



**SOUTH WALTON BEACHES
WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WINE & SPIRITS STARS, CULINARY DELIGHTS, LIVE MUSIC
AND POPULAR TASTING SEMINARS HIGHLIGHT
SOUTH WALTON BEACHES WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL, APRIL 27-30**

Wine, charity and fun converge during Northwest Florida Beaches Ultimate Wine Week

Miramar Beach, Florida (April 19, 2017) — A dazzling roster of more than a dozen celebrity winemakers, brew masters, distillers, chefs and entertainers, will converge in Miramar Beach, Florida to wine, dine, educate and entertain guests as part of the four-day celebration of wine during the 2017 South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival held April 27-30 throughout the Town Center of Grand Boulevard at Sandestin.

Building upon 32 years of long-lasting relationships forged with the industry’s top winemakers and distributors, South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival shines a spotlight on the beach communities of idyllic South Walton in Northwest Florida.

“South Walton keeps upping their game every year and this year we are thrilled to again be a top sponsor of this great event. It’s a professional party that does a lot of good and makes South Walton a yearly destination for our audience,” says Jay Spaleta, vice president of publishing for Wine Enthusiast magazine.

Highlights of the area’s premier signature wine event center on sipping, swirling and tasting more than 800 domestic and imported wines:

A Win-win Wine Festival

The Festival is an opportunity to “meet” 216 medal winners (Gold, Silver and Bronze winners in 72 categories). Each winner is noted with a special collar and recognized in the Tasting Guide given to each attendee. Be sure to taste the Best of Show Red: La Rioja Alta Viña Ardanza Reserve, 2007; Best of Show White: Ramey Platt Vineyard Chardonnay, 2012; People’s Choice winner, Louis Martini Napa

Cabernet Sauvignon, 2013 and a new category this year, Best of Show Champagne/Sparkling Wine: Dolci Colline Rose Spumante (Brut).

Celebrity Appearances

The star-studded celebrity roster includes winemakers, chefs, master distillers, craft beer brew masters and other special guests who will be available to meet and discuss their crafts with festival guests. They include: Don Hartford, founder/owner Hartford Family Estates/CEO Jackson Family Wines; Glenn C. Salva, wine estate manager, Antica Napa Valley; Erik Saccomani, Marchesi Antinori Wines; Thomas Houseman, winemaker, Anne Amie; Franco Massolino, winemaker, Massolino Winery; Andrew Holloway, winemaker, Rombauer Winery; Laurent Gruet, winemaker, Gruet Winery; Scott Plumley, culinary director of the festival and Wine World restaurants; Chef Kevin Korman, Roselie Dining + Seafood; Chef Stephen Bucalo, The Hub on 30A; Chef Ted Morrison, Barefoot's Beachside Bar & Grill at Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa; Chef Yoshie Eddings, Harbor Docks; Pierre de Agostini, ANCO Fine Cheeses; Mona B. McGee, Mac Farms; Tommy Brunett, founder/owner, Iron Smoke Whiskey; James C. "Jimmy" Russell, master distiller, Wild Turkey Distillery; Carlton Grooms, Papa's Pilar Rum; Fred Parent, Hendrick's Gin; Robert Ryan, Tullamore D.E.W.; Harlen Wheatley, master distiller, The Sazerac Company/Buffalo Trace Distillery among others.

Craft Beer & Spirits Jam

On Friday night food & beverage industry "celebrities" representing some of the hottest breweries and happening distilleries from across the country will be mixing, mingling and pouring more than 150 different kinds of specialty craft beers and spirits samples. Along EATS Street, guests will be able to nibble a smorgasbord of savory small plate menu items prepared by a range of South Walton and Destin restaurants, eateries and food trucks. Beers will be poured by, among others, Abita Brewing Company, Cigar City Brewing Co., Oskar Blues Brewery and 3rd Planet Brewing and local breweries Idyll Hounds, Grayton Beer Company, Destin Brewery, Nivol Brewing and others.

Champagne Lane Has New Hours

Special guests and wine celebrities will be pouring fine Champagnes and sparkling wines on Saturday and Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m. in the new Champagne Lane Tasting tent. Indulge in fine chocolates and sweet treats from Kilwin's Chocolates, Fudge & Ice Cream, and of course, lots of bubbles.

Culinary Delights on the Menu

Foodies will delight in the delicious dishes prepared by both local and celebrity chefs specially designed to pair with the impressive roster of imported and domestic wines being poured. The Savor South Walton Culinary Village, artfully orchestrated by local Festival Culinary Director Scott Plumley, will include an array of food tastings that will both satisfy and surprise the palate. Culinary delights will include Alabama Goat Cheese Fritters with San Marzano Tomato Sauce; Cavatelli with Pork Ragu, Tuscan Kale, Parmesan and Lemon Breadcrumbs; Spicy Lamb Meatballs with Italian Salsa Verde and Dirty Risotto "Jambalaya." Local chefs from area restaurants add to the vibrant culinary scene by serving house-made Blood Orange sorbet (Chef Ted Morrison); Shrimp & Grits Fritter with Tomato & Pepper Jam (Chef Kevin Korman); Smoked Chili-Lime Wings and Pickled Gulf Shrimp Ceviche (Chef Stephen Bucalo.) Also on the menu are artisan cheeses by ANCO Fine Cheeses, sushi creations (Chef Yoshie Eddings) as well as gourmet

olive oils and fresh nibbles harvested from the organic gardens of Mac Farms in Santa Rosa Beach, decadent sweet treats and charcuterie platters from Publix Super Market and more.

