

PHOENIX



Experience the Culinary Diversity of the Sonoran Desert

2024 LDEI Annual Conference

October 17-20, 2024 | Wigwam Resort | Phoenix, AZ



Experience the Culinary Diversity of the Sonoran Desert

President's Invitation

We're in the final stages of our countdown to Conference, and I couldn't be more eager to share with you the stunning, intriguing, and exciting program our Conference Cochairs, Judith Baigent-King and Candy Leshner, along with the Phoenix chapter and a dazzle of Dames from other chapters, have assembled for us. We can look forward to a Conference that will showcase the rich cultural diversity and regional specialties of the Sonoran Desert and provide a unique experience for us all.



The best way to start is by securing your spot in one of the pre-Conference tours or experiences. We have yoga, trail rides, a cooking class, historical sites, the Botanic Gardens and Heard Museum—or maybe you'd like to try a hot-air balloon ascent. The post-Conference offerings are guaranteed to end your weekend perfectly.

Peruse the Conference brochure! It's power-packed with phenomenal offerings, beginning with our opening keynote speaker and two days of educational sessions and networking breaks. We have our always-inspiring Legacy Awards Luncheon and a kick-up-your-heels Country and Western Night with a chuckwagon dinner, music, and line dancing (bring your boots!). This year, we'll be celebrating our 2024 Grande Dame Carla Hall. I know you'll want to join me in honoring her at the Saturday night Grande Dame dinner.

I look forward to the LDEI Conference every year. It is our time to learn, explore a new city, make new connections, forge meaningful friendships, and enjoy being Dames together.

It will be my pleasure and honor to preside over our Conference as president of Les Dames d'Escoffier International, and I'm looking forward to seeing you all in October.

As always,
Kathy

Cochairs' Invitation

How fast the last two-and-one-half years have flown by, since Judith and I took deep breaths, raised our hands, and said Phoenix would throw their hat in the ring to host the 2024 Conference! Now, we are merely months away from getting to personally welcome each of you who plan on attending, to our little corner of the Southwest.

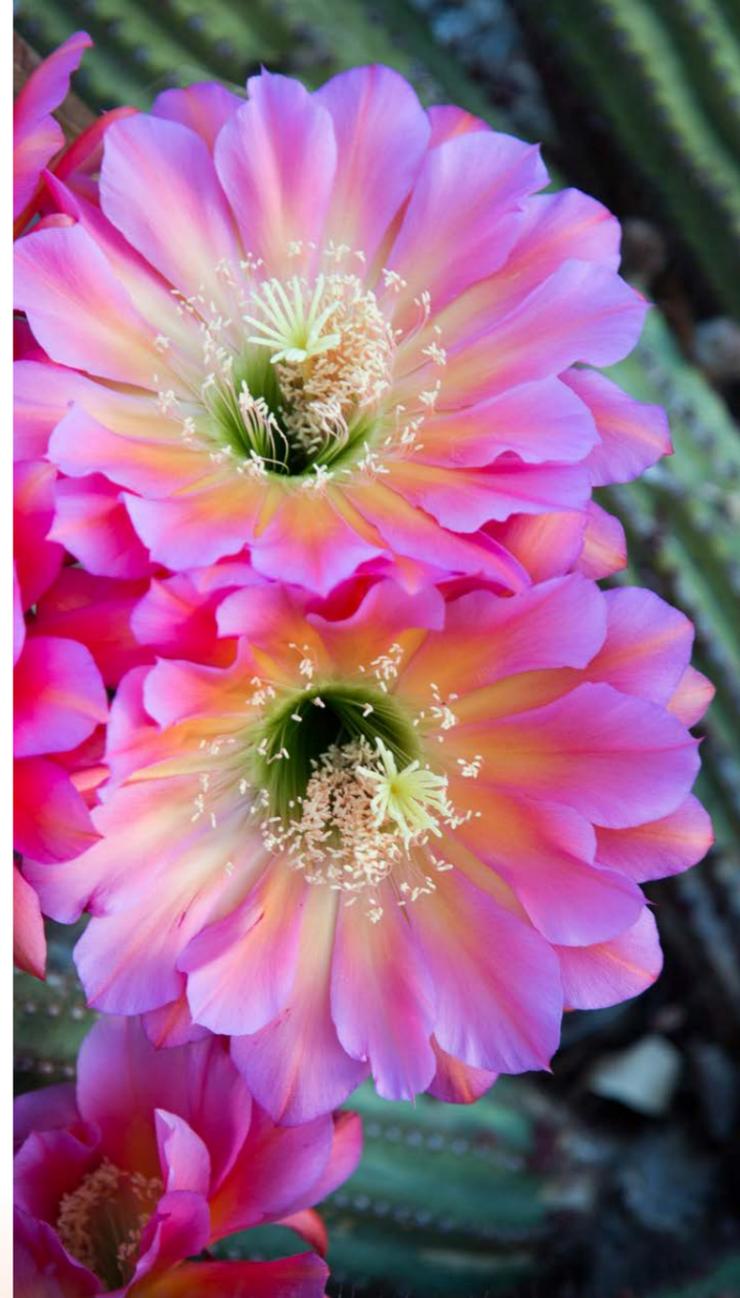
Judith, myself, and our Phoenix chapter are beyond thrilled at getting to roll out the red carpet for LDEI, a carpet colorfully woven with fabulous food, culturally relevant experiences, educational opportunities and, of course, the excitement and warm camaraderie that comes from bringing one's friends and peers together under "one roof."

