

St. Moritz Gourmet Festival 2017: USA – “Discover THE Best from the West”
30th January to 3rd February 2017

Glamorous festival conclusion with ten American star chefs

The 2017 St. Moritz Gourmet Festival ended last night with the Great BMW Gourmet Finale at the Kulm Hotel St. Moritz. Under the motto, USA – “Discover THE Best from the West”, ten high-carat guest chefs from the United States, together with the local award-winning Executive Chefs from the partner hotels, ensured culinary fireworks in the Upper Engadine. Their individual culinary arts bore creative testament to the exciting diversity of North American cuisine and enthused near to 4,300 guests at more than 40 enjoyment events during this festival week. Hence, the organizers continue the success story of this cult festival. In 2018, the St. Moritz Gourmet Festival will celebrate its 25th anniversary.

Positive messages were conveyed from the land of opportunity all through this week at the St. Moritz Gourmet Festival by top chefs Daniel Humm, James Kent, Enrique Olvera and the American Diner icon Ron Silver from New York, as well as Tal Ronnen from Los Angeles, Dean Fearing from Dallas, Kim Canteenwalla and Rick Moonen from Las Vegas, Lee Wolen from Chicago and Melissa Kelly from Maine – and they all leave numerous sparks of inspiration. “The guest chefs’ creative ideas and culinary concepts stimulate our own new creations”, underlines Fabrizio Zanetti, Executive Chef at the Suvretta House, which has been a partner hotel of the St. Moritz Gourmet Festival from the very start. Therefore, this collegial collaboration with the Executive Chefs at the partner hotels also sustainably benefits the guests.

At the **Grand Julius Baer Opening** on Monday evening, fully booked with 400 guests, the unique spirit that distinguishes the St. Moritz Gourmet Festival was immediately evident. The American guest chefs appeared such an experienced team side by side with the Executive Chefs from the partner hotels and offered first sample tasters of their skills at various “gourmet islands” at the Kempinski Grand Hotel des Bains. In keeping with the festival motto, the hall had been transformed into a glittering Las Vegas setting. The star chefs clearly enjoyed chatting with the guests and were willing to pose for many selfies. Showgirls and a live music band contributed at the ensuing party toward an exuberant atmosphere. A large number of guests took advantage of the invitation to try their luck with gambling at the Grand Casino St. Moritz.

On the following evenings, the **Gourmet Diners** in the restaurants at the festival partner hotels were well frequented and “some were fully booked well in advance”, as Martin Scherer, Director of the Hotel Schweizerhof St. Moritz and President of the St. Moritz Gourmet Festival Association, was pleased to announce. Here, each guest chef creates his own very personal signature dish in the form of a five-course menu, - also with wine pairing or à la carte options. The culinary bandwidth was correspondingly large: from South-Western cuisine, farm-to-table and seafood specialties to vegan, Mexican and Texan gourmet creations, through to innovative creative haute cuisine. Particularly enjoyable moments among convivial epicures were offered by the highly-coveted **Gourmet Safaris**, where guests go on a discovery tour in elegant BMW limousines, chauffeured directly to the tables of five guest chefs in different restaurants.

In the afternoons at the **Chocolate Cult** in «Le Grand Hall» at the Badrutt’s Palace Hotel, many guests were more enthusiastic than ever about the innumerable delicacies created from finest chocolate in the most varied of flavors by chef pâtissier Stefan Gerber. Furthermore, lovers of tender-melting temptations came to enjoy delicious brownie pralines made of finest Sprüngli chocolate that Lisbeth Werder, confectioner of the renowned Sprüngli Confiserie, had composed with skilled craftsmanship especially for this festival. At **The Tasting** in the Suvretta House, both gourmet fans and gastronomic professionals showed their delight about the great variety of select beverages, delicatessen to be tasted or the cookbooks to be discovered at the various stations of the participating festival partners. The guests also appreciated fruitful discussions about latest trends in gastronomy with the experts from Caratello Wines St.Gallen, Marolo Distilleria, Cerutti “il Caffè”, Laurent-Perrier SA, Martel AG St.Gallen, Rageth Comestibles AG, SIBERIAN VODKA AG and the bookstore WEGA.

