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**THE JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION AND GOURMET MAGAZINE
PRESENT
THE 2008 WHO'S WHO OF FOOD & BEVERAGE IN AMERICA**

*Inductees to be announced at special event on
Saturday, June 7, 2008 in New York City*

New York, NY (March 11, 2008) - For the first time, the James Beard Foundation's **Who's Who of Food & Beverage in America** will be presented at its own celebration, an invitation-only reception hosted by *Gourmet* magazine **on Saturday, June 7, 2008**, in New York City. This inaugural affair will pay tribute to the five 2008 inductees to the prestigious group of culinary professionals who have made a significant and unique contribution to the industry. The event will be part of the overall festivities of the James Beard Foundation Awards weekend, which will commence Friday, June 6, 2008, with the Media Awards Dinner and will culminate with the Awards Ceremony and Gala Reception Sunday, June 8, 2008. Inductees to the Who's Who receive a bronze medallion etched with the image of the late James Beard, as well as a certificate from the James Beard Foundation.

"Honoring the American food world's best and brightest, The Who's Who Award was initiated 24 years ago, just as the U.S. food revolution was getting under way," said Ruth Reichl, editor in chief of *Gourmet*. "Elected by its peers, the membership keeps constant track of the country's remarkable culinary evolution, celebrating the people who have changed the way America eats. The James Beard Foundation's Who's Who Award is, without a doubt, the most prestigious award in the world of American food today."

The Who's Who of Food & Beverage in America was established in 1984 by *Cook's Magazine* and *Restaurant Business* and became part of the James Beard Foundation's awards program in 1990. Members of

the Who's Who are individuals who have made a unique and long-lasting contribution to American gastronomy and who have been active in the industry for at least 10 years. New inductees are nominated and selected to join the prestigious group by the current members. There are 195 current members. Balloting for the voting process is conducted by the independent accounting firm Lutz & Carr.

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"The James Beard Foundation is delighted to partner with *Gourmet* to announce and celebrate the new 2008 inductees into this prestigious and influential group of leaders in our culinary world," said Susan Ungaro, president of the James Beard Foundation.

The James Beard Foundation Awards are the nation's preeminent recognition program honoring professionals in the food and beverage industries. The Awards celebrate outstanding achievement in each of the following categories: Restaurants and Chefs, Books, Journalism, Restaurant Design and Graphics, 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.

Renowned chefs Dan Barber (*Blue Hill, Blue Hill at Stone Barns*) and Odessa Piper (*L'Etoile*) will serve as Chef Co-Chairs of the 2008 James Beard Foundation Awards. This year's events will celebrate "Artisanal America" and honor those artisans and craftsmen who work to provide the finest ingredients to the nation's top restaurants and chefs. The annual Media Awards Dinner will take place on Friday, June 6, 2008 at the Hudson Theatre, an exclusive event hosted by celebrated writers and cookbook authors, Matt and Ted Lee. The Media Awards honor the nation's preeminent food journalists and culinary broadcast programs. This will be followed by the Awards Ceremony and Gala Reception on Sunday, June 8, 2008 at Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, during which the Restaurant and Chef awards will be handed

out, along with book honors and a number of special achievement awards. The location of the Who's Who of Food & Beverage in America reception will be announced at a later date.

About the James Beard Foundation

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.

About Gourmet

Gourmet, The Magazine of Good Living, celebrates the pleasures of dining, entertaining and travel with an affluent and active audience of more than 5.4 million passionate readers each month. *Gourmet* is first to identify and report on America's changing epicurean landscape that will change the way we eat, drink and travel tomorrow. *Gourmet* presents authentic and unique epicurean experiences from around the globe, ranging from the everyday to the extraordinary, through award-winning journalism and photography by acclaimed writers and photographers. www.gourmet.com

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