

ATLANTA  
**FOOD & WINE**  
FESTIVAL

**IN MIDTOWN | MAY 31 - JUNE 3, 2018**

**FOR:** ATLANTA FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL  
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**ATLANTA FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL PRESENTED BY SOUTHERN LIVING ANNOUNCES 2018 ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
*Southern Festival Changes the Game with an All-Female Council*

**Atlanta, GA** (January 17, 2018) – Known for creating authentic culinary experiences through carefully-crafted programming, the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival continues to change the landscape of the food and wine festival industry with the announcement of an all-female Advisory Council and an increased emphasis on showcasing diversity. With a unique focus on celebrating the people, places and stories behind Southern food and drink, the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival is set to bring an educational, entertaining and delicious weekend to Midtown Atlanta, GA on May 31 – June 3, 2018.

Since the first event in 2011, Atlanta Food & Wine Festival has hosted more than 683 classes, 25 tasting tent sessions and 145 dinners and events that have explored, among other topics, the region’s viticulture, the history of classic Southern cocktails, and African, Latin and Asian influences on Southern cuisine. AF&WF has been a platform for Southern chefs, beverage professionals and brands to tell their stories and a catalyst for national exposure.

Well-respected in the industry for its depth of programming, Atlanta Food & Wine Festival never shies away from addressing important industry topics. Programs such as “Where are the Black Chefs?”, a class focused on the disproportionately low number of African-American chefs leading commercial kitchens, and “Powerful & Delicious,” a female-centric dinner focused on highlighting the role of women in Southern food and drink culture, have positioned the Festival as a leading national event. The Festival also gained national attention in 2017 for its “Nourishing You” program that helped chefs and beverage professionals navigate the stresses of the industry and included a late-night “Chill Space” for talent who are on the path sobriety or wanted a break from the rigors of the weekend. The Festival will once again host the Nourishing You program for its talent.

“The Atlanta Food & Wine Festival is a mission-driven organization with a passionate and fierce focus on shining an international spotlight on the rich food and beverage traditions of the South,” says Festival Co-Founder Dominique Love. “To fulfill our mission, we must continue to evolve our programming and talent pool to ensure we are telling the story of Southern food and drink in the most authentic way. We know that women and African-American, Latino, Indian and Asian people have long-influenced our region’s epicurean traditions, but they are often underrepresented in commercial kitchens, the media and even at festivals.”

Each year, the Festival's illustrious Advisory Council of Southern chefs, beverage innovators, sommeliers and authors are charged with developing class concepts and curated experiences to take Festival attendees deep into the region's food and beverage history and to explore what is on the horizon.

"For the past eight years, we have been supported by an amazing Advisory Council that consistently challenged us to push boundaries and to be authentic in our presentation of the South. They have also taught us to be true to who we are, which enables us to constantly evolve the Festival. The 2018 Council will be all-female, and we have diversified our talent base across the board," says Co-Founder Elizabeth Feichter.

"It's sort of interesting that women, especially African-American women in the past have had the task of feeding people – at home, in the fields; but the attention shifted when it became a viable profession. It's an honor to be a part of this Festival that is bringing us into the spotlight," says Stephanie Tyson and Vivian Joiner, Sweet Potatoes (well shut my mouth!!) – A Restaurant and Miss Ora's Kitchen, Winston-Salem, NC

"When you gather the intuition and perspective of women as a group, you get a rare chance to see and taste food through the heart. That indeed is truly exciting, and I appreciate the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival for making women a priority," says Sarah Gavigan, POP Nashville, Otaku Ramen and Little Octopus, Nashville, TN

"Women chefs, restaurateurs, and food and beverage professionals are coming together to reclaim and change the narrative for our industry. I am so proud to be a part of the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival's Advisory Council, to help amplify our message of excellence, creativity, diversity and strength," says Ouita Michel, Woodford Reserve Chef-in-Residence, Ouita Michel Family of Restaurants, Midway, KY

The 2018 Advisory Council is presented by Kentucky-based Woodford Reserve. The art of making fine bourbon first took place on the site of the Woodford Reserve Distillery, a National Historic Landmark, in 1812. The perfectly balanced taste of Woodford Reserve's Bourbon is comprised of more than 200 detectable flavor notes, from bold grain and wood, to sweet aromatics, spice, and fruit and floral notes. Woodford Reserve brands, including Bourbon, Double Oaked, Rye, the Distillery Series and the Master's Collection, have a long-standing role in Southern food and drink traditions as a favorite ingredient in favorites dishes or cocktails, or enjoyed as a complement to a meal.

"We are delighted to join forces with the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival to support the many women, including our own Chef-in-Residence, Ouita Michel, who have made and continue to make great strides in the food and beverage industry. Their dedication and passion for their craft is inspiring to all of us at Woodford Reserve," says Global Brand Director, Mark Bacon.

"We know that the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival has given a lot of talent national visibility and it is now time to shift the spotlight to a new generation. We look forward to welcoming food and drink enthusiasts from near and far to our table this May," adds Love and Feichter.

The 2018 Atlanta Food & Wine Festival is scheduled for Thursday, May 31 – Sunday, June 3, 2018 in Midtown, Atlanta, GA. Tickets go on sale March 16, 2018. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.atlfoodandwinefestival.com](http://www.atlfoodandwinefestival.com).

#### **ABOUT ATLANTA FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL**

Launched in 2010, by Atlanta entrepreneurs Dominique Love and Elizabeth Feichter, the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival is a four-day culinary experience dedicated to shining an international spotlight on the rich food and beverage traditions of the South from Texas to the District of Columbia. With an Advisory Council of 60 award-winning talent from 13 Southern states and the District of Columbia, the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival is one-part

conference and one-part party, offering carefully-crafted programs and events to entertain and educate consumers about Southern food and drink. The Festival also celebrates the flavors of other Southern regions around the globe including Southern Europe, South Africa, South America, Southern Hemisphere (Australia and New Zealand) and South-of-the-Border for Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Caribbean. The Atlanta Food & Wine Festival is a member of the IWSC Group North America's portfolio of events. Atlanta Food & Wine Festival returns to Midtown Atlanta Thursday, May 31 – Sunday, June 3, 2018. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.atlfoodandwinefestival.com](http://www.atlfoodandwinefestival.com). Follow Atlanta Food & Wine Festival on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). #KnowTheSouth #AFWF18

**ABOUT WOODFORD RESERVE:**

Tucked in the heart of thoroughbred country in Versailles, Kentucky, lives the historic Woodford Reserve Distillery, the birthplace of Woodford Reserve. A National Historic Landmark, the Woodford Reserve Distillery represents craftsmanship with a balance of historic heritage and modern practices. Woodford Reserve is a product of the Brown-Forman Corporation, a premier producer and marketer of fine quality beverage alcohol brands including Jack Daniel's, Finlandia Vodka, Korbel California Champagne, Old Forester, Chambord, Tequila Herradura and Sonoma-Cutrer. To learn more about Woodford Reserve, visit us [www.woodfordreserve.com](http://www.woodfordreserve.com) or check us out on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/woodfordreserve](http://www.facebook.com/woodfordreserve).

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