BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA stirs up international appetite for American cuisine through new platforms and partnerships with the James Beard Foundation, Travel Channel and the Food Network

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- New website, guidebook, and partnership showcase the United States' rich culinary landscape

Brand USA, the destination-marketing organization for the nation, is enticing international travelers to visit the United States through a culinary tourism strategy that includes the newly launched online content hub, guidebook, broadcast sponsorships, and partnerships with the U.S. Department of State and the James Beard Foundation.

Based on Brand USA's proprietary research across 12 key international markets, culinary has risen to one of the top five motivations that travelers use to select an international destination. In fact, culinary is a top motivator in seven of the 12 markets Brand USA conducted proprietary research in 2014, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Japan, and Mexico. (Source: Brand USA 2014 proprietary market profiles research).

In order to build off the rise of culinary tourism, in July Brand USA in partnership with the Food Network (International) and Travel Channel (International) will broadcast a series of vignettes featuring notable American chefs showcasing regional cuisines from their hometowns and favorite U.S. destinations. The episodes, which show how each cuisine mirrors its region, will air in 98 countries across Europe, the Middle East and Africa during July 2015. Additionally, the Travel Channel will broadcast a series of U.S. road-trip food adventures with British broadcast personalities and food experts Jeni Barnett and Olly Smith. The program is an expansion of Brand USA's broadcast in 2014 of Jeni and Ollie's "West Coast Wine Adventures" series.

Other components of Brand USA's culinary strategy include the May 2015 launch of Brand USA'sfirst-ever culinary content hub, "Flavours of the USA," which is available from Brand USA's global consumer website, DiscoverAmerica.com and includes gastronomic features from all 50 states, theDistrict of Columbia and the five U.S. territories. The site also offers culinary-inspired American travel itineraries, listings of food festivals and events, descriptions of wine and beer trails, and regional recipes by top chefs. The James Beard Foundation, through its partnership with Brand USA, has supplied much of the online content.

Brand USA also worked with the U.S. Department of State on its Diplomatic Culinary Partnership, which is a collaboration with the James Beard Foundation that champions American chefs abroad, promotes American food products, and fosters an interest in American culinary culture and history through international programs and initiatives, to produce the "Flavours of the USA" culinary guidebook. The guide, published in multiple languages, features recipes and content by a variety of prominent U.S.chefs – all affiliated with the James Beard Foundation – that showcase U.S. regional cuisines.

Brand USA will distribute 115,000 of the guides at upcoming Independence Day celebrations at U.S. embassies and consulates in China, India, Japan, France, and Germany, and during the year at Brand USA pavilions and in key markets around the globe.

Brand USA will also distribute the "Flavours of the USA" guidebook and promote culinary tourism in the USA during the United States' participation in Expo Milano 2015, the Universal Exhibition (often referred to as the "World's Fair") in Milan, Italy from May 1 to Oct. 31, 2015. About 20 million visitors are expected to attend Expo Milano 2015 where they will have opportunities to sample the food of 140 countries.

The theme of the USA Pavilion at Milan is "American Food 2.0: United to Feed the Planet." The pavilion brings to life the ways in which the USA employs innovative processes to bring food from farm to table. As a partner of the USA Pavilion at Expo Milano, Brand USA and its partners will be a prominent part of one of the USA's many exhibits, Food Truck Nation, which leverages the creative

serving up regional American street foods—both traditional and creative interpretations with a focus on wholesomeness, sustainability and health. The USA Pavilion is a signature project of the Office of Public Diplomacy of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, with input and support from the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce and other key government agencies.

In addition, through Brand USA's content partnership with the James Beard Foundation, Brand USA participated in the James Beard Foundation Awards ceremony held on May 4 in Chicago. Christopher L. Thompson, Brand USA's president and CEO, helped present the "2015 America's Classics

Awards" to American restaurants treasured for their delicious food, authentic character and timeless appeal. The five restaurants honorees included: Archie's Waeside, Le Mars, IA; Beaumont Inn,

Harrodsburg, KY; Guelaguetza, Los Angeles, CA; Sally Bell's Kitchen, Richmond, VA; and SevillaRestaurant, New York, NY.

"Culinary tourism is a way for international visitors to experience the diversity of America through our cuisine," Thompson said. "By promoting exceptional gastronomic offerings, such as those created by the 'America's Classics Awards' recipients, we hope to inspire travelers from around the world to visit and experience the USA, one dish at a time."

The five winning restaurants, said Susan Ungaro, president of the Beard Foundation, have been able "to bring neighborhoods together as they celebrate the authentic and unique flavors of America's food scene."

About the James Beard Foundation

Founded in 1986, the James Beard Foundation celebrates, nurtures, and honors America's diverse culinary heritage through programs that educate and inspire. A cookbook author and teacher with an encyclopedic knowledge about food, James Beard, who died in 1985, was a champion of American cuisine. He helped educate and mentor generations of professional chefs and food enthusiasts, instilling in them the value of wholesome, healthful, and delicious food. Today JBF continues in the same spirit by administering a number of diverse programs that include educational initiatives, food industry awards, scholarships for culinary students, publications, chef advocacy training, and thought-leader convening. The Foundation also maintains the historic James Beard House in New York City's Greenwich Village as a "performance space" for visiting chefs. In September of 2012, JBF launched the Diplomatic Culinary Partnership with the U.S. Department of State's Office of Protocol and helped create the American Chef Corps as a way to champion American chefs abroad, promote American food products, and foster an interest in American culinary culture and history through international programs and initiatives. One such project is the next world's fair, Expo Milano 2015, for which the James Beard Foundation is co-leading the effort for the State Department to design and produce the USA Pavilion, a global gathering of 147 countries addressing the challenges of how we will feed ourselves in the future. The pavilion, whose theme will be "American Food 2.0: United to Feed the Planet," will showcase America's contributions to global food security and gastronomy. For more information, please visit jamesbeard.org. Find insights on food at the James Beard Foundation's blog. Join the James Beard Foundation on Facebook. Follow the James Beard Foundation on Twitter and Instagram.

About the Diplomatic Culinary Partnership

Launched by the Department of State in 2012, the Diplomatic Culinary Partnership is a public-private partnership program that seeks to elevate the role of culinary engagement in America's formal and public diplomacy efforts. Through a partnership with the James Beard Foundation, the American Chef Corps was established - a network of over 100 of America's most renowned chefs. The program seeks to foster cross-cultural exchange to promote the American culinary culture through programs that use the shared experience of food to engage foreign audiences abroad and at home. It also promotes American food exports in a way that encourages trade and investment in American goods. Importantly, it also supports the President's Executive Order to increase international visitation by highlighting regional American cuisines and foods, and attracting new travelers to the U.S.

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About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing

current visa and entry information.

Since 2012 Brand USA, in collaboration with travel industry partners, has been responsible for attracting an additional 10.3 million visitors who spent nearly $35 billion in the United States, generating $76 billion in economic output, and sustaining nearly 40,000 jobs per year. Without any cost to taxpayers, these efforts have generated $10 billion in tax receipts and returned $20 to the U.S. economy for every dollar spent.