



The James Beard Foundation's

**CHEFS &
CHAMPAGNE®**

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From the Big Easy to the Big Apple:
**John Besh Named James Beard Foundation's
2016 Chefs & Champagne® Honoree**

New York, NY (April 13, 2016) – Today the [James Beard Foundation](#) (JBF), the country's preeminent culinary organization celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, announced that it will honor **John Besh**, multiple James Beard Award–winning chef, author, philanthropist, and restaurateur, at its annual Hamptons fundraiser and tasting party this summer. [Chefs & Champagne®](#) will be held at Wölffer Estate Vineyard in Sagaponack, New York, on Saturday, July 23, 2016, featuring flowing Champagne Barons de Rothschild, Goose Island beers, Wölffer Estate wines, and culinary offerings from a select group of more than 40 fine chefs.

“I am incredibly humbled to be named a James Beard Foundation honoree. It is an honor to work alongside this inspirational team with the like-minded mission of preserving and celebrating America’s diverse culinary heritage,” said Besh. “Plus, I am equally excited to share an evening of bubbles and delicious foods with some of the finest chefs in the world.”

The celebrated chef has dedicated his career to the culinary riches of southern Louisiana. In his restaurants, entrepreneurial pursuits, and public activities, Besh preserves and promotes ingredients, techniques, and heritage one dish at a time. He is the author of four cookbooks: *My New Orleans* (October 2009) and *My Family Table* (November 2011), *Cooking From The Heart* (October 2013) and *Besh Big Easy* (September 2015); as well as the host of two national public television cooking shows, *Chef John Besh's New Orleans* and *Chef John Besh's Family Table*. In 2011, he founded the John Besh Foundation, which works to protect and preserve the culinary heritage and foodways of New Orleans via initiatives such as the Chefs Move! culinary school scholarship and “Milk Money” microloans for local farmers.

“It’s always exciting for us to be able to honor a great chef and friend of the Foundation at what is one of our favorite fundraisers of summer,” said Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation. “From his participation in our annual Food Conference and Leadership Awards, Taste America tour and most recently serving as a mentor in our 2016 Women in Culinary Leadership Program, we are delighted to celebrate the admirable career of multiple James Beard Award-winning chef John Besh.”

Besh’s talent and drive have earned him praise throughout his career: *Food & Wine* named him one of the “Top 10 Best New Chefs in America.” His twelve acclaimed restaurants ([August](#), [Besh Steak](#), [Lüke](#), [Lüke San Antonio](#), [La Provence](#), [Domenica](#), [Pizza Domenica](#), [Borgne](#), [Johnny Sánchez](#) New Orleans, [Johnny Sánchez](#) Baltimore, [Shaya](#) and [Willa Jean](#)) each celebrate the bounty and traditions of the Louisiana region, and his flagship restaurant, August, is a Gayot Top 40 Restaurant and a *Wine Enthusiast* Top 100 Restaurant. In March 2016, the Besh Restaurant Group announced the

creation of One House Hospitality, a division focused on creating and operating food and beverage concepts inside hotels and resorts.

Among the chefs who have signed on thus far: Baker **Alex Bois**, Pastry Chef **Sam Kincaid**, and **Jon Nodler**, High Street on Hudson, NYC; **Chad Brauze**, The Back Room, Park Hyatt, NYC; **Chris Cipollone**, Piora, NYC; **Jay Ducote**, Baton Rouge, LA; **Aaron Fitterman**, Aretsky's Patroon, NYC; **Jeremy Ford**, Matador Room, *Miami Beach, FL*; **Eric Gabrynowicz**, Restaurant North, *Armonk, NY*; **Kerry Heffernan**, Grand Banks, NYC; **Paul Kahan***, One Off Hospitality Group, *Chicago*; **Matthew Kenney**, 00+Co, NYC, and Plant Food + Wine, *Miami and Venice, CA*; **Anthony Lamas**, Seviche, A Latin Restaurant, *Louisville, KY*; **Karl Ljung**, Hillenberg, *Stockholm, Sweden*; **Anita Lo**, Annisa, NYC; **Angie Mar**, Beatrice Inn, NYC; Pastry Chef **Alina Martell**, Ai Fiori and Vacluse, NYC; **Lucero Martinez**, Pampano, NYC; **Dean James Max**, DJM Restaurants, *Multiple Cities, USA, and Cayman Islands, BWI, and Harbor Island, Bahamas*; **Julian Medina**, Tacuba and Toloache, NYC; **Jonah Miller**, Huertas, NYC; **Damian O'Donnell**, Harbor Bistro, *East Hampton, NY*; **Ralph Perrazzo**, BBD's - Beers, Burgers, Desserts, *Rocky Point, NY*; **Guy Reuge**, Mirabelle, *Stony Brook, NY*, and Sandbar, *Cold Spring Harbor, NY*; **Roxanne Spruance**, Kingsley, NYC; Pastry Chef **Sherry Yard***, iPic Entertainment.**

Chefs & Champagne is considered the East End's premier culinary event. Funds raised at the event help support the James Beard Foundation's wide variety of initiatives, including culinary student scholarships and the organization's annual food conference on sustainability, public health, and nutrition. A silent auction consisting of fine dining experiences, wines and spirits, cookware, and culinary travel packages will also raise funds for the organization.

With a long tradition of supporting culinary education, the James Beard Foundation will also announce the recipient of the 2016 Christian Wölffer Scholarship at the event. Established in 2006, the scholarship fund supports students in their study of food and wine. As of 2016, the Foundation will have awarded over \$6.5 million in financial aid to more than 1,800 recipients.

The **Chefs & Champagne** main event will take place from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm on Saturday, July 23, and is open to the public—reservations are \$200 for James Beard Foundation members and \$275 for non members. General admission includes all tastings, silent auction bidding opportunities, and a gift bag. VIP premium admission, beginning at 5:00 pm, is \$375 for James Beard Foundation members and non members. VIP tables of 10 are available for \$4,000. The VIP experience includes an additional exclusive reception hour with early access to all tastings, reserved table seating, advanced silent auction preview, gift bag and access to the VIP after-party. Reservations can be made by calling (212) 627-2308 or at jamesbeard.org/chefsandchampagne. To become a member of the James Beard Foundation, click [here](#).

In addition to exclusive Champagne sponsor Champagne Barons de Rothschild, support for Chefs & Champagne 2016 will be provided by Audi; Badoit; evian; Goose Island Beer Co.; *Hamptons* magazine; Maille; Melissa's; Shunkado; Sturia Caviar; Tito's Handmade Vodka; VerTerra Dinnerware; and Wölffer Estate Vineyard.**

**Denotes James Beard Award winner.*

***Current list as of press time.*

About the James Beard Foundation (JBF)

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation celebrates, nurtures, and honors America's diverse culinary heritage through programs that educate and inspire. A cookbook author and teacher with an encyclopedic knowledge about food, the late James Beard 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 JBF continues in the same spirit by administering a number of diverse programs that include educational initiatives, food industry awards, scholarships for culinary students, publications, chef advocacy training, and thought-leader convening. The Foundation also maintains the historic James Beard House in New York City's Greenwich Village as a "performance space" for visiting chefs. For more information, please visit jamesbeard.org. Get food news, recipes, and more at the James Beard Foundation's [blog](#), or subscribe to the free digital newsletter [Beard Bites](#). Follow the James Beard Foundation on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#) and [Livestream](#).