We hope that you will accept our invitation to share this unique experience with us – as *sharing* really is the focus of what our Conference has been built on. Sharing our stunning, western locale, historic surroundings, unique cultural exposures, and exceptionally talented speakers/presenters.

Sharing – and thus supporting – has also been a glorious bonus when assembling the talented Dames helping to make this Conference uniquely remarkable, as multiple chapters have stepped up and augmented Phoenix's small-but-mighty numbers with their talented members.

We invite and we welcome you – to come *share* with us, bring your experiences and your expertise, be involved in both the educational and festive aspects we have thoughtfully brought together for you. Allow us to embrace you with a good ol' fashioned warm western welcome. Phoenix – 2024 LDEI Conference awaits you!

Candy Leshner and Judith Baigent-King
Conference Cochairs



LDEI Conference Sponsors

Thank you to our Conference Partners for their generous support:

Yeti

The Wine Group

Wente Family Estates

Tito's Homemade Vodka

Plate Magazine - in kind

Event Logistics

Hotel Reservations

The rate at the Wigwam Resort is \$250 single/double plus a resort fee of \$15 per night (reduced from \$35).

Or you can call the hotel directly at 844.239.1641.

Click here to make your reservations.

Please book through the two available methods (above) and avoid using Expedia or other online travel agent, as we are committed to utilizing a certain number of rooms in order to get special concessions from the hotel. Booking outside of our official block or through a service like Airbnb could prevent us from meeting our commitment and thus increase our costs.



Transportation

Phoenix is the 5th largest city in the US - the metropolitan area is over 90 miles from one side to the other, hence the freeway traffic can be really congested. Lyft, Uber, and taxis are your transportation options from the Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. The cost runs between \$35 and \$45, depending on the time of day.

Weather and Attire

October temperatures will be in the high 80's during the day and 60 plus at night. Bring a light jacket or sweater for inside the air-conditioned hotel. Attire is business casual during the day, cool, semi-casual for Thursday evening, western bling Friday night, and cocktail attire Saturday evening.

Resort Activities

Make your spa appointments well in advance of the Conference. Call LeMonds Aveda Salon/Spa directly at 844 239-1641. Also, bring your swimsuits to enjoy the warm weather and the various pools at the resort. You can also enjoy tennis, pickleball, the fitness center, and bike rentals.



Conference Agenda

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

LDEI Board of Directors Meeting

4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Registration

[Open Evening](#)

Local Restaurant list will be available.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17

Breakfast:

On your own in restaurants in and around the resort

6:00 am – 5:00 pm

Registration

Optional Tours and Activities:

Tour notes: **The buses will leave on time!** If you are late and miss your bus, you will need—at your own expense—to Uber to the first stop. Phoenix traffic can be very congested, and the tours may end later than scheduled. Bring a hat and sunscreen with you. Water will be provided, but a personal water container is recommended.

6:15 am

Tour 1: Golf Tournament

Tee times start at 7:00 am - cart path only. A specially prepared boxed breakfast will be awaiting you at your cart. Enjoy a fun format, no-pressure golf tournament at the Wigwam's premier golf course. The tee times will be reserved on their Blue Course. Cost includes golf cart, club rentals, green fees, and boxed breakfast.

Fee: \$260.00 (includes clubs). Without club rental \$200.00
Minimum/Maximum 4/16

6:30 am – 8:30 am

Tour 2: Tethered Hot Air Balloon Ascent and Sparkling Mango Mimosa Brunch, at the Wigwam Resort

Experience the thrill of the ascent of a tethered hot air balloon right on the grounds of the Wigwam Resort. You will rise about 50 feet off the ground in a four-person tethered balloon, experiencing a great view of the surrounding countryside, then feast on a sumptuous mimosa breakfast once you come back down to earth from your short adventure. You will be able to enjoy this experience and still be able to attend one of the two on-site seminars!

