James Beard Foundation **Awards Ceremony and Gala Reception** will take place the following evening, **Monday, May 3, 2010**, at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in New York City. Open to the public, the event honors the winners of the Restaurant and Chef and the Restaurant Design and Graphics awards categories, along with a number of special achievement awards, including the Humanitarian of the Year honoree and America's Classics award winners (which were announced earlier this month; for more information on these winners, please visit www.jamesbeard.org/awards) and the Lifetime Achievement honoree.

The 2010 James Beard Foundation Awards are presented with support by the following companies: In Association Sponsor: All-Clad Metalcrafters; Premier Sponsor: Green & Black's® Organic Chocolate, Lenox Tableware and Gifts, Mercedes-Benz; Supporting Sponsors: The Coca-Cola Company, Delta Air Lines, Food Network NYC Wine & Food Festival, illy caffè North America, Inc., Louisiana Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism, Southern Wine & Spirits of New York, Stella Artois; Gala Reception Sponsors: Acqua Panna® Natural Spring Water, Beijing Tourism Administration, Ecolab, Food Network South Beach Wine & Food Festival, Pernod Ricard USA, Rums of Puerto Rico, S.Pellegrino® Sparkling Natural Mineral Water; Media Sponsor: The Wall Street Journal and with additional support from Chefwear.

About Alton Brown

Alton Brown's flair in the kitchen developed early with guidance from his mother and grandmother, a budding culinary talent he skillfully used later "as a way to get dates" in college. Switching gears as an adult, he spent a decade working as a cinematographer and video director, but realized that he spent all of his time between shoots watching cooking shows, which he found to be dull and uninformative. Convinced that he could do better, Alton left the film business and moved to Vermont to train at the New England Culinary Institute. Soon after, he tapped all of his training to create *Good Eats*, Food

Network's prime-time smash hit that blends wit with wisdom, history with pop culture, and science with common sense cooking. Although Alton can hardly believe it himself, he recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of *Good Eats*, as well as his latest book *Good Eats: The Early Years*.

About Wolfgang Puck

Wolfgang Puck is a world-renowned master chef and restaurateur. His vast empire of restaurants, catering services, cookbooks and licensed products are run by three distinct companies: Wolfgang Puck Fine Dining Group, Wolfgang Puck Catering and Wolfgang Puck Worldwide, Inc., known as the Wolfgang Puck Companies collectively. From its opening day in 1982, Wolfgang's first flagship restaurant *Spago* was an instant success and culinary phenomenon, and he has since won the James Beard Foundation Award for Outstanding Chef of the Year in 1991 and 1998 (the only chef to have won twice), and the James Beard Foundation Award for Outstanding Restaurant for *Spago* in 1994. Some of his other restaurants across the country include *Chinois on Main* in Santa Monica, *CUT* in Beverly Hills and Las Vegas, *The Source* in Washington, D.C., several fast-casual restaurants including his new *Wolfgang Puck Bistro* concept, and a number of restaurants in Las Vegas including the newly-opened *Brasserie PUCK* in Crystals at CityCenter. Wolfgang has also been honored to serve as official chef for the post-Academy Awards® celebrity banquet for the past fourteen years, as well as the GRAMMY awards celebration, the ESPY awards, American Music Awards, presidential galas and fundraisers.

