



CITY DINING

OUR IN-DEPTH GUIDE TO MEMPHIS-AREA RESTAURANTS



Master Chef José Gutierrez

TIDBITS

Memphis Food & Wine Festival

by PAMELA DENNEY

WHEN RIVER OAKS MASTER CHEF JOSÉ GUTIERREZ talks about Michelin star Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten — the headliner for the first annual Memphis Food & Wine Festival — he uses his first name, dropping the chef and the last name as only good friends can do. The chefs' longstanding friendship started decades ago in southern France, when they both worked in the acclaimed kitchen of Paul Bocuse. "He is a sweet, sweet gentleman who is the most amazing chef, and he has never been to Memphis before," said Gutierrez at a media kickoff for the celebration of food, wine, and blues music to benefit Le Bonheur's FedExFamily House.

Vongerichten's credentials — he operates 30 restaurants worldwide — set a gold-star standard for an impressive lineup of more than two-dozen local, regional, and national chefs and the exquisite dishes they will serve at the October 15th event, staged at the Memphis Botanic Garden's outdoor concert venue. Consider these entrée dishes: charred octopus with butternut squash puree, candied ginger, and roasted chestnuts from master Chef Nico Romo of Fish Restaurant in Charleston; Indian chicken tacos with pear ginger salsa from Chef Deb Paquette of Nashville's Etch; and truffle-cured Wagyu strip loin with blueberry gastric from Andreas Kisler, The Peabody's executive chef.

And for dessert? Save room for salted caramel chocolate mousse from Memphis chocolatier Phillip Ashley Rix; Arkansas pecans and moonshine pie from the Wilson Café's Joe Cartwright and Shari Haley; and a tempting list of Southern-inspired gelatos (bourbon & Coke!) from Hugh Balthrop's much-loved Sweet Magnolia in Clarksdale, Mississippi.

Dozens of wines provided by Memphis-based Star Distributors will complete the event's culinary triptych, offering hidden gems from France, Italy, Argentina, and California, of course. Winery representatives also will be on hand to answer questions from guests about the wines they try in the souvenir stemware they receive at the gate.



Memphis Food & Wine Festival is October 15th. Individual tickets are \$250; a table for eight is \$2,000.

We celebrate our city's community table and the people who grow, cook, and eat the best Memphis food at MEMPHISMAGAZINE.COM/FOOD-DINING