



For Immediate Release:

Monday, November 18, 2013

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The James Beard Foundation Celebrates Women in the Culinary Industry at the 2013 “Women in Whites” Gala

Tyra Banks, Gail Simmons, and Martha Stewart join five of the country’s top chefs for Foundation’s annual fundraiser at the Four Seasons Restaurant

New York, NY (November 18, 2013) – The [James Beard Foundation](#), the world’s foremost culinary organization, celebrated its annual gala and fundraiser at the Four Seasons Restaurant in New York City on Friday, November 15. This year’s “[Women in Whites](#)” theme featured a multi-course menu presented by five of the culinary industry’s most acclaimed chefs, including **Dominique Crenn**, **Kristen Kish**, and JBF Award winners **Melissa Kelly**, **Barbara Lynch**, and **Sherry Yard**. More than 260 guests were in attendance to honor these talented women. The evening began with an extravagant reception and silent auction featuring [Joelle & The Pinehurst Trio](#) band, followed by a seated dinner and a live auction hosted by celebrity auctioneer **Billy Harris**.

Guests enjoyed a tasting that was complemented with exquisite wine pairings chosen by 2013 JBF Award winner **Merry Edwards** of Merry Edwards Winery, in Sebastopol, California, while mixologist **Audrey Saunders**, who owns New York City’s famed Pegu Club, prepared cocktails.

The evening’s delectable courses were:

- Land and Sea: Razor Clams with Plankton, Seaweed, Bone Marrow, and Pork Belly
Dominique Crenn, Atelier Crenn; San Francisco
- Foie Gras Terrine with Walnut, Brioche Sablé, Persimmon, and Apple
Kristen Kish, Menton; Boston
- White Truffle Gnocchi with Mousseron Mushrooms and Lobster
Barbara Lynch, No. 9 Park; Boston
- Jamison Farm Lamb Duo: Saddle and en Croûte with Truffled Red Kuri Squash and Roasted Baby Root Vegetables
Melissa Kelly, Primo; Rockland, ME

Honorary Event Chairs included: **Tyra Banks**, CEO, The Tyra Banks Company; founder of the Tyra Banks TZONE Foundation; and creator of *America’s Next Top Model*; **Gail Simmons**, special projects director of *Food & Wine* and judge on *Top Chef*; and **Martha Stewart**, founder, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia.

Tyra Banks offered opening remarks, sharing what the theme of the evening meant to her: “It is my honor to be here saluting the women behind the doors of some of the world’s most renowned and delicious kitchens, who play more of a role than we think in our daily routine and the greatest moments of our lives via food.”

At the end of the dinner, Gail Simmons introduced all the chefs: “I am particularly excited to be an honorary event chair this year, not only to support JBF and tonight’s amazing featured chefs, but also as a board member and supporter of Hot Bread Kitchen, who provided the delicious breads we’ve been enjoying this evening. Hot Bread Kitchen is a non-profit organization that increases economic security for foreign-born and low-income women and men by providing job training and access to the specialty food industry.”

Among the guests who attended: James Beard Award winning chefs **David Burke** and **Emily Luchetti**, chair of the Board of Trustees, James Beard Foundation; **Belinda Chang**, wine director, Culinary Concepts; West Coast based chef/owner of Father’s Office and Lukshon, **Sang Yoon**; restaurateurs **Tony May** and **Drew Nieporent**; **Fred Seegal**, vice chair of the Board of Trustees, James Beard Foundation; Event Chairs **Kimberly Grillo Bernstein** and **Henni** and **John Kessler**; Host Committee Chairs **Zachary** and **Lori Pomerantz**; and JBF scholarship recipients **Dynia Mariano**, **Wendy Velasquez** and **Pam Yung**.

An extraordinary silent and live auction of once-in-a-lifetime packages raised over \$400,000 to support the James Beard Foundation’s mission and programs. The live auction included a plethora of unique packages including an extravagant multi-course private dinner for up to 40 people prepared by JBF Outstanding Chef award winner **David Bouley** and a private dinner for 30 at the historic James Beard House by **Mario Carbone** and **Rich Torrisi**, chef and partners, Torrisi Italian Specialties, Carbone, and other New York City hot spots. The auction, which also included “Women in Wine,” a wine country getaway for three couples with a three-night stay at Merry Edward’s Orchard House at her eponymous Russian River Valley winery, ended with a surprise pledge. For this last auction opportunity, pastry chef **Dominique Ansel** baked 25 specially-flavored in theme with the gala, all-white Mont Blanc with Chestnut Cream [Cronuts™](#). More than \$20,000 was raised from this final moment, the proceeds of which will go towards the Foundation's Women in Culinary Leadership program.

The evening ended with a delectable dessert reception created by Sherry Yard, well-known for her creation of the desserts at the annual Governor’s Ball Oscar Party. Now at Helms Bakery in Los Angeles, Sherry’s Pop-In Dessert Lounge featured a fantasy land of desserts including Tarts, Corn'Sicles, Rocks, Push-Ups, Lollies; Chocolate and Lavazza Gran Selezione Coffee Beignets; Nocciola and Lavazza Coffee Cookie Pops.

Sponsors for “Women in Whites” included Delta Air Lines; Langham Place; Lavazza Coffee and Espresso; Pierre Ferrand; Bacardi USA; Laird’s Applejack; *GOTHAM* magazine; Cognac Pierre Ferrand; Tanqueray Gin; Noilly Prat; and The Women’s Culinary Circle, a collection of female-owned businesses that further demonstrate women’s leadership in the culinary industry, including: At Vermilion, EDENS, Gourmet Settings, Les Dames d'Escoffier and The National Restaurant Association.

About the James Beard Foundation:

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation's mission is to celebrate, nurture, and honor 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 the Beard Foundation 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, 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. Find insights on food at the James Beard Foundation’s blog [Delights & Prejudices](#). “Like” the James Beard Foundation on [Facebook](#). Follow the James Beard Foundation on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