Once again, the midweek highlight was the legendary **Kitchen Party** in the canteen kitchen of the Badrutt's Palace Hotel, celebrating the golden age "from Rock 'n' Roll to Disco" with upbeat live music, while the master chefs served their delicacies to the guests from sizzling pans, directly after preparation. Just after this fantastic culinary party the celebrations went on in the «King's Club» till the early hours.

On the evenings of the **Illustrious Kitchen Whispering**, guests were able to look directly over the shoulder of New York's most famous American Diner icon Ron Silver from the Bubby's restaurant, as he prepared ingenious aperitif tidbits in the kitchen of the Hotel Schweizerhof. He was ably assisted by prominent figures from the local gastronomy scene, such as Rolf Hiltl ("Tibits") and Nadia Damaso ("Eat Better Not Less") and others. While savoring these delicacies, everybody chatted in a relaxed atmosphere about the successful recipes.

On the initiative of Ueli Schiess from the house Caratello Wines, St.Gallen, a unique and successful encounter for the guests took place at the event **America meets Italy**. Guest chef Lee Wolen from Chicago created exceptional delicacies to accompany the select wines offered by exceptional Tuscan vintner Giovanni Manetti from his famous wine-growing estate Fontodi. At the highly elegant **Fascination Champagne** event at Suvretta House, the house of champagne Laurent-Perrier, Tours-sur-Marne (F), served their exclusive cuvées to the guests, accompanied by a delicately coordinated menu created by Lee Wolen. The evening was musically underscored with stylish soul and jazz inlays by expert saxophonist Benny Horatschek alias Mr. Soulsax.

At Hotel Waldhaus Sils, Jan Martel from the wine store Martel AG, St.Gallen presented a small circle of guests at the **Celestial Wines'** event extremely rare American premium wines in best drinking maturity. This exceptional wine tasting was rounded off by culinary creations prepared by guest chef Rick Moonen, America's most famous seafood specialist from Las Vegas. The "Cérémonies des Fromages" were celebrated by famous Maître Antony from Alsace on the three evenings of the **Wine & Cheese Celebration** in the wine cellar vaults of the Hotel Steffani, St. Moritz. Guests were invited to select their accompanying wines themselves under expert guidance from the exclusive range on offer from the two festival sponsors, Martel AG, St.Gallen and Caratello Wines, St.Gallen, as well as directly from the Steffani wine shelves where some true treasures are kept safe.

Apart from the coveted traditional events where the guest chefs from the United States play the main part, the public is also able to enthuse about some special events during this festival week. At the Hotel Schweizerhof, St. Moritz, the **pop-up American Diner** attracted many visitors from morning to night. Here, Ron Silver spoilt the guests with light, fluffy blueberry pancakes, delicious burgers, steaks, roasts and pies. A selection of his American home cooking specialties was available as take-away food from a steelrunner trailer in front of the Schweizerhof. Under the theme **US-Beef Blizzard**, Reto Mathis served at Mathis Food Affairs on Corviglia, select US beef specialties from the Middle West - at an alpine altitude of 2,486 metres.

A festival premiere took place on Thursday on Corviglia with the **public charity event by Daniel Humm**. Gourmet fans, some arriving straight from the ski slopes, enjoyed the famous "Humm-Dogs", that the Swiss native international celebrity chef from the New York three-star gourmet restaurant Eleven Madison Park offered at this charity benefit event.

On the local mountain of St. Moritz, several guest chefs enjoyed a sportive leisure program that also contributed to the special attraction of the festival. "The hours spent together skiing and snowboarding on Corviglia will remain unforgettable in our memory", raves the New York star chef James Kent from the NoMad restaurant, guest chef of Gero Porstein at the Carlton Hotel, St. Moritz. This is how new friendships occurred here and there, resulting from the professional collaboration with the local Executive Chefs and the directors of the partner hotels. Further contacts and reciprocal visits have already been fixed.

Last night, the festival week culminated with all the master chefs participating in the brilliant **Great BMW Gourmet Finale** in the Kulm Hotel, St. Moritz. During the champagne cocktail in the stylish hotel lobby, guests were already able to savor select appetizers prepared by the star chefs. It was followed in the Corviglia hall in an impressive glamorous setting with an authentic American look and feel, where an exquisite multi-course menu was served that had been prepared by all the guest chefs and local chefs together. Guests were also enthralled by the program of musical accompaniment. The live band "Noble Composition Orchestra" with the famous singers Della Miles and Josanne Thomas, who had flown over from the USA especially for this evening, provided high spirits.

