

ST. CROIX FOOD & WINE EXPERIENCE

Iron Chefs, Rebellious Chefs, Island Chefs Support St. Croix Food & Wine Experience

Tim Love, Kevin Rathbun, Gabriel Rucker, Roberto Treviño to Judge Island Wide Competition, Prepare Fundraising Dinners and Face-Off in Fun Competition

St. Croix, US Virgin Islands - 2010 - Celebrated American chefs have signed up to support The St. Croix Food & Wine Experience, an annual series of events that support the community programs of the St. Croix Foundation. The four-day fundraising fete will take place April 13-17, 2010 on St. Croix, US Virgin Islands.

Participating celebrated chefs for the 2010 St. Croix Food & Wine Experience include:

Tim Love **Ft. Worth, Texas**

Tim Love has become a nationally recognized culinary personality. He has appeared on Paula Deen, Rachael Ray, on Top Chef Masters, and Iron Chef America. As chef/owner of The Lonesome Dove Western Bistro and The Love Shack in Fort Worth, his innovative dishes have earned critical and popular acclaim. The Love Shack earned three stars from *The Dallas Morning News*, being singled out as having the "most perfect burger on the planet" by *The Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, and was named by *Condé Nast Traveler* as a 2008 Hot List restaurant.

Kevin Rathbun **Atlanta, Georgia**

Chef Kevin Rathbun is the award-winning visionary owner of three of Atlanta's acclaimed restaurants Rathbun's, Krog Bar, and Kevin Rathbun Steak. Nicknamed the "Sultan of Steak" by the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, Rathbun was selected as the 2007 Rising Star Chef and he and his brother, Chef Kent Rathbun, took down Bobby Flay on Food Network's "Iron Chef." Rathbun, a supporter of the NFL's Taste of the NFL charity, has worked with celebrity chefs and restaurateurs such as Bradley Ogden, Emeril Lagasse, Stephen Pyles, Ella Brennan and Pano Karratossos, is a native of Kansas City, Missouri.

Gabriel Rucker **Portland, Oregon**

Gabriel Rucker, the chef/owner of Le Pigeon in Portland, which he opened in 2006 at the age of 25, is rebellious with his bistro offerings and the "darling of the culinary world." A self-taught cook, Rucker has won multiple awards, including *Food & Wine* magazine's Best New Chefs of 2007, *Portland Monthly's* Chef of the Year 2006, *The Oregonian's* Rising Star Chef 2006, *Restaurant and Hospitality Magazine's* Rising Star of 2007. He earned a nomination for the James Beard "Rising Star" award in 2009 and he has been selected as a Food Ambassador for the state of Oregon. *Men's Journal* magazine selected him as a chef-model for the October 2009 issue. With all the acclaim, Rucker remains truly modest, states "No chef does it alone."

Roberto Treviño **Puerto Rico**

As a contender in Food Network's *Iron Chef America*, Roberto Treviño, a leader in Nuevo Latino cuisine, exhibited his talents as he battled Mario Batali. His warmth and charm along with his skilful Asian fusion can be experienced at Budatai, his restaurant in Puerto Rico. Chef Treviño has been featured in *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Coastal Living*, *The New York Times*, *Bon Appétit* and *Gourmet*. He has been honored to cook a dinner at the James Beard House in New York, and at their awards events.

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Each guest chef will be guest judge at Taste of St. Croix, the island's culinary competition, will each host a Cork & Fork dinner, intimate fundraising dinners paired with a top winery, and will face-off in a friendly competition with local island chefs.

Over the past few years, guest chefs have included Rocco DiSpirito, Antonia Lofaso, Kevin Rathbun, Robbin Haas, Gerry Klaskala, Wayne Nish, Richard Reddington and Johnny Vinczencz. Past participating vintners have included Chris Benziger of Benziger Wineries, Bill Blais of Kendall Jackson Estates, Bob Foley from Foley Wines, Paul Hoffman of Medusa Wines, Julianna Martinelli of Martinelli Vineyards, Joel Peterson from Ravenswood, Maria Ponzi of Ponzi Vineyards, Carroll Kemp of Red Car Wines, and Kent Rosenblum from Rosenblum Cellars.

Tickets to the St. Croix Food & Wine Experience go on sale in March 2010 and will be available at www.StCroixFoodandWine.com. Patrons wanting access to all events can purchase the "Platinum Patron" package for \$5000, which includes two tickets to each event and a choice of one Cork & Fork dinner. Sponsorship packages are also available. For more information on sponsorship opportunities or Patron packages, please contact Roger Dewey at 340-773-9898.

About the St. Croix Food & Wine Experience

The St. Croix Food & Wine Experience, named one on the Ten Best International Food and Wine Festivals by Forbes Travel, showcases the diverse cuisine and wine available on St. Croix, US Virgin Islands. The multi-day event includes gourmet dinners, wine seminars, wine auctions, and the annual culinary competition, A Taste of St. Croix. The event benefits the St. Croix Foundation (www.stxfoundation.org), a non-profit community foundation that administers a number of local programs. The event was started in 2001 by restaurant owners Katherine Pugliese of Eat@CaneBay, and Kelly Odom of Tutto Bene, and is recognized as the pre-eminent food and wine event in the Caribbean. For more information visit www.stcroixfoodandwine.com or www.tasteofstcroix.com.

About The St. Croix Foundation

Proceeds from The St. Croix Food & Wine Experience are donated to The St. Croix Foundation, a non-profit organization focused on community revitalization, economic development, youth programs, education and additional needs in the community. The culinary event has raised more than \$750,000 for The St. Croix Foundation over the past nine years. For more information visit www.stxfoundation.org.

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