

Created by: Debra C. Argen

Greenwich WINE + FOOD Festival - 2015 - Greenwich, CT, USA



The fifth annual [Greenwich 2015 WINE + FOOD Festival](#) presented by **Serendipity** was a celebration of delectable **wine and spirits, delicious food, celebrities, fun, and live music by Grammy and CMA Award Winners, LittleBig Town**, to benefit the charity founded by Paul Newman, [The Hole in The Wall Gang Camp](#) for children coping with serious illnesses, and the **Greenwich Parks & Recreation Scholarship Fund**.

This was Luxury Experience's second year attending the 4-day Greenwich WINE + FOOD Festival, and it was another year of discovering new restaurants to try and sampling new-to-market products as well as old favorites.

On Saturday, September 26, 2015, Roger Sherman Baldwin Park in Greenwich, Connecticut was a celebration of wine, spirits, beer, food, and music, with a diverse selection of products to sample. After reading the event program we felt like singing the George Thorogood song, "One Bourbon, One Scotch, and One Beer" with the extensive product line-up.

Oenophiles had the opportunity to taste wines from **90+ Cellars, Excelsior Wines, Lieb Cellars, Old Greenwich Fine Wines & Cheese, Quintessential Wines, Shaw Vineyard, and Val's Putnam Wines & Liquors** to name but a few, and Greenwich's own **Kathie Lee Gifford** was on hand pouring her **GIFFT wines** and mingling with guests.



Kathie Lee Gifford and Edward F. Nesta

In the **Celebrity Chef Demo Tents**, **Harold Dieterle** gave a presentation on Thai Style Fried Chicken, **Rocco DiSpirito** created Ricotta Gnudi, **Kevin Des Chenes** hosted Cuisine & Cocktails, **Samantha Eichenberg** presented *The Dessertist: Desserts After Dark*, **Kimberly Schlapman** showed how to make The Best Glazed Apple Cake, **Alex Guarnaschelli** created Fun Veggies for Fall, and **Geoffrey Zakarian** presented A Taste of The National in Greenwich, CT presented by **Coldwell Banker Previews International**.

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Rocco DiSpirito

For wine, beer, and cocktail lovers there were interesting presentations including **Cocktail Fun with Celebrity Cruises**, **Marc Stroobandts Beer & Food Magic**, **Napa & Co. Presents Pairing Food & Wine ... Put Simply**, and **Drinking Great Wine Anytime with 90+ Cellars**.

In the **Tacos + Tequila Tent** guests had the opportunity to pair tasty tequila cocktails with delicious food from **Bodega Taco Bar**, **Boxcar Cantina**, **Bruce Julian Bloody Mary Bud Ritas**, **Geronimo Tequila Bar** and **Southwest Grill**, **Little Mexican Café**, **Mezón Tapas Bar & Restaurant**, **POST 154**, and **Tomatillo Taco Joint**.



Squeeze + Tequila

Bartenders had the opportunity to "shake their stuff" in the **Top Bartender Showdown** in the **Empire City Tent**, with **Sasha Jarufe** from **Harvest Wine Bar** in Greenwich winning the Judges choice and **Dimitrios Zahariadis** of **Highland Brass Co.** in Waterbury winning the People's Choice.

We attended the "**Beer and Food Magic Show**" hosted by **Belgian Master Beer Sommelier Marc Stroobandt**, who is a "member of the British Guild of Beer Writers and has been awarded an honorary knighthood by the Chevalrie des brasseurs of the Confederation of Belgian Brewers.

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Marc Stroobandt and Debra C. Argen

Marc began the tasting by enthusiastically telling guests to "embrace the foam" as he instructed how to pour Stella Artois into their signature chalice glass, and said that beer celebrates food and that we should not be afraid to pair beer and cheese.



Beer and Food Pairing

Menu and Pairings

Stella Artois, 5% alcohol

Paired with Strong Cheddar

Paired with Sriracha Hot Sauce

Stella Artois Cidre, 4.5% alcohol

Paired with Goat Cheese

Blue Point Brewing Company Blueberry Ale, 4.5% alcohol

Paired with Double-Cream Goat and Sheep Milk Cheese

Goose Island Goose Autumn Ale, 6.7% alcohol

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Paired with Smoked Ham

Marc concluded the tasting by providing a recipe for an easy cheese fondue.



Marc Stroobandt

Marc Stroobandt - Easy Cheese Fondue

Cheese Fondue Ingredients:

Wooden box of Brie or Camembert
Garlic Clove
Thyme
Stella Artois Cidre
Crusty Bread

Method: Remove cheese from the refrigerator and let sit at room temperature for 1-hour. Remove the cheese from the box and remove the paper wrapper, then return cheese to the box. Place the box on a baking sheet. Poke a hole in the center of the cheese, add a garlic clove, some thyme, and top with Stella Artois Cidre. Place under the broiler and boil until just bubbly. Take care not to burn the cheese or the wooden box. Serve with slices of crusty bread to scoop out the melted cheese.