The guests also applauded warmly as the announcement was made and the presentation ceremony took place for **Stefano Berenato** as the **winner of the “Young Engadine Talents” competition**. The apprentice chef in his third year of training with Executive Chef Steve Van Remoortel at Hotel Laudinella, St. Moritz, was very pleased to receive several prizes during the evening, among them a vacation stay of seven nights in a Deluxe double room for two persons at the five-star Kempinski Hotel Bahía Estepona in Spain, as well as a training period in the Vivanda restaurant with Executive Chef and hotel director Dario Cadonau at the In Lain Hotel Cadonau in Brail. The runner-up, Mascha Jordan from Hotel Waldhaus Sils and Samuel Indermühle in third position, as well a cooking apprentice at the Hotel Waldhaus Sils, were formally announced and awards presented in front of a large audience on the evening of the finale.

Another highlight of the evening was the presentation of the diplomas and gifts to the guest chefs and the local chefs by Kurt Egloff, President & CEO of BMW (Schweiz) AG, festival title sponsor & official car.

With 4,300 guests in all, the organizers are able to look back on an extremely successful festival week. Epicures can now already look forward to next year! The **2018 St. Moritz Gourmet Festival** will take place from 29th January to 2nd February 2018. “It will be organized entirely in the context of the 25th anniversary and consequently offer enjoyment surprises with passionate guest chefs”, said Reto Mathis, President of the festival event organization, at the prospect of a promising event.

News from last week’s festival week can be found on the website www.stmoritz-gourmetfestival.ch and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/stmoritzgourmetfestival).

St. Moritz Gourmet Festival 2017 – USA – “Discover THE Best from the West”, 30th January to 3rd February Overview of the guest chefs

Tal Ronnen, Crossroads restaurant, Los Angeles (US), Restaurant of the Year 2013 (VegNews), Top 10 – Best New Restaurants of 2013 (Los Angeles Magazine), www.crossroadskitchen.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Michel Jost, Badrutt’s Palace Hotel***** Superior, St. Moritz, www.badruttspalace.com

James Kent, The NoMad restaurant, New York City (US), 1 Michelin star, 3 New York Times stars, nominated for Best Chef NYC 2016 (James Beard Foundation), winner of the Bocuse d’Or USA (2010), www.thenomadhotel.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Gero Porstein, Carlton Hotel***** Superior, St. Moritz, www.carlton-stmoritz.ch

Enrique Olvera, Cosme restaurant, New York City (US), No. 96 – The World’s Best Restaurants 2016, No. 1 – Top New York Restaurants (The New York Times, 2015), www.cosmenyc.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Fabrizio Piantanida, Grand Hotel Kronenhof***** Superior, Pontresina, www.kronenhof.com

Dean Fearing, Fearing’s restaurant, Dallas (US), Pioneer of American Cuisine (Culinary Institute of America, 2016), cookery book “The Texas Food Bible” (2014), Silver Spoon Award (Food Arts, 2009), Best hotel restaurant (Zagat Guide, 2008), www.fearingsrestaurant.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Markus Rose, Hotel Giardino Mountain***** Superior, Champfèr/St. Moritz, www.giardino-mountain.ch

Ron Silver, Bubby’s restaurant, New York City (US), New York’s most famous American Diner chef and legendary pastry cook, www.bubbys.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Christian Ott, Hotel Schweizerhof**** Superior, St. Moritz, www.schweizerhofstmoritz.ch

Rick Moonen, RM Seafood, Las Vegas (US), Nominee for Best Chef: West (James Beard Foundation, 2016); New Restaurant of the Year (Desert Companion, 2013); Top Chef Masters (2009/2010); Seafood Champion Award (2006); Chef of the Year (Monterey Bay Aquarium, 2011), www.rickmoonen.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Dennis Brunner, Hotel Waldhaus*****, Sils-Maria, www.waldhaus-sils.ch