Fee: \$125.00
Minimum/Maximum 60/90



7:00 am – 12:00 pm

Tour 3: Trail Ride and Cowboy Brunch

Experience Arizona's stunning backcountry on a one-hour guided horseback trail ride through a working ranch and scenic South Mountain Park. Accompanied by wranglers and Dames, explore miles of trails and beautiful vistas. After the ride, enjoy a special Cowboy Brunch. Wear appropriate attire and be sure to sign a waiver (200-lb. weight limit). Water provided.

Fee: \$190.00
Minimum/Maximum: 18/25

7:45 am – 4:00 pm

Tour 4: Tour of Historic Wickenburg

Travel to the charming Western town Wickenburg. Start with pastries at Dame Fanny Hick's bakery. Visit Vulture City ghost town and Arizona's most prolific gold mine. Enjoy a hearty rancher-approved barbecue lunch at Hassayampa Smokehouse, a guided tour of Desert Caballeros Museum's Western art, and history exhibits featuring Remington, Russell, and more. Ride back to the resort or continue to the optional Harvest Moon Festival (additional fee for the festival).

Highlights: Bakery, ghost town, museum tour, barbecue lunch
Fee: \$195.00
Minimum/Maximum: 19/38



9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Tour 5: Desert Botanical Gardens and Heard Museum

Immerse yourself in the Sonoran desert flora and fauna at the renowned Desert Botanical Gardens on a docent-led tour. Enjoy a farm-to-table lunch at Gertrude's restaurant, hosted by Dame Michelle Jacob, then explore the world-class Heard Museum that is dedicated to Native cultures and art led by another docent tour. Learn about Arizona's indigenous heritage through exhibits that highlight the arts, living traditions, and broader themes.

Highlights: Botanical gardens tour, Gertrude's lunch, Heard Museum Native art/culture tour.

Fee: \$175.00
Minimum/Maximum: 19/38



9:30 am – 1:00 pm

Tour 6: Indigenous Ingredients Cooking Class and Luncheon: Cook Like an Arizona Dame!

Experience the culinary heritage of Arizona through indigenous ingredients, techniques, and flavors. Two renowned Phoenix Dames teach this deep dive with dishes like green corn tamales, nopalitas salad, poblano relleno, and tres capas dulce de leche cheesecake. Explore Southwest, Hispanic, and Native ingredients and methods. Included will be a booklet on unique local products.

Menu highlights: Tamales, nopalitas salad, poblano relleno, tres capas cheesecake.

Fee: \$150.00
Minimum/Maximum: 30/50

10:00 am – 1:30 pm

Tour 7: Arizona Wine Seminar and Luncheon: Arizona's Fast-Growing Wine Region. Taste Why!

Explore Arizona's unique wine region with this dynamic event featuring a grand tasting, winemaker panel, and four-course luncheon. Discover the challenges and opportunities of growing grapes in an arid, high-altitude climate. Taste nine wines showcasing Arizona's diverse AVAs and learn about the varieties, climates, and winemaking styles. The panel includes renowned local winemakers, growers, and industry experts. Dishes by Executive Chef Christopher McLean are perfectly paired with Arizona wines.

Fee: \$170.00
Minimum/Maximum: 30/50

10:00 am – 3:30 pm

Mercado Moderna and Book Store (Chapter boutique shop)

4:45 pm – 5:00 pm

First-Time Attendees Reception

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Welcome to Phoenix Opening Reception

The Opening Reception, the traditional Conference kick-off, is a great opportunity to renew old acquaintances and forge new, lasting friendships.

5:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Harvest Moon Festival (optional event)

This Annual Phoenix Chapter Fundraiser in conjunction with C-CAP Arizona is held on the magnificent grounds of the Phoenician Resort in the heart of Phoenix. Bring your appetites to this festive event. Each delectable food station features a team of top High School culinary students who are mentored by an outstanding local chef - and all compete to win your vote for the People's Choice Award. With 30-plus stations to choose from, you'll be hard pressed to decide on a favorite. Nate Nathan and The Mac Daddy O's band,— a 12-piece rocking' ensemble will keep the energy moving, and an outstanding lineup of beverages will round out the evening.

