Food Network New York City Wine & Food Festival presented by Invesco QQQ Took Over New York City for Four Days of Food, Entertainment and Star-Studded Moments

From Rachael Ray's Burger Bash to Method Man's Performance at The Cookout, NYCWFF Brought Together Sylvester Stallone, Bryan Cranston, Whoopi Goldberg, mgk and More for Four Unforgettable Days

New York, NY (October 26, 2026) – Over 35,000 passionate food and drink lovers came together to celebrate the 19th annual **Food Network New York City Wine & Food Festival presented by Invesco QQQ (NYCWFF)** from October 15–18, 2026.

Produced by a21, NYCWFF's exclusive production partner, the four-day celebration brought together more than 300 chefs, culinary personalities, creators and entertainers for over 50 events across New York City, marking an exciting return to the Seaport and introducing The Rooftop at Pier 17 as a new destination for some of the Festival's most celebrated events.

From appearances by **Sylvester Stallone** and **Bryan Cranston** to **Whoopi Goldberg** joining The Cookout, **mgk (Machine Gun Kelly)** taking the culinary demonstration stage and performances by **Method Man** and **D-Nice**, the Festival delivered memorable moments alongside some of the biggest names in food and entertainment.

The **Invesco QQQ Festival Campus in the Seaport** served as the heart of the weekend, with **The Rooftop at Pier 17** making its Festival debut as part of the **Norwegian Cruise Line Rooftop Series**. From waterfront tastings and rooftop celebrations to intimate chef-driven dinners, live culinary demonstrations and events across the city, NYCWFF showcased the extraordinary talent, creativity and energy that make New York City one of the world's greatest culinary destinations.

Beyond the celebrations, the 2026 Festival proudly supported the **James Beard Foundation and Event Zero Foundation**, helping advance a stronger, more sustainable future for the hospitality and events industries.

Highlights of the 2026 NYCWFF Festival:

The Festival kicked off Thursday, October 15 with one of its most beloved traditions, **Blue Moon Burger Bash hosted by Rachael Ray and Bert Kreischer presented by Pat LaFrieda Meats**. Some of New York's top burger talent fired up the grills at the Invesco QQQ Festival Campus as guests sampled their way through the competition. **Cedric the Entertainer** joined the festivities as a celebrity judge alongside **Anthony Anderson, Sophie Flay, Ana Navarro, Andrew Rea** and **Jet Tila**, helping crown this year's ultimate burger champion.

2026 Burger Bash Winners:

- **Pat LaFrieda Judges' Choice: Gotham Burger**, from **Michael Puma** and their classic Gotham Smash, a nostalgic double-smash Pat LaFrieda burger with grilled onions, melted American cheese, house-made pickles, jalapeños, club sauce, ketchup and mustard, served on a Martin's Sandwich Potato Roll.
- **People's Choice: Nowon's Legendary Cheeseburger** from **Chef Jae Lee**, featuring a double-smash patty topped with American cheese, kimchi special sauce, pickles and raw white onion on a sesame brioche bun. The winner also received a cruise for two courtesy of Norwegian Cruise Line.
- **Mike's Amazing Bottle Royale**: **Midnight Shokupan**, from Chef Keith Hernandez of **RW Prime at Resorts World**, featuring a short rib burger topped with white American cheese, savory chili crisp aioli, pickled Fresno chili, frisée, perilla and crispy shiitake on toasted Japanese shokupan. The win earned RW Prime the opportunity to create and bottle their own signature sauce in collaboration with Mike's Amazing.

Friday, October 16, brought Hollywood star power to **Southern Glazer's Trade Day presented by Square sponsored by Wine Spectator**, at the Invesco QQQ Festival Campus, where more than 5,000 hospitality professionals gathered for a day of industry conversations, networking and discovery. **Sylvester Stallone** joined Festival Founder **Lee Brian Schrager** for an onstage Q&A covering his involvement with **Carbonadi Italian Vodka**, the latest season of *Tulsa King* and working alongside his wife, **Jennifer Flavin**, who also joined the conversation.

Bryan Cranston added to the excitement, making an appearance and pouring shots of Dos Hombres for attendees.

That evening, **Bryan and Michael Voltaggio** hosted **Steak & Whiskey** at The Rooftop at Pier 17, bringing together standout steak dishes, premium whiskey pours and appearances by **Dorinda Medley and Kelly Bensimon** of E!'s *The Golden Life*.

