

Media Contact:
Debra Ford
debra@fordandcompany.com
281-415-0673

**CHEF EDGAR MORALES FROM DEL FRISCO CRUSHED IT!
WINNING THE COVETED *CHEF OF CHEFS* TITLE AND
\$5,000 DURING THE 21ST WINE & FOOD WEEK**

HOUSTON, TEXAS (June 1, 2025) ... Wine & Food Week 2025 is Crushing It! The 21st Annual celebration wrapped up a slate of events in The Woodlands May 31 with a \$5,000 check presentation to Chef Edgar Morales of Del Frisco who crushed it in the *Chef of Chefs* competition at the grand finale that brought together culinary stars and wine lovers from across the U.S. in an unforgettable week of flavor, flair, and festivity.

Throughout the week, more than 125 chef team participants, seventy-five restaurants, and five hundred wines were highlighted in a dynamic lineup of events. At **Wine Around the World Wednesday** guests globetrotted their way through a curated collection of wines from Spain, Japan, Italy, France, Bulgaria, and USA--California, discovering bold

reds, crisp whites, and hidden gems from every corner of the world. **Crushing It With Cocktails!** served up high-energy vibes, with eight superstar mixologists battling for Best in Glass, Vineyard Visionary, and the People's Choice—a spirited mix of flavor and fun that shook things up in style. **Sips, Suds & Savor** was a flavor-packed adventure where craft brews, fun wines, and delicious bites came together for the ultimate tasting trifecta and four contestants crushed it with a Grape Stomp presented by Bernhardt Winery and a fabulous weekend staycation at the winery as the prize.

A standout moment? The ultimate culinary showdown at **The Wine Rendezvous Grand Tasting & Chef Showcase** where thirty-eight chefs crushed it in a fierce culinary battle bringing their A-game to claim the crown of *Chef of Chefs*.

The Wine Rendezvous Grand Tasting & Chef Showcase was the ultimate adult playground where guests sipped from a selection of hundreds of wines like the Antinori Tiganello, Silver Oak, Col Solare Cabernet, and a Ceretto Barolo while sampling dishes like, Rosemary sourdough crust manchego basque cheesecake with a rioja reduction and a crispy slice



Kady Miller, Richard Huber, Ever de Pena, Constance McDerby, Edgar Morales and Clifton McDerby.



Phat Eatery

of jamon iberico on top by Chef Tim De St. Remy from Duchess; Cocoa rubbed smoked brisket nigiri with a raisin mole, egg yolk jam, and fermented garlic chili oil made by Chef Esai Negrete from Loro Asian Smokehouse & Bar; Malay Pie Tee-Crispy pork lard pastry cup with mixture of shredded Chinese turnip, carrots, green beans, dried shrimp, sweet snow crab, prawn and shredded egg crepe on top drizzled with chili oil created by Chef Marvin He from Phat Eatery; Texas Hill Country Goat Heart Arancini. Locally sourced cabrito heart braised in Hill Country red wine, folded into Texas rice with native pecans and local cheddar, golden blue cornmeal crust, vibrant prickly pear foam, and house-made smoked achiote tomato

reduction from Chef Jared Campbell from Experience a Chef in Fredericksburg, TX. These decadent bites were created by thirty-eight chefs competing for the **Chef of Chefs Award** judged by an esteemed chef and culinary-trained food media panel. People's Choice Award for best dessert went to Kady Miller of Alchemy Bake Lab.



Experience a Chef



Chef Edgar Morales, Del Frisco took top honors including a \$5,000 cash prize for his Sweet twice baked Tamale Cakes with a creamed tomatillo sauce inspired by his Mexican roots.



Sweet Tamale Cake by Chef Edgar Morales

Chef of Chefs winner Chef Edgar Morales, Del Frisco

Second Place and \$750.00 cash prize went to Chef Richard Huber, Swift & Company for Grilled Baby Octopus with corn velouté, lemon verbena crème fraîche, scallion ash, and huitlacoche tuile, marinated in black garlic and chili crisp, finished with finger lime, green onion flowers, and dried piquín powder.



Chef Richard Huber

Third place and a \$500 cash prize went to Chef Ever De Pena, Ever Restaurant Aruba for Asado negro with cashew puree with shaved truffles. A traditional dish in Aruba and Venezuela.

“This year marked our 21st annual celebration—we're officially of age, and more than ready to raise a glass to the journey we began over two decades ago,” remarked Wine & Food Week Co-Founder Constance McDerby. “Back then, my husband and partner, Clifton



and I had a dream: to create the region's first

multi-day wine and food event. I can say with full hearts and full glasses—it's a dream that has far exceeded anything we imagined.

The theme this year is “Crushing It.” And indeed, we are.

Not just grapes—but expectations, boundaries, and every milestone we once thought was a finish line,” concluded McDerby.

Mixing, mingling, and munching in the crowd were a who's who of food and wine superstars including Bayway Cadillac owners Darryl and

Linda Wischnewsky; presenting sponsor H-E-B's Joe Casiano, Sr. Marketing Manager; Chopped Champion Chef Lena Le, Top Chef Tristen Epps, Chefs Ever de Pena and Teddy Bouroncle from Aruba. Culinary judges included, Houston Chronicle Restaurant Critic, Bao Ong; Food journalist, Mai Pham; TV host and President Cleverley Stone Foundation, Katie Stone; Program Director Culinary Institute LeNotre, Chef Stephanie Lamour, TV Host and Executive Producer of Good Taste with Tanji, Tanji Patton; Chef Carlos Ramos, Chef David Skinner, CEO, Bravado Spice Company, Jeremiah Tallerine, restaurateur Kevin Lee and Digital Editor PaperCity Magazine, Laura Landsbaum.

Wine & Food Week's 21st celebration supported charitable organizations New Danville, The Woodlands Waterway Arts Council, Second Chances, and The Montgomery County Food Bank. Food & Vine Time Productions has raised well over two million dollars through various channels for local charities over the years.

Cheers to another year of Crushing It—and there's still one more unforgettable experience to go!

For more Wine & Food Week fun, make plans to attend the upcoming Ladies of the Vine on June 6, the Platinum Wine Vault Friday September 19 at Bayway Cadillac and the H-E-B Wine Walk on Thursday, October 2. Information at www.wineandfoodweek.com

ABOUT WINE & FOOD WEEK AND FOOD & VINE TIME PRODUCTIONS

Wine & Food Week, produced by Food & Vine Time Productions, is the first multi-day, multi-faceted, comprehensive destination culinary and wine event in the Houston Metro. Owners Clifton and Constance McDerby are dedicated to showcasing the culinary talent in the Houston metro while welcoming great chefs from across the globe who share their passion for flavors. They also are committed to extending their love of wine by featuring the flavors of the winemakers, growers, and producers who bring a time-honored tradition of the flavors of the vine. Food & Vine Time Productions created another first with the state's first multi-day craft beer destination and educational event featuring over 300 craft beer selections. Brewmasters Craft Beer Festival which celebrated a decade of craft beer experiences was named #3 beer event in America by USA Today and #1 in Houston by Houstonia Magazine. Food & Vine Time Productions offerings include Katy Sip N Stroll, Houston Chronicle Culinary Stars, Nach-Yo Ordinary Tequila Tasting Tour, and a myriad of private events for various clients. Since its inception in 2002, Food & Vine Time Productions has assisted in raising well over two million dollars for local charities through live and silent auctions and cash donations. The mission has always been to raise a glass, meet a new friend, share a laugh and take it all in.



Chef Ever De Pena, Third Place