About Lidia Bastianich

Lidia Bastianich is one of the best-loved chefs on television, a best-selling cookbook author, restaurateur, and owner of a flourishing food and entertainment business. Her cookbooks include, *Lidia Cooks from the Heart of Italy* and *Lidia's Italy* – both companion books to the Emmy-nominated television series, *Lidia's Italy* as well as *Lidia's Family Table*, *Lidia's Italian-American Kitchen*, *Lidia's Italian Table* and *La Cucina di Lidia*. Lidia is the chef/owner of four acclaimed New York City restaurants – *Felidia*, *Becco*, *Esca* and *Del Posto*, as well as *Lidia's* in Pittsburgh and Kansas City She is also founder and president of Tavola Productions, an entertainment company that produces high-quality broadcast productions including *Lidia's Italy*. Together with her son Joseph, she produces award-winning wines at their Bastianich Vineyards in Friuli. 2007 signified a true benchmark in Lidia's career, as she had the esteem honor of cooking for His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI during his travels to New York. Looking ahead to the fall of 2010, Lidia will release her first children's book, soon to be a holiday classic, "*Nonna Tell Me a Story: Lidia's Christmas Kitchen*." Perhaps the single most important quality that Lidia shares is her belief that it's not only the food on the table that makes the meal, it's the people who join around the table who bring the meal to life. Her signature line: "Tutti a tavola a mangiare!" means "Everybody to the table to eat!" This common phrase, in its simplicity, could possibly be Lidia's true recipe for success.

About Kelly Choi

Kelly Choi is an acclaimed food journalist and host of Bravo's *Top Chef Masters* and creator, producer and host of NYC-TV's restaurant show *Eat Out NY*. A former model, Kelly will be releasing her first book, *The 20 Most Delicious Dishes in New York*, later this year. She is also host of the internationally syndicated and Emmy award-winning *Secrets of New York*, a weekly show that reveals mysteries and little-known facts about the five boroughs. Kelly has hosted the USA

finals of the prestigious culinary competition, Bocuse d'Or, which is held in Lyon, France, every two years. She has also been a judge on *Iron Chef America* and *Master Chef* in Puerto Rico. She has received multiple Emmy nominations from the New York chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for her work on NYC-TV. Born in Seoul, Korea, Choi won the Elite Modeling Agency's "Look of the Year" contest, and has been voted as "One of the Sexiest New Yorkers" by the *New York Post*. She has a Masters degree in Magazine Writing from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. Kelly supports, among many charities, an Alliance for a Healthier Generation as well as City Harvest, and has hosted various charity events related to food around New York City.

About Andrew Zimmern

Andrew Zimmern is a food writer, TV personality, chef, teacher and is regarded as one of the most versatile and knowledgeable personalities in the food world. As the co-creator, host and contributing producer of Travel Channel's hit series, *Bizarre Foods with Andrew Zimmern* and *Andrew Zimmern's Bizarre World*, he travels the globe, exploring the food in its own *terroir*. From Parisian restaurants to Asian jungle markets, it's all about discovering the authentic experience. *Bizarre Foods* received high praise from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Outside Magazine* and other national publications. He has appeared on almost every talk show on the planet including *Live with Regis and Kelly*, *NBC's Today show*, and *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*. Zimmern is a monthly columnist and contributing editor at both *Minneapolis-St. Paul Magazine* and at *Delta Sky Magazine*. He is the author of *The Bizarre Truth: How I Went Out the Door Mouth First And Came Back Shaking My Head*, published by Broadway Books in 2009. Andrew has served as SuperTarget's meal adventure guide, sharing his passion for ethnic foods with supermarket customers around the country. Additionally, he is the international spokesman for Procter and Gamble's Pepto-Bismol brand, Travel Leaders (formerly Carlson Wagonlit Travel) and Elite Destination Homes. Zimmern resides with his family in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

About the James Beard Foundation

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation is dedicated to celebrating, preserving, and nurturing America's culinary heritage and diversity in order to elevate the appreciation of our culinary excellence. A cookbook author and teacher with an encyclopedic knowledge about food, James Beard, who died in 1985, was a champion of American cuisine. He helped educate and mentor generations of professional chefs and food enthusiasts. Today, the Beard Foundation continues in the same spirit by administering a number of diverse programs that include educational initiatives, food industry awards, scholarships to culinary schools, and publications, and by maintaining the historic James Beard House in New York City's Greenwich Village as a "performance space" for visiting chefs. For more information, please visit www.jamesbeard.org. Find insights on food at the James Beard Foundation's blog [Delights & Prejudices](#). Join the James Beard Foundation on [Facebook](#). Follow the James Beard Foundation on [Twitter](#).

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