

HIGHLIGHTS FROM A STAR-STUDED INAUGURAL DEL MAR WINE & FOOD FESTIVAL

\$25,000 Raised for Feeding San Diego in Collaboration with Festival Partners Pro Athletes Alex Morgan, Drew Brees, and Rob Machado; Festival Co-Founders Claire & Troy Johnson, Ernie Hahn, Chris Finn, and Surf Sports

Del Mar, CA (September 15, 2023) – More than 8,000 San Diego locals and visitors alike came out to toast the town and celebrate the city’s inaugural **Del Mar Wine & Food Festival (DMWFF)** September 6-11. The first of its kind in Southern California, the festival featured 20 culinary-fueled events with action-packed festivities hosted by professional athletes **Alex Morgan, Drew Brees, and Rob Machado**, actors **Aaron Paul & Bryan Cranston** of *Dos Hombres*, and over **200 world-renowned chefs and winemakers** from SoCal, Baja, and beyond.

“It’s just so humbling to see not only how many people showed up to celebrate our food and drink culture, but how world-class the venue and experience turned out to be,” says festival co-founder Troy Johnson. “Thousands of people on that grass. Every few feet, an absurdly talented chef or winemaker or drinks-maker sharing the great thing they do. And we raised money for Feeding San Diego. We’re incredibly grateful for the chefs and winemakers and people. It blew away our expectations for the first year. We’ve already started on creative ideas for year two.”

While raising awareness of the city’s leading hunger-relief and food rescue organization, the DMWFF is honored to donate **\$25,000 to Feeding San Diego**, a partner food bank of Feeding America, the nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief organization.

“We are honored to have been chosen as the first-ever charity beneficiary of the DMWFF and are thrilled to receive the generous donation of \$25,000 to help provide nutritious meals to San Diegans facing hunger,” said Ali Colbran, Feeding San Diego’s director of development. “Many hunger-relief organizations across the country are facing new challenges post-pandemic stemming from reduced funding and the impacts of inflation, and Feeding San Diego is not excluded. We are incredibly grateful to our culinary community for rallying behind our mission this year.”

Headlining celebrity chefs of DMWFF 2023 included **Susan Feniger, Antonia Lofaso, Catherine McCord, Claudette Zepeda, Claudia Sandoval, Richard Blais, Brian Malarkey, Aaron May, Beau MacMillan, Benito Molina, Drew Deckman, Eric Greenspan, Jackson Kalb, Silvio Salmoiraghi** and many others.

There were several stand-out moments from the week’s signature events:

- **NFL legend Drew Brees** hosted the **Whispering Angel celebrity pickleball tournament**, benefitting Feeding San Diego, at Bobby Riggs Racquet & Paddle while dueling it out on the courts with various professional athlete friends
- **San Diego Wave FC** soccer team hosted the **opening night kickoff party** at Monarch Ocean Pub, where many of the country’s top professional female players mingled with guests during an alfresco sunset soiree
- Actors **Aaron Paul & Bryan Cranston** led a multi-coursed **Dos Hombres-infused pairing** journey alongside **Baja’s top chefs** and the culinary team of The Lodge at Torrey Pines
- Sunday’s Grand Tasting was hosted by **Soccer icon Alex Morgan**, while Saturday’s Grand Tasting spectacle welcomed **Chef Susan Feniger** in preview of her upcoming film ***Susan Feniger. Forked***

- **Pro surfer Rob Machado** led a **beach cleanup** at his Cardiff home break followed by a revelrous Sunday brunch with chef **Brian Malarkey** at Herb & Sea
- Best-selling author/chef **Catherine McCord** hosted an **upbeat yoga and brunch** event at Monarch perched above the Pacific Ocean
- Star chefs **Claudette Zepeda** and **Antonia Lofaso** curated a Kosta Brown wine paired dinner at Vaga at the five-star Alila Marea Beach Resort
- **Food Network's brightest stars** cooked alongside host **Richard Blais** at the **official after party** at the Pendry San Diego hotel
- **Country music's most exciting emerging artist, Pillbox Patti**, kept the crowd rocking with a special performance after Saturday's Grand Tasting
- Two champions were crowned in the festival's inaugural Grand Tasting culinary competitions with **Civico 1845** and **Tanner's Prime Burgers** awarded \$15,000 each in cash and prizes.

The festival will return for its second installment next fall in 2024. Stay up to date by following the conversation all year long on Instagram and Facebook using [@DelMarFest](#) /[#DMWFF](#). For more information, visit [delmar.wine](#).

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About Del Mar Wine & Food Festival: Del Mar Wine & Food Festival (DMWFF) was founded in 2023 by a group of famed San Diego natives to celebrate the soul of the SoCal lifestyle and uplift San Diego's culinary reputation. With dozens of events held throughout the city, DMWFF creates a new culinary-fueled lifestyle experience that transcends the West Coast's festival scene. The festival benefits Feeding San Diego, with a portion of proceeds helping San Diegans end hunger through food rescue. In its inaugural year, the festival generated \$25,000 for its charitable partner. More information on the Festival can be found at [delmar.wine](#). Follow DMWFF on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) using [@DelMarFest](#) /[#DMWFF](#).

About Feeding San Diego: [Feeding San Diego](#) is a non-profit organization on a mission to connect every person facing hunger with nutritious meals by maximizing food rescue. Established in 2007, Feeding San Diego rescues surplus food from local and national food donors before it goes to waste and gets it to people facing hunger in San Diego County. It is the only Feeding America partner food bank in the region. Each year, the hunger-relief organization provides more than 35.4 million meals to children, families, seniors, college students, military families, and veterans in partnership with a network of nearly 350 local charities, schools, colleges, faith communities, healthcare providers, and meal sites. It operates nine distinct programs countywide that support people facing hunger with food assistance or resources. More than 76 percent of the food distributed by Feeding San Diego is rescued, allowing high-quality food to be redirected instead of going to waste. By diverting more than 31 million pounds of food from the landfill, Feeding San Diego protects people and the planet. Every \$1 donated helps provide two meals to people facing hunger. To get involved with Feeding San Diego and learn more about its mission, visit [feedingsandiego.org](#). Get daily updates on social media at [facebook.com/feedingsandiego](#), [twitter.com/FeedingSanDiego](#) or follow us on Instagram [@feedingsandiego](#).