



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Who We Are

Les Dames d'Escoffier is the pre-eminent organization of women who are leaders in the fields of food, fine beverage and hospitality. The New York chapter (LDNY) is the founding and largest of the 37 chapters in the United States and abroad.

The organization was founded in 1976, just as the feminist movement was taking hold. The prevailing culture of the time was rife with discrimination against women in hiring, compensation and educational opportunities, which was, unfortunately, especially true in the culinary and hospitality industries. To that point, there were no prominent women in hotel and restaurant management nor in restaurant kitchens.

Against this backdrop, Carol Brock, food reporter of the Sunday *New York Daily News*, emerged as a visionary. Determined to address and redress the gender inequalities, she embarked on a journey to create a professional women's organization that would "increase the presence and prestige of women in the food world through education, networking and above all, scholarship, and to support the professional aspirations of the future generations of talented women."

How We Began

Les Dames d'Escoffier New York (LDNY) began as an offshoot of the prestigious, all-male organization, Les Amis d'Escoffier, which was established in homage to the legendary chef Auguste Escoffier. In 1973, Les Dames d'Escoffier New York became the first organization devoted to professional women in food, fine beverage and hospitality when culinary editor Carol Brock secured a charter to form a new, autonomous "ladies' chapter" for professional women only.

Three years later, 50 highly accomplished women held their investiture at the French Embassy in New York, and Les Dames d'Escoffier New York (LDNY) was born. Since the founding of the New York chapter, the group has become an international not-for-profit organization, boasting 37 chapters in the U.S., Canada and England, of which the New York chapter remains the largest with 160 active members. For more information about the international organization, Les Dames d'Escoffier International (LDEI), visit www.ldei.org. For more information about the New York chapter, visit www.ldny.org and follow us at @LesDamesNY



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Major Milestones

1973 – Carol Brock secures a charter from the New York chapter of Les Amis d'Escoffier, an all-male professional fine-dining society, to create a women's chapter.

- She assembles a task force of five prominent women professionals in food and hospitality. Working together, they reach out to additional women leaders in those fields who share their objectives of education, advocacy and philanthropy, to further the careers of women in fields previously dominated by men.
- The new Society is named Les Dames d'Escoffier.

1976 – Les Dames d'Escoffier holds its first investiture and gala for 50 pioneering women, including Marcella Hazan, Paula Wolfert, Barbara Kafka, Mary Lyons, Elayne Kleeman and Ella Elvin. The elegance of the event was evident with napkin rings and bracelets designed by Tiffany and serviettes by Halston.

- The newly formed society decided that once chapters in five cities were formed, Les Dames d'Escoffier would be renamed Les Dames d'Escoffier International.

1977 – Les Dames d'Escoffier creates the annual "*Grande Dame*" award to recognize one professional woman's extraordinary contributions to culinary excellence and to the community at large. At its first annual dinner, LDEI confers the distinction on its guest of honor, Julia Child.

1978 – Marking another significant milestone, the organization's annual dinner is created by LDEI member, Leslie Revsin, who has just been appointed *chef de cuisine* at the Hotel Waldorf Astoria. Revsin is the first woman to wear a toque in a major New York hotel kitchen.

1979 – Les Dames d'Escoffier decides to honor one segment of the culinary and hospitality world at each of its annual dinners.

- At this dinner, the society showcases and pays tribute to the growing legions of women leading the charge as chefs, managers and proprietors of first-class restaurants around the world.

1980 – The organization's annual dinner features women student chefs and food professionals in training.

- Paul Bocuse attends, reversing his previously-quoted sexist comments and declares his enthusiastic support of women chefs.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Milestones continued...

1981 – The annual dinner is a “Salute to Women in the Hotel Industry.”

- Honorees are nine women hoteliers from France, Italy, Germany, Austria, North and South America and the Philippines.

1984 – The goal of five chapters of Les Dames d'Escoffier is reached, and the society is officially re-named Les Dames d'Escoffier International (LDEI).

