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May 15th, 2009

## James Beard Foundation Gala Honors Women in Food

We had the opportunity to attend the **James Beard Foundation Awards** ceremony — the Oscars of food — held at the Lincoln Center in New York City May 4. This year's annual gathering of chefs, sommeliers, restaurateurs and other culinary professionals featured the theme of **Women in Food**, with all 22 food tables and 13 cocktail tables headed by female chefs and mixologists.



The 2009 James Beard Foundation Awards gala honored **Women in Food**, featuring female chefs, mixologists, sommeliers and winemakers.

This year's big awards — presented by **Cat Cora**, **Emeril Lagasse** and **Stanley Tucci**, who plays Julia Child's husband in the upcoming film *Julie & Julia* — went to **Jean Georges** in New York (Outstanding Restaurant), Dan Barber of New York's **Blue Hill** (Outstanding Chef), Nate Appleman of **A16** in San Francisco (Rising Star Chef) and **Momofuku Ko** in New York (Best New Restaurant). The 2009 Lifetime Achievement Recipient was Ella Brennan, who has been involved with the 129-year-old New Orleans landmark **Commander's Palace** since 1969.

Past female winners include Nancy Silverton in 1991 — the first year the awards ceremony was held, though honors have been given since 1967 — for Outstanding Pastry Chef when when she was at Campanile. (Check out Silverton's antipasto salad recipe for *Vivmag* [here](#)). A year later, local- and slow-food advocate Alice Waters of **Chez Panisse** won both Outstanding Chef and Outstanding Restaurant. Andrea Reusing of the **Lantern Restaurant** in Chapel Hill, NC, told us she sees a bright future for women in the industry "Tons of young women are seeing this as a career possibility," she says.

For light warm-weather fare, try this recipe for Lebanese Fattoush Salad from 2008 award winner Carrie Nahabedian of **Naha** in Chicago.

### Lebanese Fattoush Salad

- 1 cup Mt. Vikos "True" Greek Feta Cheese, slightly crumbled
- 2 cucumbers, peeled, split lengthwise, seeds removed, sliced into 4-inch diagonals
- 4 plum tomatoes, peeled, quartered, seeds removed
- 3 hearts of Romaine, torn, inner leaves only
- ½ cup kalamata olives, split, pits removed
- 1 small red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 bunch mint leaves, torn
- 3 pieces pita bread, split, toasted golden brown and broken into large pieces
- ½ bunch flat-leaf parsley, leaves torn
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ teaspoon cracked black pepper
- 1 teaspoon each of fennel seed, anise seed and cumin seed, all lightly toasted and cracked
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 4 ounces extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 ounces red-wine vinegar
- Salt and pepper

Place all ingredients in a large bowl and toss well to mix. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Serves 8

### NUTRITION SCORE (per serving)

269 calories (64% fat)

Fat 19 g

Carbs 20 g

Protein 6 g

Fiber 3.3 g

Calcium 177 mg

Iron 2.7 mg

Sodium 659 mg

We love discovering new and noteworthy restaurants. Would you go out of your way to support one if you knew a woman was at the helm?

Photo credit: Daniel Krieger