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The Restaurant at Rowayton Seafood

Although we could not visit every stand, we made an admirably attempt visiting and sampling from the many participating restaurants and food suppliers. A few of the many highlights we sampled included the scallop and shrimp ceviche from **The Restaurant at Rowayton Seafood**, from **Fjord Fisheries**, Cos Cob, we had Blue Point Oysters as well as corn and oyster fritters, from **Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant** we enjoyed their Red Sangria and samples of their Dry-cured Iberico Loin, sliders from **Plan B Burgers**, the acorn squash soup from **One Twenty One Restaurant**, and the Watermelon Soup from **Geronimo Tequila Bar and Southwest Grill**.



Edward F Nesta Sampling Dry-cured Iberico Loin

Barcelona Wine Bar & Restaurant

Paul Denamiel demonstrated **How to Cook the Perfect Burger** in the **Budweiser + Burgers Tent**, culminating in the **Fourth Annual Burger Battle** hosted by **Adam Richman** with Celebrity Chef Judges **Geoffrey Zakarian**, **Alex Guarnaschelli**, **Rocco DeSpirito**, **Harold Dieterle**, and **Terry French**. **Plan B** won the Judges Choice, and **Westchester Burger** won the People's Choice in the **Burger Battle**.

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Watermelon Soup

Geronimo Tequila Bar and Southwest Grill

Other chef demos included **The Grill Master Party** with **Rebel Chef Terry French** who created Grilled Golden Scallops Venus, and **Elevated Butchery with Fleishers Craft Butchery** demonstrated butchering techniques. Participating restaurants and brewing companies in the **Master Griller Party Tent** included **Blue Point Brewing Company, Bobby Q's Pit Stop, Brother Jimmy's BBQ, Dinosaur BBQ, Gabriele's Italian Steakhouse, Goose Island Beer Company, Gunter Wilhelm Half Full Brewery, Heritage Brewing Company, Mike's Organic Delivery, Myrna's Kitchen, Pizza Luca, Revival Brewing Company, Shock Top Belgian White, The Ginger Man, and The Whey Station.**



Gourmet Grilled Cheese Sandwiches

The Whey Station

During a final round of restaurant tastings, we loved the Absinthe Bonbons from **ElmRestaurant** in New Canaan, the truffle ravioli from **Gabriele's Italian Steakhouse** in Greenwich, the creative chocolates from **Blue Tulip Chocolates** in Rye, New York, the interesting flavors from Tee-Riffic! Ice Cream and the innovative cocktails from the **Rye House** in Port Chester, New York.

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Blue Tulip Chocolates

All that, playful "gambling" in the **Empire City Casino Tent**, and live music, too! In the evening, **Assembly of Dust** took to the stage to open for the Grammy and CMA Award Winning band, **Little Big Town** to complement an extraordinary day of wine, spirits, and food to benefit **The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp** and the **Greenwich Parks & Recreation Scholarship Fund**.



Rye House Mixing Up Cocktails

We cannot wait to attend next year's **Greenwich WINE + FOOD Festival**.

"The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp was founded in 1988 by Paul Newman with one simple premise in mind, that every child, no matter their illness, could experience the transformational spirit and friendships that go hand in hand with camp. Paul Newman, while a successful actor, was also a visionary with the heart of a child. His personality, playfulness and mischievousness are infused within every corner of Camp, from the pirate flag he raised on the tree house to the days he spent on the lake fishing with campers. With unobtrusive expert medical care, it was Paul's dream that Camp would provide seriously ill children with a fun-filled experience defined by compassion, laughter and acceptance."

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The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp team

"The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp is dedicated to providing a "different kind of healing" to seriously ill children and their families throughout the Northeast free of charge. It's a community that celebrates the fun, friendship and spirit of childhood where every kid can "raise a little hell."

"To ensure that every child with a serious medical condition has the chance to experience the world of possibilities that camp has to offer. Through the generosity of others, The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp community provides this unique healing experience to kids in need and their families, including those who may not be able to come to Camp."

To learn more about **The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp**, please visit the website:

www.HoleintheWallGang.org

The Hole in the Wall Gang Fund
555 Long Wharf Drive
New Haven, Connecticut 06511
United States
Telephone: +1-203-772-0522
Fax: +1-203-782-1725
E-mail: info@holeinthewallgang.org
Website: www.HoleintheWallGang.org



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