



NEWS RELEASE

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Pensacola Chefs to Honor Florida's 500-Year History at Third-Consecutive James Beard House Dinner

PENSACOLA, Fla. (Feb. 28, 2013) – Five of the Pensacola Bay Area's finest chefs are heading back to New York's acclaimed James Beard House for the third consecutive year to host a dinner showcasing the destination's culinary offerings, Spanish heritage and *Viva Florida 500*, an initiative celebrating the state's 500th anniversary.

The already sold-out culinary event – titled “*Viva Pensacola! A Culinary Exploration Commemorating the Influences of Spain*” – will be hosted by Visit Pensacola on March 27. The menu, presented by the Pensacola Celebrity Chefs, will fuse modern Gulf Coast cuisine with gustatory inspirations from the first nation to fly its flag over the Pensacola Bay Area, when it became America's first major settlement attempt in 1559.

Along Northwest Florida's Gulf Coast, culture and history blend to create a distinct local flavor. In the Pensacola Bay Area, Southern traditions and a 450-year history influenced by five flags (Spain, France, England, the Confederacy and the United States) combine with the freshest seafood and produce to create an extraordinary culinary experience. At the James Beard House, the Pensacola Celebrity Chefs – **Dan Dunn** of H2O at the Hilton Pensacola Beach Gulf Front, **Irv Miller** of Jackson's Steakhouse, **Jim Shirley** of the Fish House, **Gus Silivos** of Skopelos/Nancy's Haute Affairs and **Frank Taylor** of Global Grill – will present a menu celebrating these influences. Each of the main courses will pay tribute to different regions of Spain – Andalucía, Aragon, Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa in the Basque Country and Galicia – and have been expertly paired with Spanish wines, provided by **Jorge Ordoñez & Co.**, one of the most prominent Spanish wine importers in the United States.

“To have been invited to the James Beard House for an unprecedented third year is a tremendous honor, as is having the opportunity to represent the rich history and culture of the Pensacola Bay Area and of Florida through a culinary exploration,” Chef Silivos said. “Each dish will be seasoned with a dash of Southern and a pinch of Spanish.”

The evening will begin with tapas, which include Gulf Coast lump crab with fresh herbs and Galicia tetilla cheese petit pastissos; Basque-style steamed clams with house-made chorizo; Gulf shrimp croquetas with Manchego cheese, aioli and fresh tomato sauce; skewer of Ibérico Serrano ham-wrapped swordfish with saffron aioli and pickled quail egg; markitako de cabrito (goat stew) with onions, leeks, green peppers, chorizo, garlic, potatoes, fresh tomatoes and Pimentón de la Vera.

For the main courses, the chefs will prepare pan-seared diver sea scallops, Romesco sauce olive tostado, La Quercia cured ham and apricot-almond chutney with preserved figs; Txangurro, Basque-style cooked crabs, stuffed with blue crab and Florida lobster; grouper Kokotxa with Idiazábal cheese, Pil-Pil sauce and chive garni; chorizo-crust red snapper with saffron rice pudding, mojo de cilantro and fried silver mullet roe; and domestic lamb shank with Aragonese potatoes au gratin, roasted baby carrots, cipollini onions and roasted peppers.

Wines paired with the courses will include Bodegas La Cana Albariño 2011, Txomin Etxaniz Getariako Txakolina 2012, Bodegas Muga Rioja Reserva 2008, Bodegas Volver Single Vineyard Volver 2010, Bodegas Alto Moncayo Alto Moncayo 2010 and Marques de Gelida Brut Exclusive Gran Reserva Cava 2008.

Finally, dessert, prepared collaboratively by the five chefs, will consist of a sweet basil Spanish olive oil-infused ice cream with fig and mascarpone-filled buñuelo español, toasted candied almonds and Pedro Ximénez syrup, paired with Alvear Pedro Ximénez de Añada 2008.

The James Beard Foundation was established in 1986 in honor of James Beard, a cookbook author, teacher and father of American gastronomy. Beard's Greenwich Village townhouse showcases the industry's finest chefs at nightly dining events. The March 27 event will be the Pensacola Celebrity Chefs' third consecutive James Beard House dinner.

To learn more about the Pensacola Bay Area's culinary offerings, as well as history, attractions and year-round festivals and events, go to www.VisitPensacola.com, or call 1-800-874-1234 to request a complimentary Visitor Guide.

About Visit Pensacola

Visit Pensacola, the Greater Pensacola Chamber's tourism arm, is the Pensacola Bay Area's Convention and Visitors Bureau, focused on promoting the Pensacola Bay Area as a premier travel destination. For more information or to request a complimentary Visitor Guide, contact Visit Pensacola at (850) 434-1234 or (800) 874-1234 toll-free or go to www.VisitPensacola.com. You can also stay informed of Pensacola Bay Area happenings through www.Facebook.com/VisitPensacola.

About the Pensacola Celebrity Chefs

Visit Pensacola created the Pensacola Celebrity Chefs initiative in 2008 to highlight the Pensacola Bay Area's unique culinary offerings. In 2009, during the city's 450th anniversary, the chefs cooked for King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia of Spain at a banquet of 500 guests. They have previously hosted seven sold-out events, including two James Beard House dinners, in June 2011 and March 2012, both of which were featured on MSNBC's "Morning Joe." For more information, visit www.PensacolaCelebrityChefs.com.

About Viva Florida

This year, Florida has reached a significant milestone, the 500th anniversary of European contact on the continental United States. While Florida's history dates back more than 12,000 years with the American Indians, Spain's claim in 1513 began a new, modern era. Viva Florida 500 commemorates the story of how many nationalities and diverse cultures thrived together in Florida and how their legacy continues to shape America. The Florida Department of State and its many partners are planning enriching events and experiences across the state. Learn more by visiting www.fl500.com and www.vivaflorida.org.

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