Fee: \$185
Minimum/Maximum 50/150

6:30 pm

Dinner on Your Own

If are not attending "Harvest Moon Festival," the Phoenix chapter will provide a list of local and Dame-owned restaurants.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18

6:45 am – 7:30 am

Morning Yoga (optional event)

Fee: \$10.00

7:30 am to 5:00 pm

Registration

8:00 am to 8:30 am

Opening Breakfast

8:30 am to 8:45 am

General Session Welcome

Kathy Gold, LDEI President

8:45 am to 9:45 am

Keynote Address: Crystal Wahpepah

As the first Native American woman-owned catering business in California - Wahpepah's Kitchen - Crystal, a 2022 James Beard Award finalist proudly serves authentic Native cuisine based on her Kickapoo heritage cooking Native food such as bison, squash, and corn, with recipes passed on for hundreds of years. She is a member of the Kickapoo tribe (Oklahoma) and grew up in Oakland, California, an urban Native American community. Crystal has catered and held educational talks in many forums that span local community settings, the tech world, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions. Funded by the Brock Circle.



10:00 am to 10:30 am

Networking Break

10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Hospitality/Mercado

10:30 am to 12:00 pm

Concurrent Sessions

SESSION 1: Chapter Leadership Forum

The Chapter Leadership Forum is open to all Conference attendees and is a must for anyone (including incoming or current board members, as well as all chapter members) who is engaged, active, and interested in furthering their chapter's mission. In this session, we'll discuss big picture topics for building and maintaining a dynamic and healthy chapter. We'll learn from other chapters who are successfully navigating challenges, share ideas and real take-ways that can apply to every chapter, and gain insight into others' best practices.

SESSION 2: How to Pick the Right Culinary Tour

Planning to book a Culinary Tour? Learn from your fellow Dame experts everything you need to put into your checklist to ask for, search for, and consider. Having a regional and experienced culinary-focused guide to steer you to both the iconic spots and the mom-and-pop word of mouth gems is always the smart way to go. Learn the best practices and be confident in what you should be asking to be sure you're getting the most from every travel moment.

Dame Denise Bina, Global Table Travel (Phoenix)

Dame Francesca Montillo, Owner and Founder, Lazy Italian Culinary Adventures (Boston)

Phoenix Founding Dame Donna Nordin, Donna Nordin Cooks and Tours

SESSION 3: Chocolate, Wine, and Coffee - When Dirt (Terroir) REALLY Matters

A dynamic presentation by Phoenix Dames that includes an interactive round robin comparative tasting of chocolates, wines, and coffees. Get the dirt on what gives chocolate, wine, and coffee their intrinsic complexity based on where they are grown, then join in by sharing your thoughts in a lively discussion on what your palate picked up—every palate is like a fingerprint—totally unique! Bring your taste buds: explore, evaluate, and compare.

Moderator: Dame Tracy Dempsey, Owner, Tracy Dempsey Originals, Co-owner ODV Wines. Holds a WSET Level 2 award in wines - with distinction, Past board member for the Arizona Wine Growers' Association (Phoenix)

Dame Maureen Elitzak, Owner, Zak's Chocolates (Phoenix)

Dame Morgan Mahlzan, Pastry Chef (Phoenix)

Dame Sharon Koger, Master Coffee Roaster - Owner, Esso Coffeeshop (Phoenix)

Dame Michelle Minta, Owner/Grower - Rhumb Line Vineyard & Lavender Farm (Phoenix)

SESSION 4: Beyond the Buzz: The Art of Non-Alcoholic and Decaffeinated Drinks

This session explores the craft of premium non-alcoholic wines and decaffeinated coffees pioneered by industry leaders Rachel Martin (Oceano Wines) and Jodi Lehr (Santa Lucia Coffee). Through the tasting and expert insights, attendees will:

- Discover the meticulous processes used to remove alcohol and caffeine while preserving flavors
- Learn about the technological advancements enabling these sophisticated beverages
- Understand how these "mindful" options reflect a cultural shift toward inclusive, health-conscious drinking
- Taste samples that showcase the artistry behind non-alcoholic and decaffeinated drinks
- Gain perspective on how these products are reshaping social norms and traditions

Martin and Lehr will guide a deep dive into the parallel journeys of their innovative non-alcoholic wine and decaf coffee, while examining the craftsmanship that allows these beverages to transcend mere "trend" status. An illuminating look at the future of drinking cultures.



12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

Legacy Awards Luncheon

The Legacy Awards Committee invites you to share their pride in the Legacy Awards class of 2024: five outstanding women who stood out from a very competitive field of applicants. Hear how these Dame-hosted externships have made a meaningful difference in the lives of these talented women and their professional futures.



