

**For Immediate Release:**

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**Taste the Best of France with Chef Traci Des Jardins**  
Royal Insider Partners with James Beard Foundation in Offering Luxury  
Culinary Trip

New York, NY (November 28, 2012) – The James Beard Foundation (JBF) has partnered with Royal Insider to create their first luxury culinary excursion: [\*\*Taste the Best of France with Chef Traci Des Jardins: A James Beard Foundation Gastronomic Trip by Royal Insider\*\*](#). For one week from April 29 through May 5, 2013, JBF Award-winning chef Traci Des Jardins will lead twelve guests through Beaujolais, Burgundy, and Champagne, stay at fine *chateaux*, and meet with prominent chefs and winemakers for the culinary experience of a lifetime.

“As a young chef I spent many of my formative years living and working in France,” said Des Jardins, chef and owner of Jardinière Restaurant and two-time James Beard Award winner. “When the James Beard Foundation approached me about partnering on a French culinary trip to help fundraise for them, I was thrilled at the chance to lead this journey exploring the innermost heart of the French food and wine culture.”

The luxury trip is being organized by Royal Insider, a culture-sustaining travel company that arranges authentic travel experiences steeped in local life. The trip will serve as both a cultural exchange in line with JBF’s mission as well as a fundraiser to support its other diverse programs. Des Jardins will guide the group, sharing her culinary insight and classical French training as they navigate everything from home-cooked meals to fine-dining experiences to farm visits.

“When James Beard would travel, the first place he visited was always the local food markets rather than the museums. He felt that food reflected the culture,” said Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation. “Food is such a journey on its own that pairing it with a tour through France was a natural fit.”

Taste the Best of France trip highlights include:

- A barge cruise on the Burgundy canal
- A private tour with a vintner in Gevrey-Chambertin with cellar tastings and a home-cooked dinner created to capture the essence of the soul-sustaining communal meals served to workers during the harvest
- A day-in-the-life of a countryside *chèvrerie*, from milking goats to making exquisite cheeses
- Personal presentations from Michelin-starred chefs in which they will share products highlighting local *terroir*

“Food is a universal connector. It’s transformative and can open many doors,” said Kevin Molony, owner of Royal Insider. “The idea of this trip is to carry the banner of American culinary culture into the heart of France and come back steeped in French culture—and about as much deliciousness as any person can handle.”

Cost varies by room occupancy and preference, with options beginning at around \$12,750 per person. For more information or to book one of the twelve exclusive seats on this trip, please visit [jbf.royalinsider.com](http://jbf.royalinsider.com) or call 504-524-7094.

### **About the James Beard Foundation**

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation is dedicated to celebrating, nurturing, and preserving America's diverse culinary heritage and future. 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, instilling in them the value of wholesome, healthful and delicious food. 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, publications, chef advocacy training, thought-leader convening, and by maintaining the historic James Beard House in New York City's Greenwich Village as a "performance space" for visiting chefs. In September of 2012, the Foundation launched the Diplomatic Culinary Partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Office of Protocol and helped create the American Chef Corps as a way to champion American chefs abroad, promote American food products and foster an interest in American culinary culture and history through international programs and initiatives. For more information, please visit [jamesbeard.org](http://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](#).

### **About Royal Insider**

Royal Insider was established in 1999 to orchestrate trips that allow travelers to participate in the authentic culture of a destination, hosted by the people whose strivings sound out the heartbeat of that culture every day. The "culture-sustaining" company literally never hires tour guides, instead arranging for travelers to be hosted by culture bearers: singers, artists, chefs, winemakers, record producers and countless others who welcome their guests *inside* to experience the real local life—not tour them around the facade of it. A member of the world's most prestigious alliance of luxury travel professionals, Virtuoso ("The Best of the Best"), Royal Insider has been written about in publications ranging from American Express *Departures* to Neiman Marcus *Entrée* to *Gourmet* to *Time* magazine. The company is routinely rated among the top of its kind around the globe, and has been credited by industry leaders with significant innovations. For more information, please visit [royalinsider.com](http://royalinsider.com).

### **About Traci Des Jardins**

Traci Des Jardins is classically trained in French cuisine by some of the best chefs and restaurants in the world. A native of Northern California, Des Jardins has four restaurants in San Francisco, including Jardinière, Mijita Cocina Mexicana (two locations) and Public House. In Lake Tahoe, she operates Manzanita, a destination restaurant at the Ritz-Carlton Highlands at Northstar. Des Jardins is a two-time James Beard award winner (1995, 2007), in 2007 she beat Mario Batali on *Iron Chef America* and in 2011 competed on *Top Chef Masters 3* making it to the finals. Beyond the kitchen, Des Jardins sits on the board of La Cocina, a San Francisco based non-profit business incubator, and on the advisory board of Bocuse d'Or USA, joining fellow chefs in the quest to elevate culinary excellence in the United States. She is a deeply committed activist and philanthropist working with hunger-relief organizations such as Share Our Strength, Citymeals On-Wheels, and other non-profits such as amfAR. For more information, visit [tracidesjardins.com](http://tracidesjardins.com), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#).

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