



**JAMES
BEARD
FOUNDATION**



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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James Beard Foundation

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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND THE JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE
THAT THE JAMES BEARD AWARDS WILL RETURN TO CHICAGO IN 2016 AND 2017**

The "Oscars of the Food Industry" Extends Its Stay in Chicago for Two Additional Years

CHICAGO, Illinois (April 16, 2015) – Mayor Rahm Emanuel of Chicago; Susan Ungaro, President of the James Beard Foundation (JBF); Don Welsh, President and CEO of Choose Chicago; and Sam Toia, President and CEO of the Illinois Restaurant Association, announced today that the James Beard Foundation Awards Ceremony and Gala Reception will return to Chicago in 2016 and 2017. The first-ever James Beard Awards to be held outside of New York City will take place on May 4, 2015 at the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

“Ever since we announced last year that Chicago would host the JBF Restaurant and Chef Awards Gala for its 25th anniversary, our great city has been electric with excitement and anticipation,” said Mayor Emanuel. “Chicago has a rich history with the Foundation, delivering restaurant and chef winners 23 out of 24 years with more than 40 James Beard Award winners to date. We are so proud to be welcoming this most prestigious of events for two more years.”

The almost sold-out 2015 James Beard Foundation Awards presented by Lexus, will feature awards for the Restaurant and Chef and Restaurant Design categories, along with special achievement awards including Humanitarian of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America, and America's Classics. A gala reception will immediately follow, featuring top chefs and beverage professionals from across the country.

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“We received a groundswell of enthusiastic support from chefs, restaurateurs, and sponsors all across the country when we announced that the silver anniversary of the Awards would take place in Chicago,” said Ungaro. “The entire city of Chicago has proven to be a generous and creative partner in planning this year’s Awards. Returning for two more years is not only exciting, but offers continuity for even more opportunities for our Foundation’s most important event of the year.”

As previously announced, on Friday, April 24, 2015, the James Beard Foundation Book, Broadcast, and Journalism Awards Dinner, an exclusive event honoring the nation’s top cookbook authors, culinary broadcast producers and hosts, and food journalists, will take place at Pier Sixty at Chelsea Piers in New York City, hosted by Carla Hall. The JBF’s Book, Broadcast, and Journalism Awards will continue to remain in New York City.

“Just as we garnered tremendous support from the business, culinary, and travel industries for this year’s JBF Awards, Choose Chicago is committed to continuing to create the most memorable experience for this prestigious annual celebration,” said Welsh. “The opportunity to welcome America’s greatest culinary leaders to Chicago and roll out the red carpet for three straight years continues to align perfectly with our strategies to achieve Mayor Emanuel’s goal of attracting 55 million annual visitors by 2020.”

“We are absolutely thrilled to host the James Beard Foundation Awards for three years in a row,” added Toia. “What an honor to welcome the James Beard Foundation Awards to Chicago for a multi-year commitment. We have to thank our dedicated chefs and restaurateurs, who have invested so much hard work and resources to bring attention to Chicago as a premier gastronomic hub.”

Established in 1991, the James Beard Awards recognize culinary professionals for excellence and achievement in their fields. Each award category has an individual 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 JBF Award winners receive a certificate and a medallion engraved with the James Beard Foundation Awards insignia. There are no cash prizes.

For a link to this press release, go to CityofChicago.org or JamesBeard.org. To follow the conversation online use the hashtag #JBFA; read the James Beard Foundation’s blog [Delights & Prejudices](#); join the James Beard Foundation on [Facebook](#) and/or follow the James Beard Foundation on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

The 2015 James Beard Foundation Awards are presented by Lexus; in association with HMSHost, the Illinois Office of Tourism and Mariano’s; and the following partners: Premier Sponsors: All-Clad Metalcrafters, American Airlines, BACARDÍ® GRAN RESERVA, Lenox Tableware and Gifts, True Refrigeration®; Supporting Sponsors: Acqua Panna® Natural Spring Water, Brand USA, Breville,

Fine European Wines from Bulgaria, Goose Island Beer Company, Lavazza, S.Pellegrino® Sparkling Natural Mineral Water, Skuna Bay Salmon, Valrhona; Gala Reception Sponsors: Braveheart Black Angus Beef from PERFORMANCE Foodservice, Celebrity Cruises®, Ecolab, Groupon, Tanqueray No. TEN®, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts; with additional support from: Chefwear, VerTerra Dinnerware, and Wisconsin Cheese. The James Beard Foundation also gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Chicago Department of Aviation, Choose Chicago and the Illinois Restaurant Association.

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, 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 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. In September of 2012, JBF 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. One such project is the next world's fair, Expo Milano 2015, for which the James Beard Foundation is co-leading the effort for the State Department to design and produce the USA Pavilion, a global gathering of 147 countries addressing the challenges of how we will feed ourselves in the future. The pavilion, whose theme will be "American Food 2.0: United to Feed the Planet," will showcase America's contributions to global food security and gastronomy. For more information, please visit 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](#) and [Instagram](#).

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