2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

In Conversation with Jackie Henson, Esq.

This year, we are providing our chapter leaders the opportunity to join small group discussions with LDEI's long-time attorney, Jackie Henson. There will be several opportunities throughout the Conference, where chapter leaders can afford themselves of Jackie's vast non-profit legal experience.

Concurrent Sessions

SESSION 5: Catalysts for Change: How Female Leaders are Helping Individuals with Barriers to Employment Find Themselves and Their Futures Through Careers in Food, Beverage, and Hospitality

This panel discussion will feature Dames who collaborate within the Catalyst Kitchens community. This network includes 90 nonprofit member organizations that are changing lives and impacting communities in 35 states nationwide.

At the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Define the elements of a trauma-informed leadership style.
- Activate their communities to support workforce development training programs, social enterprises, and hunger relief operations.

Dame Dina Altieri: Director of Education and Training, Catalyst Kitchens (Phoenix)

Dame Shanita McAfee-Bryant: Executive Director, The Prospect Kansas City (Kansas City)

Dame Sallie Miller: Director of Social Enterprise, Homeward Bound of Marin County (Sonoma County)

Dame Whitney Reuling: Executive Director, Sonoma Family Meal (Sonoma County)

Dame Meegan Roberts: Head of Culinary Innovations, Villa Dolce Gelato (Phoenix)

SESSION 6: Food Writing for Today's Media

The face and focus of food writing continues to evolve,—and evolve quickly—from who is telling the stories to how they are being told. Traditional publications have shifted from print-only to digital-first; social media is changing the way readers search for information; and print-on-demand is making it possible for anyone to publish a cookbook. In addition to learning to adapt to the changing landscape of

the food-media world, writers must now also contend with the surging addition of AI. A panel of writers, editors, and digital publishers will talk about how culinary storytelling has changed during their careers, and share ways they navigate this mercurial field and make use of the opportunities that come with these challenges.

Moderator, Dame Raeanne Sarazen, Food Writer & Editor, Consultant, Author *The Complete Recipe Writing Guide* (Chicago)

Dame Shannan Perciballi, Publisher & Editor, Edible Phoenix (Phoenix)

Dame Bahar Anooshahr, Nightlife and Dining Reporter, Arizona Republic (Phoenix)

Felicia Campbell, Cookbook Author, Food, Dining and Nightlife Editor of The Arizona Republic

Dame Giangi Townsend, Owner and Digital Publisher at Giangi's Kitchen (Phoenix)

SESSION 7: Making History: Women in Beer

This panel discussion will explore the history – or what we like to call her-story on the current state of women and beer. Brewery owners Megan Greenwood and Sue Rigler will share their knowledge of the history of women in beer and their experiences in being women in today's male-dominated brewing industry.

Moderator; Dame Donna Del Rey, Relish Culinary Events, (Sonoma)

Megan Greenwood, Owner and Founder, Greenwood Brewery

Sue Rigler, Owner and Founder, Hundred Mile Brewing Company

SESSION 8: Foraging in the Desert

In this illuminating session, explore the world of sustainable foraging in the desert with experts Tamara Stanger (Hell's Backbone Grill) and Danielle Goldtooth (Dii IINA). Gain invaluable insights on:

- Foraging Techniques
- Scouting and identifying wild edible plants; Sustainable harvesting methods
- Using foraged ingredients in recipes
- Indigenous Perspectives
- Ethical foraging practices
- Traditional uses - medicinal vs culinary
- Foraging permits and regulations
- Sustainable harvesting approaches

The presenters will share exclusive recipes showcasing wild Arizona ingredients. Attendees will learn to appreciate and respect the desert's natural bounty through responsible foraging traditions. This will be an invaluable experience for culinary enthusiasts and conscious foragers alike!

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Country and Western Night with Chuckwagon Dinner, Music, and Dancing—Boots and Bling!

We'll supply the hats! You bring your boots, western duds, and bling! Enjoy great food and drinks, music, line-dancing instruction, and entertainment booths. Marvel at the skill of Native



Chauncey Jones
Click here

American Hoop Dancers followed by Chauncey Jones and his renowned five-piece Country Western Band - a true Southwestern experience. The event is being held at the Wigwam Resort, so no lengthy bus ride.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19

6:45 am – 7:30 am

Morning Yoga

(optional event)

Fee: \$10.00

7:30 am – 8:00 am

Buffet Networking Breakfast

This is a great opportunity to network and mingle with fellow Dames. Attendees will also have the opportunity to engage and interact with C-CAP students who will be demonstrating the skills and techniques required when they compete for local and national scholarships.

