

NEW YORK RESTAURANTS



GRUB STREET

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WITH
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Foodievents

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'Top Chef' Parties at South Beach Wine and Food Fest



Top Chef judge Gail Simmons with former contestants C.J. and Lee Anne Wong in South Beach.
Photo: Josh Ozersky



Mr. and Mrs. Laurent Tourondel at the South Beach Wine and Food Festival.

Our first night at the South Beach Wine and Food Festival made it pretty clear why this event is such a success. For one thing, it's warm down here. And the two parties we attended were as carefree as hayrides. The full moon shone down on the Versace mansion, and we gained some useful knowledge. Such as...

- Former [Buddakan](#) chef Michael Schulson is doing a restaurant at the Borgata in Atlantic City. This time, the theme will be yakitori for the masses, built along the big-box model of Las Vegas's Tao. Schulson is dipping into our own city's thriving yakitori scene for inspiration.
- We ran into top *Top Chef* judge Tom Colicchio, and the poor man looked worn out. He's here relaxing, an unexpected gift resulting from *Vanity Fair* cancelling its Oscar party at Craft in L.A. Turns out he [comments on Grub Street!](#) "And under my own name, too," he says.
- Speaking of *Top Chef*, there's a major contingent here: Last night alone we ran into Chris Jacobson (C.J.), Lee Ann Wong, and Ilan Hall. Lee Ann talked pork, C.J. hit the bar, and Ilan danced by the pool at the Versace mansion. At another party, contestant Sam Talbot chatted with Adam Perry Lang. Gail Simmons was everywhere and never seemed to get the slightest bit intoxicated. We are still hoping for a Howie sighting, given that this is his hometown.
- On the agenda for today: meeting Padma!



Chris Santos of Stanton Social is excited about his new slider.
Photo: Josh Ozersky