



Contact:

Lana Gersten | 312.846.1655 | lgersten@groupgordon.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chef Rick Tramonto to Lead Exceptional Culinary Experience as Chef de Cuisine of the 2016 Naples Winter Wine Festival

James Beard Award-Winner to Headline an All-Star Lineup of Top Culinary Talent

Naples, FL – July 28, 2015 – Longtime Naples Winter Wine Festival (NWWF) supporter and renowned chef Rick Tramonto will return to the event for the sixth year, this time as the honored Chef de Cuisine. A pillar of the Chicago restaurant world and a James Beard Award winner, Chef Tramonto will be joined by a team of culinary all-stars at the annual Festival, to be held from January 29-31, 2016 at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in Naples, Florida.

“There’s no doubt that the Naples Winter Wine Festival is one of the most successful charity events in the world,” said Chef Rick Tramonto. “The work of the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF) is an inspiration, and being able to use my passion for food to give back to the community is an honor. As a father myself, it is especially rewarding to work with an organization dedicated to transforming the lives of children in need.”

Over more than two decades running some of Chicago’s most recognized restaurants, including his most awarded establishment, Tru, Chef Tramonto gained critical acclaim and received numerous four-star reviews. In 2010, he brought his talents to the Big Easy, teaming up with Louisiana native (and fellow NWWF regular) John Folse to start a new restaurant company, Home on the Range. Their flagship project, Restaurant R’evolution, won *New Orleans Magazine’s* Best New Restaurant in 2013. Their second venture, Seafood R’evolution, was awarded *Best Seafood Restaurant in Mississippi* by *Mississippi Magazine* in 2015. At this year’s NWWF, the two will partner again to prepare a special meal for one of the Festival’s acclaimed private vintner dinners. In 2010, Chef Tramonto appeared on the second season of *Top Chef Masters*, competing for charitable donations against other renowned chefs. He has also guest-judged on *Top Chef* and appeared as a contestant on *Iron Chef America*. Chef Tramonto has appeared twice on *Oprah*, and several times on *Good Morning America* and *the Today Show*.

In addition to his continued participation at the NWWF, Chef Tramonto supports a number of charities, including Feed the Children and Angel Tree.

“We are so pleased to honor a chef whose impact on the Naples Winter Wine Festival, and, by extension, our whole community is undeniable,” said Laura Dixon, Co-Chair of the 2016 Naples Winter

Wine Festival. “Chef Tramonto is extremely dedicated to his craft and his charitable endeavors, and having him as Chef de Cuisine will help make this one of our best Festivals to date.”

The NWWF draws top vintners and chefs from around the world for a weekend of incredible wine and food. Guests enjoy private vintner dinners that pair some of the most awarded vintners in the world with the most talented chefs as well as an electrifying live auction offering the chance to bid on one-of-a-kind travel experiences, limited edition cars, and unique wine lots not available to the general public.

Ticket packages to this year’s Naples Winter Wine Festival, limited to 580 guests, start at \$10,000 per couple. A \$25,000 package that includes reserved seating for a party of four under the tent at a vintner dinner is also available. For more information about the NWWF, please visit <http://www.napleswinefestival.com> or call 888-837-4919.

About the Naples Winter Wine Festival

The Naples Winter Wine Festival is one of the world’s most prestigious charity wine auctions, bringing together renowned vintners and chefs with wine enthusiasts and philanthropists for a three-day Festival that raises millions of dollars for underprivileged and at-risk children. Every dollar raised under the tent funds the Festival’s founding organization, the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF), whose annual grants and strategic initiatives have provided more than 200,000 children with the services and resources they need to excel. For more information, please visit napleswinefestival.com.

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