8:00 am – 8:30 am

LDEI State of the Union

LDEI president Kathy Gold will provide an update on the initiatives currently underway in LDEI.

8:30 am – 10:00 am

LDEI Council of Delegates Meeting

This meeting has been moved to a prime-time slot within the Conference program to allow for maximum participation by the membership. Delegates, representing each chapter, will vote on the issues shaping the future of the organization. If you are considering a board position within LDEI, you must have attended the COD meeting once in the three years prior to your running for office.

8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Registration/Hospitality

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Mercado

10:00 am – 10:30 am

Networking Break

10:30 am – Noon

Concurrent Sessions

SESSION 9: Navigating Social Media

Kirti Dwivedi, Owner, Diya Marketing, will be presenting an essential and informative session on utilizing social media effectively for your brand and target audience. In 2008, Kirti founded her boutique marketing firm specializing in social media strategy and campaigns, as well as PR, with a focus on the hospitality industry. She has worked with major brands like Arizona Cocktail Weekend, Garden Bar PHX, and Circle K Arizona.



SESSION 10: Mezcal and Tequila Tasting

Unique to the desert and Southwest regions, mezcal and tequila are both singular liquors like no other. Learn to appreciate and understand how they are made, their distinctive nuances, and essentials including the best-serving vessels and temperature, what the various colors denote, what to look for in aroma (and how that is achieved), the importance (and differences) created by aging, then discover which best fits your palate and how to utilize them in your own cocktail concoctions.

Dame Kim Haasarud - Past President of the American Bartenders Association (Phoenix)

SESSION 11: Tuning in on the West: Grapes, Cheese, and the Trailblazing Women in Wine

This lively celebration features a panel of accomplished women who have forged unique paths in the wine industry. Through inspiring stories and insights, we will explore Western wines paired with exquisite cheeses, set to uplifting music for a multi-sensory experience.

Gain valuable perspectives as these trailblazers share their journeys transitioning into the wine world. Discover dazzling wine and cheese pairings while a discussion explores the panelists' diverse areas of expertise. This session will be an engaging blend of flavors, stories, and music celebrating female pioneers.

Moderator: Lizbeth Congiusti, wine expert

Ziggy Eschliman (The Wine Gal) - Veteran wine/spirits broadcaster, music pairing enthusiast

Doralice Handal - Co-owner of Locals Tasting Room, former cheesemonger/chef

Kelly Comstock Ferris - General Manager of Comstock Wines, Sonoma

Dale Ott - Founder of Nossa Wines, which focuses on Portuguese and Mexican wine imports

SESSION 12: Business Solutions Workshop

This highly interactive session tackles the universal operational challenges facing the hospitality/food service industry post-COVID. Attendees will:

- Identify and define major pain points like labor shortages, supply chain disruptions, staffing issues, and brand differentiation
- Collaborate in groups to break down these problems and share creative solutions
- Explore team-building strategies to foster a supportive "tribe" mentality
- Focus on developing interpersonal skills for a positive workplace culture
- How to build relationships with customers and industry contacts

Through an open discussion and the sharing of ideas/resources, participants can find potential fixes to their current operational hurdles. The emphasis is on problem-solving together and creating a collaborative environment to address this new industry landscape.

This highly interactive session tackles universal operational challenges facing the hospitality/food service industry post-COVID.

Moderated by seasoned experts Katie Stephens, Hannah Romberg, and Chef Jon-Paul Hutchins

SESSION 13: Giving Back - Impacting our Community: C-CAP and Blue Watermelon

This session showcases two powerful initiatives that are nurturing the next generation of culinary talent and healthful eating habits: Blue Watermelon Project

Chef Charleen Badman and Dame Ann Colleary Rodarte discuss their school-garden model where chefs teach kids how to grow and cook produce. This session highlights the program's expansion across Arizona, reaching over 6,000 students annually and proven success in increasing kids' willingness to try plant-based foods and engage local farms and businesses.

C-CAP (Careers through Culinary Arts Program)

Dame Jill Smith shares insights into this innovative national program preparing high school students for culinary careers. The program was started in Arizona by the late Dame Barbara Colleary and is now partnered with LDEI Phoenix Chapter. It fosters partnerships with businesses and organizations to provide culinary training and opportunities. Learn how these initiatives are shaping future culinarians and promoting healthy eating through hands-on education, community engagement, and nurturing a passion for food. Gain inspiration on giving back and implementing similar programs in your area.