Local Restaurant Favorites

At Friday night's Craft Beer & Spirit Jam, you can find small plates prepared by local favorites on EATS Street. This year's event features a range of award-winning restaurants, eateries and food trucks including Another Broken Egg, Jackacuda's Seafood & Sushi, Cabana Café, Cantina Laredo Modern Mexican Food, The Craft Bar, Crepe La Rus, The Bistro at the Courtyard by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard and Roux 30A. For Saturday's VIP Tasting, delectable small plates will be prepared by signature restaurants from Grand Boulevard, including Cantina Laredo Modern Mexican Food, Tommy Bahama's Restaurant, Mitchell's Fish Market, P. F. Chang's China Bistro, Everkrisp and Grimaldi's Coal Brick-Oven Pizzeria will serve their most popular dishes.

Wine & Food Tastings & Seminars

On Saturday and Sunday head to the Savor South Walton Culinary Village to take in 45-minute celebrity tasting seminars. Saturday, April 29 at 1:15 p.m.: Don Hartford, owner/founder of Hartford Family Wines and CEO of Jackson Family Wines presents a Pinot Noir-focused seminar examining the terroir of California's AVA's (American Viticultural Area). "A Walk-Through Piedmont with Frank Massolino: Experience the Varietals, Terroir and History of Northern Italy's Most Prestigious Wine Region" follows at 2:30 p.m. At 3:30 p.m. Tommy Brunett, founder of Iron Smoke Whiskey (and touring guitarist for Modern English) takes center stage to share his adventure from rock 'n' roll to award-winning whiskey. Sunday at 1:30 p.m. Laurent Gruet with Gruet Winery and Jameson Fink with Wine Enthusiast magazine present a "sparkling" seminar entitled "French Roots; American Dreams;" at 3 p.m. Antica Wine Estate Manager Glenn C. Salva presents "Antinori Heritage Explored through Cabernet." Seminars are included in ticket price; seating is limited and first come, first served.

Live Music Showcase

During the Grand Wine Tastings, the top songwriters from Nashville will perform their hit songs as part of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association's (FRLA) "Nashville Songwriters Florida Sunshine Tour." This entertainment is sponsored by FRLA and VISIT FLORIDA, in conjunction with BMI Nashville.

Wine Retail Tent

Whether your tasting tour has led to you to an old flame or a new love, you can purchase your wine discovery in the Wine Retail Tent located on site. It is open Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m. For each ticket purchased, attendees receive a \$5 rebate toward their wine purchase.

Ticket Prices & Event Times

The Craft Beer & Spirits Jam kicks off the festival Friday from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Advance tickets are \$35. The Grand Tastings are on Saturday and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Advance tickets are \$99 and ticket price includes Spirits Row, Champagne Lane Tasting, wine and food tastings, tasting seminars and live entertainment. Tickets are \$175 for the VIP Tasting, which is already sold out. The event is rain or shine;

sorry, children and pets are not allowed in Culinary Village. Ticket prices increase April 24. To purchase tickets and view the full festival schedule visit www.SoWalWine.com.

Partnership Support

Presented by Visit South Walton and Wine Enthusiast Media, the festival offers the ideal backdrop for a beach getaway. The Festival is made possible by the generous support of the following sponsors: Silver Sands Premium Outlets, Publix Super Market, GPL Landscaping, Vino-Venue, McCaskill & Company, VOSS Water, Emerald Coast Magazine, Fisher Brown, Coastal Accounting and 654-LIMO. Festival Founding Partners are Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation, Visit South Walton Tourist Development Council, Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association and VISIT FLORIDA, Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa, Wine World of Northwest Florida and Grand Boulevard at Sandestin. ResortQuest by Wyndham Vacation Rentals is the official lodging partner of the festival.

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About South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival

This year's annual South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival will be held April 27-30, 2017 throughout the Town Center of Grand Boulevard at Sandestin. The festival features a stunning showcase of the best wines in the world. Meet the celebrity wine producers and master distillers presenting their fine wine and spirits from around the world. The Savor South Walton Culinary Village offers a sumptuous array of foods to taste, wines to pair, as well as wine and food tasting seminars. Visit Spirits Row, Champagne Lane and Nosh Pavilions and enjoy live entertainment throughout the weekend. The event is a major fundraiser for Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation, which benefits children in need in Northwest Florida. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.SoWalWine.com.

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