- The new chapters are Washington, D.C. (1981), Chicago (1982), Dallas (1984) and Philadelphia (1984.)
- The New York chapter now steps into the role of founding chapter of an international society, and is henceforth called LDNY.

2016 – Today, the New York chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier International has an active membership of 160. It is recognized as a wellspring of education, mentoring, networking and scholarship support and a dynamic force in the world of food, fine beverages and hospitality.

- The international organization now includes 37 chapters in the United States, Canada, and England, with over 2,400 members, formed the following years:
 - New York – 1976
 - Washington, D.C. – 1981
 - Chicago – 1982
 - Dallas – 1984
 - Philadelphia – 1984
 - San Francisco (now San Francisco Bay Area) – 1989
 - Seattle – 1989
 - Boston – 1991
 - British Columbia, Canada – 1992
 - Los Angeles/Orange County – 1993
 - Houston – 1994
 - San Antonio – 1995
 - Atlanta – 1996
 - Minneapolis/St. Paul (now Minnesota) – 1996
 - Palm Springs – 1996
 - Phoenix – 1996
 - Kansas City – 1998
 - Hawaii – 2000
 - Miami – 2000
 - Colorado – 2003
 - San Diego – 2003
 - Austin – 2003
 - Cleveland – 2004
 - Charleston – 2005
 - Monterey Bay – 2007
 - St. Louis – 2008
 - Northeast – 2009
 - London – 2010
 - Birmingham, Alabama – 2013
 - Nashville, Tennessee – 2014
 - Ann Arbor – 2015
 - Kentucky – 2015
 - North Carolina – 2015
 - Portland, Oregon – 2015
 - Sacramento – 2015
 - Mexico City – 2015
 - Des Moines - 2016



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Our Members

As a not-for-profit, by-invitation-only organization dedicated to education, advocacy and philanthropy, LDNY is comprised of women of achievement in the food, fine beverage and hospitality professions in the New York metropolitan area.

Our members have achieved significant professional success as chefs, restaurateurs, caterers and hoteliers; culinary school owners and educators, and food and wine historians; food and wine writers and editors, and cookbook authors; wine merchants, marketing professionals, and communications specialists; bakers, food scientists, nutritionists and dietitians; and food manufacturers, purveyors and farmers.

Prospective candidates must be recommended and sponsored by two Dames in good standing during the annual membership drive and must have achieved distinction and stature in her industry. Candidates are also expected to embrace and further the mission of Les Dames d'Escoffier.

Our Mission

The primary mission of LDNY is to inspire, empower, mentor and enable women to pursue careers in the culinary and hospitality professions through **advocacy, education** and **philanthropy**. We achieve these goals through the work of key committees that implement programs, special events and activities with the support of our membership.

The mission of the New York chapter mirrors the overall philosophy and objectives of Les Dames d'Escoffier International and its chapters. Each of our committees is dedicated to achieving the essential elements of LDEI's overall mission in order to benefit women in the New York metropolitan area and throughout New York State.

We have flourishing scholarship and mentoring programs, engaging educational, networking and professional development programs, and a Green Tables initiative to promote healthy eating, sound nutrition and sustainability.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

LDNY COMMITTEES AND THEIR MISSIONS

Scholarship Committee

Our interwoven missions of **philanthropy** and **education** are fulfilled in large measure by the work of the Scholarship Committee. LDNY encourages and supports women's advancement in the culinary profession through its impactful scholarship program.

Since 1977 we've supported and offered awards to talented young women as they aspire to become the leaders of tomorrow in their chosen culinary fields by awarding stipends to them for pursuing their professional educations.

This initiative is facilitated by the chapter's ongoing fundraising efforts, its partnerships with major culinary institutions, sponsorships from food and beverage producers, and scholarships from individual donors.