12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

Partner Recognition Luncheon

2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Concurrent Sessions

SESSION 14: Farming in the Southwest; Arizona—Salad Bowl of the Nation

Our panel of Phoenix and Tucson desert farmers will surprise you with the abundant varieties of edibles grown in our Sonoran Desert. Learn about the challenges and opportunities that have made them and their farmer/suppliers successful over the decades.

Dame Kristine Jensen, Gallery of Food Bodega in Tucson - Locally grown produce and meats (Phoenix)

Dame Emma Zimmerman, Hayden Mills, locally grown organic grains (Phoenix)

Dame Sabrina Rigas, Urban Grove in Tucson, grower of exotic citrus and varietal date palms (Phoenix)

SESSION 15: Building a Brand that Lasts

This breakout session will be moderated by an entrepreneurial Phoenix Dame along with four other Phoenix Dame entrepreneurs who own and operate food-related manufacturing, retail, catering, and farming businesses, all of which have a retail and wholesale presence. The up-and-down cycles will be candidly discussed and there will be time for Q & A. The discussion will address manufacturing challenges, surviving a pandemic, multiple recessions, two fires, extreme seasonality, staffing, and the success of being in business

for decades and how their people, processes, profitability, and brand make it last. A delicious sampling of these Dames' products will be served. Come with questions.

Moderated by Dame Eileen Spitalny, Fairytale Brownies (brownie manufacturing and e-commerce company) est. 1992, (San Francisco and Phoenix)

SESSION 16: Bubbly Bliss

This class allows for a peek behind the mysteries of Champagne. We'll discuss the history of this exquisite wine, as well as the Champagne Region of France and how the term came to be proprietary. We'll learn about the process of making champagne as it compares to the process of making other sparkling wines. We'll delve into the different grape varieties and how terroir and climate influence the grapes. Attendees will get to taste and compare a local sparkling wine with two different types of Champagne, learning how to compare their production styles. We'll discuss the different types of Champagne glasses and debate the proper glassware to use when consuming Champagne (hint: there's no wrong way to drink Champagne!). Through the tasting we'll also discover the nuances of the different grape varieties in the three different samples and discover our preferences. Attendees will walk away with a greater appreciation into this complex and delicious sparkling wine.

Dame Lisa Mercer, Resort Manager, The Phoenician (Phoenix)

Dame Abby Kate Larson, Corporate Mixologist, Maggiore Group (Phoenix)

SESSION 17: The Art of Eating: An Inspiring Documentary about M.F.K. Fisher

Moderator; Dame Donna Del Rey, Relish Culinary, (Sonoma)

Watching *The Art of Eating* is a remarkably powerful and touching experience. As you listen to the words of Mary Francis, her esteemed colleagues, friends, and family—one is reminded of the simple pleasures of each moment. She was a woman who was present in her writing and used her love of food to eloquently describe life, hunger, and passionate moments.

"We must eat, if in the face of that dread fact, we can find other nourishment, and tolerance and compassion for it, we will be no less full of human dignity. There is a communion of more than our bodies when bread is broken and wine drunk. And that is my answer when people ask me "Why do you write about hunger sans not wars or love?"

"Sharing food with another human being is an intimate act that should not be indulged in lightly."—M.F.K. Fisher

There will be an 86-minute film on the life and times of M.F.K. Fisher filmed by Gregory Bezat of San Francisco.

Popcorn bar sponsored by Dame Sheana Davis, The Epicurean Connection, (Sonoma)

6:00 pm – 6:45 pm

Grande Dame Reception

6:45 pm – 9:00 pm

Grande Dame Dinner

The Les Dames d'Escoffier International Grande Dame Award is a lifetime achievement award that recognizes the extraordinary contributions of a Dame in the fields of food, beverage, and hos-



Carla Hall
Click here



pitality. Join us as we celebrate our 18th Grande Dame Award winner, Dame Carla Hall (Washington D.C.). Cocktail attire.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20

(Optional events)

9:00 am

Brunch at FnB Restaurant

Depart the Wigwam resort with your luggage for this one-hour ride to the James Beard award-winning Best-Chef Southwest - former Dame and Phoenix Chapter President, Chef Charleen Badman's popular Old Town Scottsdale Restaurant, FnB. This will be a special Dames family-style brunch to enjoy before you fly away! Charleen is known as the vegetable whisperer for good reason. Every soil-kissed element is handled with incredible reverence and intelligence in her kitchen, and the flavors in her fare reflect that veneration. This will be a not-to-be missed opportunity to experience her exceptional regional cuisine. Departure transportation is on your own.

