

CHICAGO GOURMET

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHICAGO GOURMET ANNOUNCES 2021 CELEBRATION

Annual festival reunites fans with Chicago's culinary community, champions recovery of the hospitality industry

CHICAGO, IL (June 16, 2021) – [Chicago Gourmet](#), one of the nation's most distinguished food festivals, is pleased to announce details surrounding the highly anticipated September 2021 celebration. With a focus on reuniting gourmet enthusiasts with Chicago's exciting culinary community, founding sponsors at the [Illinois Restaurant Association](#), and presenting sponsor [Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits](#) are planning both new events as well as the return of several fan favorites that champion Chicago's diverse culinary landscape.

Food and drink lovers can look forward to a range of memorable epicurean experiences, including:

- **Go Gourmet!** After presenting a series of intimate, sold-out events last year, **Go Gourmet** returns in 2021, featuring numerous events curated with care by beloved chefs at leading restaurants and venues citywide. From daytime gatherings and evening soirees to multi-course feasts representing a host of cuisines and themes, Go Gourmet events will range in gathering sizes and feature premium wines and spirits from the [Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits](#) expansive portfolio. Taking place throughout the entire month of September, fans can look forward to countless opportunities to reunite with each other and Chicago's stellar culinary community.

- **It's SeptemBURGER: Hamburger Hop presented by DoorDash, Buckhead Meat, and Blue Moon.** The iconic **Hamburger Hop** is back and bigger than ever. A hit in 2020, the **Citywide Hamburger Hop** takes the battle beyond Millennium Park. 100+ chef competitors will offer tasty burgers for dine-in, delivery, or carry out from September 1-30. Food lovers will be encouraged to hop around town or visit the DoorDash app or website and try as many burgers as possible. Based on flavor and overall presentation, they will vote on their favorite at [chicagogourmet.org](#) by September 22.

But wait – there are *more* burgers to behold! The longtime fan-favorite Hamburger Hop makes a festive return *in person* at the Harris Theater rooftop on Friday, September 24. There, organizers will announce the champ of the citywide grilling battle, while also crowning the Peoples and Judges' winners of those chefs participating onsite that evening. Tasty burgers, cold beer, wine and spirits, and unparalleled skyline views: There's no better way to celebrate SeptemBURGER.

- **Just Cru It: Grand Cru.** A newly envisioned variation of the Grand Cru will take place, also *in person*, on Saturday, September 25 at the Harris Theater Rooftop. The affair will showcase the world's finest wines curated by the nation's leading wine experts, an enhanced focus on craft spirits, and unforgettable cuisine prepared by Chicago's award-winning chefs. Enthusiasts will taste in "grand" style! Two sessions will be offered.
- **Charitable Beneficiary: The Illinois Restaurant Association Educational Foundation.** With post-pandemic economic recovery of the hospitality industry at heart, Chicago Gourmet programming will benefit the [Illinois Restaurant Association Educational Foundation](#) (IRAEEF), a 501 (c)(3) dedicated to building and promoting the health and prosperity of the



restaurant industry by investing in both youth and workforce. It has awarded more than \$3.2 million in scholarships since its inception. Since October 2020, it has also provided \$270,000 in cash relief grants to hospitality employees facing financial crisis as a result of COVID-19.

- The **Grand Tasting** on the Main Lawn **will not take place** in Millennium Park this September, with a spectacular return planned for 2022. If eventgoers purchased tickets for the 2020 festival, they will be automatically transferred to the 2022 celebration with no further action required. However, if they would like a full refund, they may submit an online request to [Chicago Gourmet](#) by July 15, 2021.

"Now in its fourteenth year, Chicago Gourmet is known and loved nationwide," said **Sam Toia**, President and CEO, Illinois Restaurant Association. "And we have been overwhelmed by the outpouring of continued support and enthusiasm for Chicago Gourmet during this challenging year for all. We want to focus this year's celebration on bringing chefs and restaurants back together with their fans, while doing all that we can to support the present *and* the future of the hospitality industry. We are looking forward to raising a glass to the exceptional and resilient talent that makes Chicago's hospitality scene second to none!"

Chicago Gourmet's full event lineup, details, and tickets will be announced in August at [chicagogourmet.org](#).

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ABOUT CHICAGO GOURMET. Chicago Gourmet, the nation's premier culinary experience, returns September 2021. Created by the [Illinois Restaurant Association](#) to honor Chicago's culinary achievements and the creative vision of the chefs, Master Sommeliers, and wine-, spirit-, and beer-makers who participate, it spotlights Chicago as an international culinary destination via its unparalleled epicurean talent. With the present and future of the hospitality industry at heart, the 2021 festival will benefit the Illinois Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. Chicago Gourmet is possible with the support of presenting sponsor Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits. For more information, visit [chicagogourmet.org](#) and follow on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

ABOUT SOUTHERN GLAZER'S WINE & SPIRITS. Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits is the world's pre-eminent distributor of beverage alcohol, and proud to be a multi-generational, family-owned company. The Company has operations in 44 U.S. states and the District of Columbia, and Canada. Southern Glazer's urges all retail customers and adult consumers to market, sell, serve, and enjoy its products responsibly. For more information visit [www.southernglazers.com](#). Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @sgwinespirits and on Facebook at [Facebook.com/SouthernGlazers](#).

ABOUT THE ILLINOIS RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION. Founded in 1914, the Illinois Restaurant Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, protecting, educating and improving the restaurant industry in Illinois. The IRA owns and produces [Chicago Gourmet](#) – the annual food and wine festival uniting hundreds of restaurants, chefs and beverage experts for a weekend filled with food and drink tastings, entertainment, cooking demonstrations, book signings, interactive seminars and more. For more information, visit [www.illinoisrestaurants.org](#) and follow on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

ABOUT THE ILLINOIS RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION. [Illinois Restaurant Association Educational Foundation](#) is a 501 (c)(3) dedicated to building and promoting the health and prosperity of the restaurant industry by investing in youth and workforce. It has awarded more than \$3.2 million in scholarships since its inception. Since October 2020, it has also provided more than \$270,000 in cash relief grants to hospitality employees facing financial crisis as a result of COVID-19. For more information, visit [www.illinoisrestaurants.org/IRAEFAboutUs](#).

FOR:

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