Partnering with prestigious culinary schools, we make scholarships available at:

- Cornell University
- The Culinary Institute of America
- CUNY Kingsborough Community College
- CUNY New York City College of Technology
- Institute of Culinary Education
- The International Culinary Center
- International Wine Center
- Montclair State University
- New York University

Qualifications for LDNY scholarships are based on academic standing, references, career goals, industry experience, and a written autobiographical essay. Since 2014, we've awarded more than \$230,000 in scholarships to 75 recipients.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Mentoring Committee

The Mentoring Committee works hand-in-hand with the Scholarship Committee on **philanthropy** and **education** to match each scholarship winner with a New York Dame whose experience complements the recipient's career goals.

We encourage our members to share their knowledge with talented young women, enabling them to become leaders in their chosen fields. The Dames who are mentors become role models and share their culinary knowledge and experience, thereby enhancing the career paths of the mentees. These informal, vital, one-on-one relationships last from six months to one year—in some cases much longer—and are intended to provide invaluable personal and professional development.

- A young scholarship winner pursued her studies at New York University with the goal of becoming a Registered Dietician. Her mentor was a registered dietician and food director of a leading woman's magazine. The mentee became an intern at her mentor's magazine and went on to employment as a successful registered dietician. The two stay in touch and enjoy seeing each other at industry conferences.
- An Institute of Culinary Education student whose scholarship enabled her to complete her degree and pursue a career in food media was mentored by a New York Dame who heads a public relations firm specializing in wine and food. Her mentor introduced her to leaders in the wine and food industries, escorted her to food and wine events, and offered her continuing guidance. The scholarship winner has just become Food Editor at *Parade* and *Dash* magazines and credits both her education and mentor.
- An internship at the renowned Restaurant Daniel was the first professional step for an LDNY scholarship winner who attended the Institute of Culinary Education with a specialty in pastry. The Dame who mentored her helped her through that difficult but ultimately successful internship, which subsequently led to positions at Gramercy Tavern and Maialino in New York City. She later provided a glowing reference for her mentee to New York's prestigious Cosmopolitan Club where she is currently banquet manager.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Green Tables Committee

The Green Tables Committee, created by Les Dames d'Escoffier International in 2005, focuses on **education, advocacy** and **philanthropy**. Each chapter of LDEI customizes its Green Tables programs to meet the specific needs of its community.

This committee reaches out to local organizations who share the goals of promoting community health and well-being through gardening and agriculture, care of the environment, and educating children and parents about nutrition and food preparation. LDNY partnered with Wellness in the Schools (WITS), with the goal of fostering a healthier lifestyle outside the school environment. The committee designed programs to help parents make informed food choices, to teach children and parents how to shop and prepare meals together, and to encourage children to choose and enjoy eating nutritious foods: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy and proteins in proper amounts.

- Launching a PTA Labs program in conjunction with WITS, the Dames demonstrated three simple, healthy, time-saving recipes based on leftover cooked chicken for a New York City public school parents group. The parents tasted each of the dishes, and recipes were provided in English and Spanish to accommodate the bi-lingual audience. A panel discussion followed with advice on shopping, meal planning, and healthy cooking. A similar PTA Labs/WITS program was repeated at another New York City public school later that year.
- The committee participated in KidCreate Day, an arts and science fair at a New York City public school, with a ChooseMyPlate activity. Kids artistically designed their own plates of food with selection of fruits, vegetables, dairy and protein in recommended portions.
- At the same public school, Dames participated in KidFit Day, focusing on the health benefit of whole grains, with printed materials, samples of whole grains, and hands-on experience making Japanese hand rolls filled with red and brown rice and a choice of vegetables, led by Dame Hiroko Shimko.
- The committee worked with Dame Liz Neumark's Sylvia Center, a garden-to-table program that inspires young people to discover good nutrition on the farm and in the kitchen. LDNY committee members took youngsters for a greenmarket tour and a visit to Dame Abigail Kirsch's growing facility at the New York Botanical Garden.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Programs Committee

The Programs Committee advances our mission of **education** by organizing a cross-section of events that enable members to gain further knowledge of food, fine beverage and hospitality and to engage in social dialogue with other members who are involved in those specialty areas.