The Festival also introduced **Flavors of Bollywood**, hosted by **Maneet Chauhan and Vijay Kumar**, celebrating Indian cuisine, music and culture in a lively new experience.

Saturday brought another full day of food, culture and entertainment, culminating in the debut of **New York After Dark presented by Airbnb**, hosted by **Kwame Onwuachi**, with a special DJ set by **D-Nice**. Inspired by Onwuachi's cookbook *All Hours*, the event combined food from some of his favorite New York City restaurants with cocktails, music and a celebration of the city's nightlife. Guests took home a copy of Kwame's new cookbook, *All Hours*.

Throughout the weekend, the **New York Lottery's Grand Tasting** welcomed thousands of guests to the Invesco QQQ Festival Campus for an expansive showcase of restaurants, wines, spirits and culinary experiences. **Culinary Demonstrations presented by Bosch Home Appliances** featured an all-star lineup of chefs and personalities, giving guests the opportunity to see their favorites in action.

Beyond the Festival Campus, intimate dinners, chef collaborations and special culinary experiences at restaurants across the city showcased the creativity and diversity of New York's dining scene.

On Sunday, **mgk (Machine Gun Kelly)** joined **Michael Symon** for a culinary demonstration. Earlier that day, mgk appeared at **Morning Buzz**, where he spoke with **Anthony Anderson** about the opening of the newest location of his **27 Club Coffee** brand.

Sunday's **Bank of America's FoodieCon® presented by SUNSET®** at Storied NYC brought together leading food creators and personalities for live conversations, interactive challenges and culinary experiences. Highlights included a discussion with Bank of America exploring the financial side of content creation, mystery food challenges moderated by **Nigel Ng** (Uncle Roger), and a bodega cooking challenge hosted by **Alex Guarnaschelli**, featuring creators **Carson Gillaspia and Stefan Johnson**.

The Festival concluded Sunday evening with **The Cookout presented by Mike's Amazing**, hosted by **JJ Johnson and Angela Yee**. The celebration of Black cuisine, culture and music featured a special appearance by Whoopi Goldberg, followed by a performance by **Method Man**, who closed out the Festival.

The evening also celebrated **2 Girls & a Cookshop**, winner of the **Mike's Amazing People's Choice Award**.

More Unforgettable Moments from NYCWFF 2026

- **Bert Kreischer** brought the laughs to Blue Moon Burger Bash, taking off his shirt during the awards ceremony alongside Rachael Ray.
- **Method Man** had the crowd on its feet, turning The Cookout into a dance party as guests sang along to his biggest hits.
- **Bryan and Michael Voltaggio** showed off their playful side, sporting corn hats during their culinary demonstration at the Grand Tasting.
- **mgk** gave a nine-year-old fan an unforgettable birthday moment, leading the audience in a rendition of "Happy Birthday" during his culinary demonstration.

Mark your calendars: The **Food Network New York City Wine & Food Festival presented by Invesco QQQ** returns **October 14–17, 2027**, marking its milestone **20th anniversary** and two decades of bringing together world-renowned chefs, culinary innovators, entertainers and food lovers.

Until then, stay connected with the Festival year-round at **@NYCWFF** and follow **#NYCWFF** for the latest news, highlights and announcements.

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The Food Network New York City Wine & Food Festival presented by Invesco QQQ is hosted by and benefits the Event Zero Foundation and the James Beard Foundation. Over the past 18 years, the Festival has generated more than $15 million in net proceeds for its charitable causes. Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits is the exclusive provider of wine and spirits at the Festival. BizBash has named the Festival the #1 Food & Restaurant Industry event in New York for 10 years in a row. More information on the Festival can be found at nycwff.org. Follow @NYCWFF on Facebook and Instagram and on TikTok at @NYCWineFoodFestival.

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Located along the East River in Lower Manhattan, the Seaport is one of New York City's original neighborhoods, rich in maritime history and framed by iconic views of the Brooklyn Bridge and city skyline. Today, it's a vibrant home for residents and a global destination for visitors, offering over 450,000 square feet of dining, entertainment, and cultural experiences. The Seaport celebrates local organizations, emerging and established artists, and community connection through year-round programming. It has become the go-to destination in New York City for marquee events including the Macy's 4th of July Fireworks® and the New York City Wine & Food Festival.
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