

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival, April 25-28, Welcomes Celebrity Winemakers, Master Distillers, Chefs, Brew Masters and Culinary Experts for 2019 Celebration

Miramar Beach, Fla.—April 23, 2019—The 2019 South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival, April 25-28, has emerged as one of the Southeast’s premier wine and food festivals. With an impressive roster of winemakers, master brewers and master distillers, the festival features premier wines, craft beer and spirits poured by the maker themselves. The festival takes participants on a virtual tour around the globe, tasting premier wines from acclaimed wine growing regions.

The Wine

Featuring more than 800 wines poured by the winemakers themselves along with knowledgeable wine industry insiders, the South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival will impress wine enthusiasts and new wine lovers alike. This year’s focus is on Oregon wines. With Oregon’s Willamette Valley gaining international acclaim for producing some of the world’s best pinot noir, this region is leading the state’s explosive growth, which now totals more than 500 wineries. To tell this story, Oregon wine industry leaders Erik Kramer, winemaker for [WillaKenzie Estate](#) and Eugenia Keegan, [Jackson Family Wines’](#) Oregon General Manager will team up to explore the history of Oregon terroir and viticulture as well as the artistry and science behind the winemaking at the Sunday featured wine seminar (seminar seating is first come, first serve). Mollie Battenhouse, MW, of Jackson Family Wines will lead the panel. On this journey of Oregon wines, attendees will sample wines from WillaKenzie Estate, Gran Moraine and [Penner-Ash Wine Cellars](#).

“There are terrific wines coming out of the region. We’ve learned to grow in a viticulture climate and it is a big part of why Oregon wines have become so popular,” said Erik Kramer of WillaKenzie and Willamette Valley resident for 15 years. “As a winemaker, you spend time farming, time in the lab, time simply exploring and coming up with ideas. You spend time making the experience one that people love and there are a lot of people passionate about wine – it’s a joy to be a part of it.”

With acclaimed winemakers, sommeliers and wine industry notables converging in South Walton, the festival is welcoming an impressive roster of celebrity winemakers and special guests for 2019. Oregon winery notables including John Grochau, winemaker/owner of Grochau Cellars (Oregon) and Robert Alstrin of Argyle Winery (Oregon-Willamette) will be personally pouring and discussing the area’s history and their wines. Returning winemakers will be joined by first time participants including Ralph Hertelendy of Hertelendy Wines (Napa Valley); Christiana Gifford of Honey Bubbles Sparkling Moscato (Santa Rosa County, Ca.) and Gretchen Brakesman of Red Thread Wines (Napa Valley). In addition, esteemed winery owner Aurélie Bertin, owner of Chateau Sainte Roseline in Les Arcs, France, is joining the stellar line-up of wine industry luminaries to pour and discuss wines from the Provence/Alpes-Cote d’Azur region of France and secrets behind their revered

Cote de Provence wines. Mrs. Bertin will be featured in the Rosé All Day Garden tent presented by ResortQuest by Wyndham Vacation Rentals

The Spirits

South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival has an equally impressive line-up of master distillers producing premium spirits joining the weekend celebration. On Saturday, April 27 at 1:30 p.m., whisky icon Bill Samuels, Jr. of [Maker's Mark](#) will kick off the festival's tasting seminars. Participants will taste and hear the stories by this visionary Whisky Hall of Famer. The Marker's Mark exhibition at the festival will feature Master Mixologist Bobby Gleason creating craft cocktails with Maker's Mark premium spirits. To add to the celebration of food and wine, Maker's Mark has partnered with artist Perego who will create a large-scale mural live at the Craft Beer & Spirits Jam on Friday night, which will then be won during the festival as part of the Wine Geek package worth more than \$2,000. On Saturday and Sunday, Perego's famed painted staves will be given away to fans.

The Maker's Mark exhibit will be complemented by exhibitions from Hendrick's Gin and American Freedom Distillery. Bottled in Scotland, Hendrick's Gin was made famous by its special botanicals recipe that includes a unique infusion of rose petals and cucumber alongside more traditional ingredients. With a non-conventional, clever visual approach, Hendrick's Gin entertains festival goers while delighting their palates with their premium gin. The team from American Freedom Distillery plans to astonish attendees with their offering of premium spirits as well as their honorary guests, The Horse Soldiers! This extraordinary band of US soldiers rode to victory in Afghanistan and opened a nine-year campaign. Attendees can meet, honor and photograph this group of American heroes!

The Food

Ranked among the Top 11 Food and Beverage Festivals in Florida by FloridaRentals.com, the festival's Savor South Walton Culinary Village has become a top draw. A new exposition kitchen will allow Culinary Director Scott Plumley of Wine World Restaurants and his team to showcase their craft and serve fresh cuisine throughout the day. Chef Plumley will be joined by celebrated local chefs serving light bites, including fresh sushi prepared by the venerable Yoshie Eddings of Harbor Docks and classic southern delights directed by acclaimed Chef Jim Shirley. Chef Shirley is one of the five distinguished Celebrity Chefs of Pensacola who have cooked at the James Beard House numerous times. He owns five of South Walton's most popular restaurants and is co-owner of three restaurants in Pensacola. During the festival, he and his team will create a culinary spread that beautifully complements wines served in the Rosé All Day Garden, including still, sparkling and even frozen rosés.

Nosh Pavilions are located throughout the festival, serving up tasty offerings from Chef Ryan Cogan of Barefoot's Beachside Bar & Grill, Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa; Mona B. McGee of Mac Farms, Kilwin's Chocolates, Fudge & Ice Cream and the Publix Super Market Pavilion will feature an array of delectable bites and bottled water to stay hydrated.

Culinary education is on the menu as well. Presented by Gourmet Foods International and Jackson Family Wines, world-renowned cheese expert and educator Michael Landis will lead two seminars (Saturday and Sunday) presenting a collection of the American Cheese Society's medal-winning cheeses paired with wines that are to be savored. As the Director of Education for the [Institut du Fromage](#), Landis has been teaching food and beverage pairings for more than 20 years. Participants will learn from an American Cheese Society Certified Cheese Professional and inductee of the International Guilde des Fromages.

The Entertainment

On the Town Center Main Stage, guests will enjoy the sounds of the Nashville Songwriters Sunshine Tour. Sponsored by Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) and VISIT FLORIDA, in conjunction with BMI Nashville, leading songwriters from Nashville will perform their hit songs as part of the Nashville Songwriters Florida Sunshine Tour. On Friday, Gurufish will perform a funk, pop explosion at the Craft Beer & Spirits Jam, which features more than 100 different kinds of specialty craft beers and spirits alongside a smorgasbord of savory small plate menu items prepared by a range of award-winning restaurants, eateries and food trucks.

Proceeds from the South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival support the Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation, benefiting children in need in Northwest Florida.

Tickets are now on sale. Event details and tickets are available at www.SoWalWine.com. To purchase tickets, visit <https://sowalwine.com/tickets/>.

Presented by [Grand Boulevard at Sandestin](#), 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 Founding Partners: 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.

###

About South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival

This year's annual South Walton Beaches Wine & Food Festival will be held April 25-28, 2019 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 the new Rosé All Day Garden, Spirits Row and Nosh Pavilions and enjoy live entertainment throughout the weekend. The Craft Beer & Spirits Jam and Winemakers & Shakers events round out the extended festival 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.

Media Contact:

For South Walton Beaches Wine and Food Festival
Stacey Brady, Director of Marketing and Communications
Grand Boulevard at Sandestin
(850) 837-3099 ext. 203
stacey@grandboulevard.com