The committee's broad range of programs and events encompass tasting tours; guided visits to food and wine producers; panel discussions on culinary trends and nutrition; cookbook introductions; and global culinary initiatives, including international luncheons/dinners and ethnic food and wine tastings. In addition, a small number of events are organized jointly with food/wine affinity groups such as the New York Women's Culinary Alliance, the Culinary Historians and the James Beard Foundation.

Examples of our programs include:

- Julia Child's 100th Birthday Celebration at the French Consulate in New York
- Visit to Banfi Vintners on Long Island for tour, tastings and luncheon
- Evening in Burma and launch of "BURMA, Rivers of Flavor" cookbook
- Guided Italian food and wine tour of Arthur Avenue in Bronx, New York
- Ethiopian Easter demonstration/luncheon by LDEI Legacy Award winner
- Lecture on abuses in the food industry by nutrition educator, New York Dame Marion Nestle
- LDNY seminar on genetically modified foods with Nobel Prize Winner Gunter Blobel
- The Next Big Bite Annual Food Trend Summit. Highly regarded and well-attended event open to industry professionals and food-focused consumers



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee has the responsibility of fulfilling the **philanthropy** mission of Les Dames d'Escoffier. Profits raised by the activities of this committee go directly to provide scholarships for young women furthering their education in the fields of food, fine beverage and hospitality. In addition, this committee pursues contributions and sponsorships by commercial establishments, such as high-quality food, fine beverage and hospitality businesses.

Fundraising Committee activities also take the form of large-scale undertakings that are publicized to large segments of the general public who appreciate food and fine beverage events or smaller, opportunistic activities that elicit significant funds to the LDNY scholarship fund. Occasional events are staged in conjunction with other philanthropic culinary organizations.

This committee is also charged with the solicitation of contributions and sponsorships that are not connected to events and are also used to further LDNY's philanthropic mission with grants, awards and scholarships to young women interested in furthering their careers in the culinary arts.

Examples of outstanding activities include:

- "Abbondanza! — A Tribute to Dame Lidia Bastianich" at New York's Rainbow Room, which raised \$124,000 to support the LDNY "Make a Difference" scholarship program.
- Week-long "Salute to Women in Gastronomy" raised more than \$100,000 for the scholarship program, earning a citation from the Mayor of New York City.
- Tribute dinner honoring Jacques Pepin and Prince Robert of Luxembourg in collaboration with the Food Network New York City Wine & Food Festival, benefiting Food Bank for New York City, Share Our Strength and Les Dames d'Escoffier New York. Members served as co-chairs, chefs and organizers of a highly successful silent auction of more than 70 items. Net income from the program was over \$60,000, all of which was contributed to the LDNY "Make a Difference" Scholarship Fund.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Communications Committee

This committee's principal role is to keep the membership advised of all news, programs and activities with calendar listings of upcoming events, quarterly newsletters, and reviews and photos of past events on the chapter's Website—www.ldny.org--and to reach out to new audiences on social media.

The Communications Committee also has the mandate to further the mission of **advocacy**, to weigh in on behalf of LDNY on issues that revolve around food, fine beverage and hospitality industries as they relate to women, speaking to both internal and external audiences. A major initiative of the Communications Committee is to establish the recognition of LDNY within the public and private sectors by devising a branding strategy and reaching out via external communications to targeted media with messaging that raises awareness of LDNY and its mission.

This committee is in a unique position to advocate for women's advancement in their careers by initiating discussion in print, broadcast, online and social media, and responding to discussions of these issues, when appropriate. Prime examples of LDNY's advocacy role are the opinion pieces sent to the media in response to print and online stories that have highlighted the achievements of young male chefs, while overlooking the accomplishments of female chefs and restaurateurs who have attained equal or greater status in their professions.

