

Foodies Unite to Fight Hunger

NYWFF brought out award-winning chefs and adoring food enthusiasts. SOBE, mark your calendars, the festival is coming your way this February. Here's a preview!

Words by Vanessa Pascale • Photo Credit: Getty Images for NYCWFF

The New York Wine and Food Festival presented by *FOOD & WINE* is a foodie's dream, where over 500 chefs, including the heavyweights like Emeril Lagasse, Martha Stewart, Bobby Flay, and Giada De Laurentiis play host among more than 100 events open to the public. The four-day affair includes intimate dinners and brunches, walk-around tastings, hands-on classes, seminars, and late night parties. And the icing on the cake is that

it's all for a great cause —100% of NYWFF's net proceeds benefit Food Bank for New York and the No Kid Hungry Campaign. The festival's motto: "Eat. Drink. End Hunger." A whopping \$8.5 million has been raised to fight hunger.

The New York festival started out in 2007 as a one night affair. In 2008, Lee Brian Schrage, festival founder and director, took the event and modeled it after sister food festival The Food

Network & Cooking Channel South Beach Wine & Food Festival presented by *FOOD & WINE*. The best of the best in the culinary world are in attendance, which draws in food lovers and fans from all over. This February 24-28th is the South Beach Wine & Food Festival (for tickets visit sobefest.com). I had the pleasure of covering the following sold out events in New York. (SOBEWFF will also host Meatopia and The Art of Tiki, so be sure to check them out.)



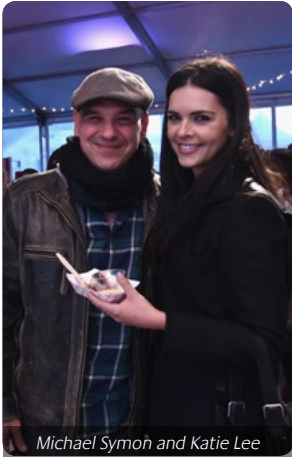
CELEBRITY CRUISES® SWEET MASQUERADE hosted by Dominique Ansel and Pecko Zantilaveevan part of Mohegan Sun's Late Night Party Series
\$125 / 10 pm-2 am

This magical affair took place within the Four Seasons Restaurant's chic Pool Room. Guests were given masks to don, while they got their fill of beautiful sugary creations. The hottest restaurants in the city were there, including James Beard award-winning pastry chef and Cronut creator Dominique Ansel, whose Secret Garden of Chocolates allowed you to pluck fresh basil leaves to wrap around their Lemon Curd and Sea Salt Chocolates, a unique combo that was surprisingly delicious. The Four Season Restaurant's Jim W. Hutchinson served up a delicious Frozen Molten Chocolate Cake topped with rich whipped cream and a chocolate, and Locanda Verde's Kierin Baldwin served a Lemon Olive Oil Torta with Scilian Oregano topped with a thin lemon slice. And, I was happily sent home with a box of chocolates compliments of Celebrity Cruises.



Stacked: Sandwiches and Sides hosted by Tiffani Thiessen part of LOCAL presented by Delta Air Lines
\$125 / 12 pm-3 pm

In its 6th year, this sandwich competition took place at the Hudson, and was hosted by Tiffani Thiessen, the star of Cooking Channel's *Dinner at Tiffani's*. Tiffani served up her tasty Pastrami Reuben with Brussels Sprouts Slaw, chatted with yours truly about the holidays (interview in our People section), and met with adoring fans. The sandwiches and side dishes were scrumptious! From Delicatessen's Short Rib Dip to Asellina's Polenta Concia, and the Frozen Kefir Sandwich (coconut cookies sandwiching frozen mango kefir)—it was all so yummy.



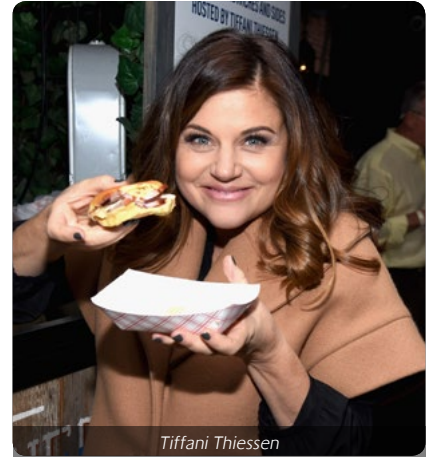
Michael Symon and Katie Lee



Haylie Duff



Emeril Lagasse



Tiffani Thiessen

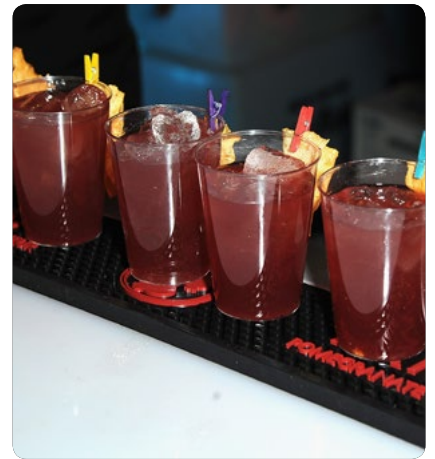
Veg Out: Stretch, Sip and Savor presented by Hungryroot hosted by Haylie Duff
\$105 / 2-5 pm

Hosted at the Gansevoort and by *The Real Girl's Kitchen's* Haylie Duff, guests were treated to a plethora of goodies. The event featured healthy bites, chair massages, ear candling, yoga classes, photo opps and a complimentary copy of Haylie's cookbook, *The Real Girl's Kitchen*, which she signed for fans onsite. Haylie even took some time out for an interview with me (featured in our People section). The health-centric dishes, comprised of organic and local ingredients, were presented by the area's top restaurants. In attendance was Chef Franklin Becker from Little Beet Table and Hungryroot. There was beet salad, carrots in peanut sauce, sliders, empanadas and popcorn! I left relaxed, full and excited to try out some recipes from Haylie's cookbook.



THE ART OF TIKI: A COCKTAIL SHOWDOWN presented by Cocktail Kingdom hosted by Emeril Lagasse
\$115 / 10 pm -1 am

Set on a pier on the Westside, luckily, this event was centered around cocktails because it's what was needed for guests to keep warm on this particularly chilly night (it's always colder by the water). Here, a list of celebrated bartenders mixed up their best Tiki cocktail (rum-centered) with spirits from the Southern Wine & Spirits Portfolio. Light Polynesian-inspired bites were served up as well, and we even got lei'd. When it came to announce the winner at the end of the night, Emeril Lagasse finally emerged, and then swiftly exited — I guess it was too cold on the pier for him. All in all, it was a great event.



Meatopia presented by Creekstone Farms hosted by Michael Symon
\$165 / 4 pm-7 pm

Meat lovers, come hungry because you're going to want to sample it all, and go back for seconds. Known as the world's most famous meat festival, the event was hosted by Chef Michael Symon. This meats-galore event served up big hunks of tender and perfectly cooked chicken, lamb, beef, pork... There was Balthazar's Porcini Rubbed and Smoked Prime Rib Sandwich; BBQ by Hill Country; Ai Fiori's Wood-Fired Short Ribs; Braised Short Rib with Polenta... the list goes on. The "Whole Animal Court" included whole lambs, hogs, and goats. There was live music, beer, wine, cocktails and the heavenly smell of BBQ in the air. If you like a good piece of meat — this is an event not to be missed. **ML**