Kim Canteenwalla, Andiron Steak & Sea Restaurant, Las Vegas (US), Restaurant of the Year (Eater Vegas, 2015), Esquire best new restaurants (Society Café at Encore, Las Vegas, 2009), Outstanding Restaurateur Nominee (James Beard Foundation, 2015), www.andironsteak.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Matthias Schmidberger, Kempinski Grand Hotel des Bains***** Superior, St. Moritz, www.kempinski-stmoritz.ch

Daniel Humm, Eleven Madison Park restaurant, New York City (US), 3 Michelin stars, The Best Restaurant in North America (No. 3 – World’s 50 Best Restaurants, 2016), Chefs’ Choice Award (World’s 50 Best Restaurants, 2015), Outstanding Chef in America (James Beard Foundation, 2012), www.elevenmadisonpark.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Mauro Taufer, Kulm Hotel St. Moritz***** Superior, www.kulm.com

Melissa Kelly, Restaurant Primo, Maine (US), Winner of the Best Chef: Northeast Award (James Beard Foundation, 1999 and 2013); Golden Whisk Award (Women Chefs and Restaurateurs, 2002), www.primorestaurant.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Florian Mainzger im Hotel Nira Alpina***** Superior, www.niraalpina.com

Lee Wolen, Boka restaurant, Chicago (US), 1 Michelin star, winner of the Culinary Masters Competition (2016), Chef of the Year (Chicago Tribune und Eater Chicago, 2014/2015), www.bokachicago.com,
Guest of Executive Chef Fabrizio Zanetti, Suvretta House***** Superior, St. Moritz, www.suvrettahouse.ch

The following festival partners look forward to welcoming gourmet fans from all over the world:

The **partner hotels** Badrutt's Palace Hotel***** Superior, St. Moritz; Carlton Hotel***** Superior, St. Moritz; Grand Hotel Kronenhof***** Superior, Pontresina; Hotel Giardino Mountain***** Superior, Champfer/St. Moritz; Nira Alpina***** Superior, Silvaplana-Surlej; Hotel Schweizerhof***** Superior, St. Moritz; Hotel Waldhaus*****, Sils-Maria; Kempinski Grand Hotel des Bains***** Superior, St. Moritz; Kulm Hotel St. Moritz***** Superior, St. Moritz, und Suvretta House***** Superior, St. Moritz, sowie die **Event locations** Cava, Hotel Steffani*****, St. Moritz, and Mathis Food Affairs, Corviglia/St. Moritz.

Furthermore, the festival is supported by the tremendous commitment of the following sponsors: Title sponsor and official car:

BMW (Schweiz) AG; **Title sponsor:** Bank Julius Bär & Co. AG; **Main sponsor:** Valsler; **Co-sponsors:** Caratello Weine St.Gallen, Confiserie Sprüngli AG, G. Bianchi AG, Laurent-Perrier Suisse S.A., Martel AG St.Gallen, Maura Wasescha AG, Maximum Wellbeing AG Schweiz, Rageth Comestibles AG; **Suppliers:** Bader + Niederöst AG, BRAGARD SUISSE AG, CERUTTI „il Caffè“, Hugo Dubno AG, Schwob AG, sknife – swiss knife, Grappa MAROLO, SIBERIAN VODKA AG; **Carriers:** Massé und Partner Transports GmbH, SWISS; **Local media partner:** Engadiner Post/Posta Ladina; **Media partners:** dasfilet.ch (Gourmetblog), htr hotel revue, ibexmedia GmbH, marmite – Zeitschrift für Ess- und Trinkkultur, restaurant-news.de, POSH.

St. Moritz, 4th February 2017

Press office: WOEHRLÉ PIROLA Marketing and Communication AG, Claudia-Regina Flores, Tel. +41 (0)44 245 86 94, flores@woehrlepirola.ch

Texts and short portraits of the guest chefs can be downloaded at: www.stmoritz-gourmetfestival.ch/en/media/presse

Photographs of the guest chefs in print quality at: www.stmoritz-gourmetfestival.ch/en/media/gastkoeche

For Festival images in print quality refer to: <http://www.stmoritz-gourmetfestival.ch/en/media/festivalfotos/>

Media press material Engadin St. Moritz: <http://www.engadin.stmoritz.ch/winter/en/media/basisinformationen/>