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# JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION

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## **ALTON BROWN TO HOST 2015 JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION AWARDS ON MAY 4, 2015**

### **CARLA HALL TO HOST 2015 JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION BOOK, BROADCAST & JOURNALISM AWARDS ON APRIL 24, 2015**

**New York, NY (March 5, 2015)** – Today the James Beard Foundation announced that the multiple James Beard Award–winning TV host, author, and chef **Alton Brown** will host the 2015 James Beard Foundation Awards presented by Lexus. The highly anticipated James Beard Awards ceremony and gala reception will take place on **Monday, May 4, 2015**, at Lyric Opera of Chicago. On **Friday, April 24, 2015**, Carla Hall, co-host of ABC's *The Chew*, will host the annual **James Beard Foundation Book, Broadcast & Journalism Awards Dinner** at Pier Sixty at Chelsea Piers in New York City.

Alton Brown began his culinary career with the desire to reinvent the cooking show. Upon completing his training at the New England Culinary Institute, Brown created *Good Eats*, a show that blends wit with wisdom, history with pop culture, and science with common cooking sense. Brown wrote, produced, and hosted the Food Network show for 13 years. *Good Eats* was recognized as a Peabody Award winner in April of 2007 for excellence in broadcast news, education and entertainment and in 2011, Brown received a James Beard Award for Outstanding Television Host.

Brown has lent his talents to a number of other Food Network shows including: *Iron Chef America*, *Feasting on Asphalt*, *Feasting on Waves*, *The Next Iron Chef*, *The Next Food Network Star*, and *Cutthroat Kitchen*. In 2013 he also mounted a traveling culinary variety show called the *Edible Inevitable Tour*, which has played to packed houses in over 100 cities across North America. Brown has also written seven books, including *I'm Just Here for the Food* (Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2002), which won the James Beard Foundation Award for Best Cookbook in the Reference category.

Carla Hall, acclaimed host of *The Chew* and former *Top Chef* competitor will host the 2015 Book, Broadcast and Journalism Awards. A native of Nashville, Hall's food journey began at L'Academie de Cuisine in Maryland, after returning from a trip throughout Europe that awakened her passion for food. Upon completing her culinary training,

she went on to work as a sous Chef at the Henley Park Hotel in Washington D.C. and later served as Executive Chef at both The State Plaza Hotel and The Washington Club. Hall's approach to cooking blends her classic French training and southern upbringing, both of which she has carried through to her artisan cookie company, Carla Hall Petite Cookies, as well as her restaurant, Carla Hall's Southern Kitchen, slated to open in New York City later this year.

"We are thrilled to have two of television's most influential food personalities host this year's shows, our 25<sup>th</sup> awards," said Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation. "Both Carla and Alton have made impressive contributions to the food world through the years, so they seem the perfect fit to play master of ceremonies as we celebrate all of the culinary achievements made not only by our Foundation, but the wonderful community of food and beverage professionals who have made this past quarter-century great."

This year's gala reception, directly following the ceremony, will feature former James Beard Foundation Award recipients showcasing dishes that celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and highlight the diverse food scene across America. The Gala Co-Chair Chefs, assisting with the oversight and direction of the 2015 James Beard Foundation Gala Reception, are leading an exemplary group of gala chefs who will all share their cuisine with nearly 2,000 guests at Lyric Opera House. The 2015 Gala Co-Chair Chefs are Grant Achatz, Rick Bayless, and Paul Kahan.

**Chefs confirmed to cook at the gala reception following the Awards ceremony on Monday, May 4, 2015, include:**

Justin Aprahamian  
Sanford Restaurant  
Milwaukee

Jimmy Bannos, Jr.  
The Purple Pig  
Chicago

Jamie Bissonnette  
Toro  
New York City

Dave Beran  
NEXT  
Chicago

David Chang  
Momofuku  
New York City

Ashley Christensen  
Poole's Diner  
Raleigh, NC

Colby Garrelts

Bluestem  
Kansas City

Brooks Headly,  
Del Posto Restaurant  
New York City

Jennifer Jasinski  
Rioja  
Denver

Melissa Kelly  
Primo Restaurants Ltd  
Rockland, ME

Tory McPhail  
Commander's Palace  
New Orleans

Daniel Patterson  
Coi  
San Francisco

Ryan Prewitt  
Pêche Seafood Grill  
New Orleans

Chris Shepherd  
Underbelly  
Houston

Nancy Silverton  
Mozza Restaurant Group  
Los Angeles

Vikram Sunderam  
Rasika  
Washington, D.C.

Takashi Yagihashi  
Slurping Turtle  
Chicago

On **Tuesday, March 24, 2015**, the Foundation will announce the final nominees for all award categories during a press breakfast at the James Beard House. Nominations will be announced live via the Foundation's Twitter feed at [twitter.com/beardfoundation](https://twitter.com/beardfoundation).

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.

The **James Beard Foundation Awards Ceremony and Gala Reception** will take place at Lyric Opera of Chicago on **Monday, May 4, 2015**. During the event, which is open to the public, awards for the Restaurant and Chef including America's Classics and Restaurant Design categories will be handed out, along with special achievement awards including Humanitarian of the Year, Lifetime Achievement and Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America. A gala reception will immediately follow, featuring top chefs and beverage professionals from across the country.

Established in 1990, the James Beard Awards recognize culinary professionals for excellence and achievement in their fields and further the Foundation's mission to celebrate, nurture, and honor America's diverse culinary heritage through programs that educate and inspire. 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.

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, 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 Food Group, Ecolab, Groupon, Tanqueray No. TEN®, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts; with additional support from: Chefwear, VerTerra Dinnerware, and Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board. 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](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](#) and [Instagram](#).

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