- The president of Les Dames d'Escoffier New York wrote to the editor of the *New York Times Magazine* following a feature regarding the lack of respect faced by women in their roles as restaurant chefs. She pointed out the fallacy of that persisting attitude, and positioned LDNY as a conduit to help young women become culinary stars through the organization's scholarship and mentoring programs.
- An LDNY Board member responded to a controversial cover story in *Time Magazine* entitled "Gods of Food: Meet the People Who Influence What (and How) You Eat," in which 13 "Gods" were highlighted (nine male chefs and only four non-chef women). The letter addressed a response that Levi Dalton, wine editor of Eater.com, had written to the *Time* article, expressing what he perceived to be the more appropriate recognition of women's achievements in the wine industry.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

MAJOR INITIATIVES

Les Dames d'Escoffier International Cookbook

Many leading chefs, cooking instructors, food editors and cookbook authors who are members of the New York chapter contributed their prized recipes and sound advice to a 365-page cookbook initiated by Les Dames d'Escoffier International and published in 2008 by Sasquatch Books: *"Cooking with Les Dames d'Escoffier: At Home with the Women Who Shape the Way We Eat and Drink."*

LDNY contributors and advisors included:

- Beth Allen – home economist, baking specialist, cookbook author
- Lidia Bastianich – chef, restaurateur, cookbook author, TV personality
- Ariane Daguin – owner of D'Artagnan, purveyor of foie gras and specialty meats
- Florence Fabricant – newspaper food columnist, wine panelist, cookbook author
- Dorie Greenspan – baking specialist, food writer, cookbook author
- Betty Fussell – food columnist, cookbook author
- Rozanne Gold – private chef, cookbook author
- Marcella Hazan – cookbook author, cooking instructor
- Abigail Kirsch – caterer, event planner, cookbook author
- Harriet Lembeck – wine educator, wine writer, wine booth author/editor
- Deborah Mintcheff – recipe developer, cookbook editor
- Marion Nestle – Professor of Food Studies and Public Health, food historian, nutritionist
- Suzen O'Rourke – cooking instructor, event planner and marketer
- Carol Prager – food editor, baking specialist, cookbook author
- Joanna Pruess – food writer, cookbook author
- Janeen Sarlin – private chef, cooking instructor
- Paulette Satur – grower and marketer of specialty produce
- Michele Scicolone – cookbook author, cooking instructor
- Corinne Trang – cookbook author, magazine test kitchen director
- Carole Walter – pastry chef, baking instructor
- Susan Westmoreland – magazine food editor
- Lucy Wing - magazine food editor
- Lee Wooding – recipe tester/developer, cooking instructor



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

LDNY's Cookbook Collection at NYU'S Fales Library

In 2009, Dame Rozanne Gold came up with the brilliant idea of honoring Les Dames d'Escoffier founder Dame Carol Brock by creating the "Carol Brock/Les Dames d'Escoffier New Acquisitions Program" at New York University's esteemed Fales Library. Together with LDNY President Deborah Mintcheff, Secretary Gale Steves, and the full endorsement of the board of directors, \$50,000 was raised thanks to the generous donations of New York Dames as well as Dames across the country.

Today, the library houses one of the most important collections of cookbooks and food literature in the U.S. This initiative enabled Fales to expand its collection of cookbooks and rare culinary volumes that document food history and culture. Bookplates in new acquisitions will acknowledge Carol Brock and provide perpetual recognition for Les Dames d'Escoffier.

A letter from New York University President, John Sexton, expressed his appreciation:

"Thank you for fulfilling the commitment to New York University from Les Dames d'Escoffier New York to New York University in support of the Les Dames d'Escoffier/Carol Brock Acquisitions Program at the Fales Library. Your dedication to our mission inspires our entire University community. Institutions of higher learning must constantly evolve to meet the demands of an ever-changing global community. The support of Les Dames d'Escoffier enables the University to sponsor programs and initiatives that help infuse the world with new ideas and innovative scholarship. Our reputation as a premier international research institution is enhanced by your generosity, and I thank Les Dames d'Escoffier for being an active partner in our success."