Fee: \$165.00

Minimum/Maximum 40/50



7:00 am – 6:00 pm

All Day Tour to Beautiful Sedona: Jeep Tour, Lunch, Dessert, and Wine Tastings

A boxed breakfast will await you to enjoy on your two-and-one-half-hour bus trip to beautiful Sedona. Pink Jeep® Tours, whose headquarters is tucked within a cluster of unique Sedona shops, is the perfect introduction to Sedona's red rock trails. The Scenic Rim Tour is 90 minutes of winding, unpaved, and bumpy back roads in an open Jeep; be prepared to hold on tight during this adventurous journey! Pink Jeep® Tours will give you a ride to remember in one of the most incredible settings on Earth.

Lunch will follow a few doors down at Sedona's highly acclaimed restaurant, Mariposa Latin Inspired Grill. There will be a stop at the architecturally incredible Holy Cross Chapel before enjoying a wine and dessert tasting hosted by Dame Morgan Mahlzan, an incredible Pastry Chef, on the bus en-route back to the Wigwam Resort.

Fee: \$350.00

Minimum/Maximum 19/38



LDEI 2024 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Registration is available online at www.ldei.org or complete the form below.

Name _____

Chapter _____

Company Name /Title _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Spouse/Guest Name _____

Dietary restrictions _____

Check here if first-time attendee

Total Due \$ _____

Cancellation Policy

Full refund, less \$50 processing fee, if cancelled by October 1, 2024. No refunds after October 1, 2024. All refunds are processed after the Conference.

Payment

Check Enclosed _____

Charge Mastercard _____ VISA _____ American Express _____

Account # _____

Expiration _____ Security Code _____

Signature Required _____

Billing address (if different from address above) _____

Send Registration

Scan/email: info@ldei.org

By Mail: Greg Jewell
LDEI
P.O. Box 4961
Louisville, KY 40204

If you require special accommodations to participate fully, please attach a written statement of your needs. The hotel is fully ADA-accessible, but we need advance notice for off-site locations and transportation.

Further Questions?

Contact Greg Jewell at 502-456-1851 x 1, or info@ldei.org.

Registration

Full registration includes all Conference materials, meals and all the events scheduled on Friday and Saturday except the optional tours and the Thursday-evening chapter event. To be eligible for the early Conference registration fee, registration must be received/postmarked by August 31, 2024.

	#	Member	#	Spouse/Guest
Early Registration		695.00		N/A
Regular Registration		745.00		N/A
Opening Reception		Included		45.00
Friday Breakfast		Included		55.00
Legacy Awards Luncheon		Included		85.00
Country and Western Night		Included		175.00
Saturday Breakfast		Included		55.00
Partner Recognition Luncheon		Included		85.00
Grande Dame Reception/Dinner		Included		185.00
Friday Day Pass <i>(includes all Fri. events and meals including dinner)</i>		400.00		N/A
Saturday Day Pass <i>(includes all Sat. events and meals including dinner)</i>		400.00		N/A
Total				

Optional Events

Both members and guests are welcome to attend any of the optional events below.

	Fee	# of Tickets	Total
Tour 1: Golf Tournament (includes clubs)	260.00		
Tour 1: Golf Tournament (without clubs)	200.00		
Tour 2: Tethered Hot Air Balloon	125.00		
Tour 3: Trail Ride and Cowboy Brunch	190.00		
Tour 4: Tour of Historic Wickenburg	195.00		
Tour 5: Desert Botanical Gardens	175.00		
Tour 6: Indigenous Ingredients Cooking Class with Lunch	150.00		
Tour 7: Arizona Wine Seminar with Lunch	170.00		
Harvest Moon Festival	185.00		
Friday Yoga	10.00		
Saturday Yoga	10.00		
Sunday Brunch at FnB Restaurant	165.00		
Sunday All Day Tour to Sedona	350.00		
Conference Patron	500.00		
Conference Grande Patron	1000.00		
Conference Supporting Patron	2500.00		
Total			

Concurrent Seminars:

(Select ONE seminar from each group.)

Group A: ___ Seminar 1 ___ Seminar 2 ___ Seminar 3 ___ Seminar 4

Group B: ___ Seminar 5 ___ Seminar 6 ___ Seminar 7 ___ Seminar 8

Group C: ___ Seminar 9 ___ Seminar 10 ___ Seminar 11

___ Seminar 12 ___ Seminar 13

Group D: ___ Seminar 14 ___ Seminar 15 ___ Seminar 16 ___ Seminar 17