



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Key West Food & Wine Festival Nominated for Prestigious Awards, Placing the Florida Keys on the Global Culinary Stage**The 17-year island tradition earns nominations for "North America's Best Culinary Festival" and a second major national recognition, rallying the local community to bring home the gold.

**KEY WEST, FL — June 11, 2026** — The Key West Food & Wine Festival is officially stepping into the international spotlight. Festival organizers proudly announced today that the long-standing island event has been nominated for **North America's Best Culinary Festival 2026** in the 7th annual **World Culinary Awards**, the global sister initiative of the World Travel Awards.

Simultaneously, the festival continues its incredible streak of domestic acclaim, once again securing a coveted nomination in the **USA TODAY 10Best Readers' Choice Awards** for Best Wine Festival—a title the event has proudly won for four consecutive years.

Together, these dual nominations cement Key West's status as a premier global epicurean destination, honoring the unique tropical charm, world-class chefs, and collaborative hospitality industry that define the Florida Keys.

"Being recognized on both a global and national level in the exact same month is an incredible honor, not just for our festival team, but for the entire Key West community," said Mark Certonio, Festival Director.

"This is a direct reflection of our local talent—the exceptional chefs, sommelier's, lodging partners, and partners who work tirelessly to show visitors that paradise tastes just as good as it looks. We are thrilled to represent the spirit and economic vitality of the Keys on the world stage."

The dual nominations represent a significant victory for local tourism economics.

Over its 17-year history, the Key West Food & Wine Festival has grown from a local gathering into a massive tourism driver, drawing thousands of high-spending culinary travelers to the island annually.

By filling hotel rooms, packing local dining rooms, and partnering with local excursions during the winter season, the festival provides a crucial economic boost to the local business community and the Tourist Development Council (TDC).

**How the Community Can Vote:** Because both programs rely heavily on industry and consumer support, organizers are calling on Key West residents, business owners, and past festival attendees to mobilize and cast their ballots:

- **USA TODAY 10Best Awards 2026:** Voting is officially open on Monday, **June 22nd** at noon EDT and ends on **Monday, July 20th** at 11:59am EDT. Supporters can cast their daily vote directly via the 10Best website, or from our home page <https://keywestfoodandwinefestival.com/>
- **World Culinary Awards 2026:** Global voting officially opens on **June 25, 2026**, and runs through **August 14, 2026**. Votes can be cast by culinary industry professionals, media, and consumers on the official World Culinary Awards portal, or from our home page <https://keywestfoodandwinefestival.com/>

"Winning these titles requires a true International, National and Local Key West rallying cry," added Certonio. "A win for the festival is a win for the whole island. Let's bring these trophies home to the Keys!"

For more information on the festival, schedule updates, or to find direct voting links as they go live, please visit [www.keywestfoodandwinefestival.com](http://www.keywestfoodandwinefestival.com).

**About the Key West Food & Wine Festival:** Now in its 17th year, the Key West Food & Wine Festival is an iconic multi-day event celebrating the vibrant culinary heritage, diverse wine selections, and quirky, laid-back elegance of Key West, Florida. Featuring custom-curated tastings, beachside events, educational seminars, and collaborations with local historic venues and partners, the festival attracts culinary enthusiasts from across the globe.

#### **About Dolce Events & Marketing:**

Dolce Events & Marketing is a premier event production company specializing in high-end, immersive culinary and cultural experiences. Known for showcasing the unique personality, local talent, and breathtaking landscapes of the Florida Keys & Oaxaca, Mexico, Dolce Events brings world-class food and wine traditions to life in paradise.

#### **About Oaxaca Food & Wine ~ Craft Beer & Spirits Festival:**

From the Florida Keys to the culinary Capital of Mexico: The 3rd annual Festival returns for February 2027. Following back-to-back sold-out years, organizers have officially announced the return of the Oaxaca Food & Wine ~ Craft Beer & Spirits Festival, taking place from Wednesday, February 24 to Sunday, February 28, 2027.

Born from the team behind the multi-award-winning Key West Food & Wine Festival, this boutique five-day travel experience takes its production expertise on the road to the undisputed gastronomic epicenter of Mexico. Spanning seven highly curated events across five days, the festival offers an intimate look at the intersections of ancient indigenous flavors, contemporary gastronomy, and Mexico's exploding craft beverage scenes. ###

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