- Funds raised allowed Fales Library to purchase the first edition of Brillat-Savarin's *Physiologie du Gout* (Paris, 1825), its English-language translation, *The Physiology of Taste* (Philadelphia, 1854) and the first known printed cookbook by Platina Bartolomeo Sacchi.
- Dame Rozanne Gold purchased the *Gourmet Magazine* cookbook library in honor of her late mother and donated it to the Fales Library collection.
- Dame Jenifer Lang donated the entire 22,000-volume cookbook collection of her late husband, restaurateur George Lang, to the Les Dames d'Escoffier Fales Library collection.



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

LDNY's Role in Les Dames D'Escoffier's **Legacy Awards**

Established by Les Dames d'Escoffier International (LDEI) in 2009, the annual Legacy Awards are designed to enable young women, who have spent a minimum of four years in the food, fine beverage or hospitality industries and are currently in those fields, to spend one week working with a Dame who has achieved prominence in that specialty area. Its goal is to prepare women to be the future leaders in their respective fields.

The Legacy Awards program doubled in size in 2012, thanks to a generous donation from the Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary Arts, which was created by Julia in 1995. She was a member of LDEI and its first Grande Dame.

The New York chapter (LDNY) has assumed a significant role in the Legacy Awards program.

- Several members of the New York chapter have chaired the Legacy Awards Committee, and a number of its members have assumed roles on the committee that selects the Legacy Award recipients.
- Members of the chapter have made their businesses and expertise available as Legacy Awards.
 - A New York City Food Journalism Experience was contributed by Dames Susan Westmoreland, Food Editor of *Good Housekeeping* Magazine, and Sharon Franke of the Good Housekeeping Research Institute. The recipient was a young woman who has been a food writer for major newspapers and food magazines.
 - Farm-to-Table Experiences on Long Island's North Fork have been contributed by LDNY Dames Paulette Satur of Satur Farms, producer of sustainable greens and herbs, and Ursula Massoud of Paumanok Vineyard, with its award-winning wines. Recipients have had backgrounds as personal chefs, nutrition educators and sustainable gardening,



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

Corporate, Institutional and Individual Support

Critical to the implementation of activities that further LDNY's mission of **education, advocacy and philanthropy** has been the support of corporations, institutions and individuals with partnerships, scholarships and in-kind donations to the chapter. Among those to whom we offer thanks are:

- Sugar Foods Corporation
- American Roland Food Corporation
- Morrell & Company
- Palm Bay International Fine Wines and Spirits
- International Culinary Center (formerly French Culinary Institute)
- James Beard Foundation
- Culinary Institute of America
- International Wine Center
- Melitta USA
- Gaggenau USA
- Society of Wine Educators
- Dunn Robbins Group
- Cornerstone Communications
- Judith B. Prince
- Abigail Kirsch
- Margaret and Darby Perry
- Meryl Rosofsky
- Renee and Nathalie Judith Marton
- Mary Ellen Griffin
- Whole Foods Market
- Emile Henry
- Cuisinart
- Elit by Stolichnaya
- Bel Gioioso
- The Winebow Group
- Chef'n Corp
- Microplane
- Wusthof
- Princess House
- Heritage Radio Network
- Estate of Jonell Nash



Les Dames d'Escoffier

INTERNATIONAL

New York Chapter

LDNY Joins the Brock Circle

of Les Dames d'Escoffier International

In 2012, the Brock Circle was created by the LDEI Board of Directors to recruit tax-deductible gifted funds to ensure the financial stability of the organization and to secure its longevity. This initiative also makes enhancements at LDEI's annual conference possible with enrichment and educational programs for its members. The financial commitment that accompanies Brock Circle membership may be made by Dames, chapters or businesses through a commitment to contribute \$10,000. As a tribute to LDEI founder and member of the New York chapter, Carol Brock, on her 90th birthday, the Board of LDNY voted to join The Brock Circle.