

For Immediate Release



LES DAMES D'ESCOFFIER NEW YORK CHAPTER WELCOMES 12 NEW MEMBERS

New York, NY, – Les Dames d'Escoffier New York (LDNY)—the founding and largest chapter of the philanthropic organization Les Dames d'Escoffier International (LDEI)— inducted 12 new members at a celebratory reception on September 19th at The Darby, New York City's glamorous, interactive supper club.

The inductees—each one selected and sponsored by two active Les Dames members—have outstanding food, hospitality and fine beverage credentials in their respective fields. They are:

- Jo Anne Cloughly, Department Chair, Agriculture and Food Management and Associate Professor of Culinary Arts, Hospitality and Tourism Department, SUNY Cobleskill and catering chef of New World Home Cooking restaurant, Hudson Valley
- Einav Gefen, head chef for Unilever North America, where she works on innovation, product and recipe development and line extensions for all food brands
- Claire Burke Gill, partner in Hunter PR, the third largest independent food PR agency in the US, creating and implementing successful marketing communications for Fortune 500 companies
- Saori Kawano, founder of Korin Japanese Trading Corporation—a purveyor of fine Japanese chef knives, tableware, kitchen, accessories, restaurant equipment—and the Gohan Society, a non-profit fostering US/Japan culinary and cultural exchange
- Christine Koury, a well known and respected professional in the food editorial field for over thirty years, and currently the food director of *Woman's World* magazine
- Laura Maniec, CEO of Corkbuzz Wine Studio and the youngest woman to achieve master sommelier in 2009; also on the Board of Directors of the Guild of Sommeliers, and regular participant on the *New York Times* wine panel
- Ellen Negrin, a highly regarded woman of achievement and well-respected sales manager at Lauber Imports Wines
- Maricel Presilla, an accomplished cookbook author, food writer and co-owner/chef of Hoboken-based Zafra, a pan-Latin restaurant and Cucharamama, a South American Cuban restaurant
- Aileen Robbins, founder of The Dunn Robbins Group, specializing in strategic planning, marketing and sales implementation for the beverage industry
- Bethany Scherline, a veteran of the PR world, with expertise in corporate brand building and currently PR director for Palm Bay Imports
- Barbara Sibley, owner and executive chef of La Palapa Cocina Mexicana, a 125-seat restaurant in New York City and consumer consultant in Mexican/Latin American Food & Beverage Products
- Ann Volkwein, a regular contributor at Cooking.com and prolific cookbook author of *The Healthy Table*, *The Arthur Avenue Cookbook*, *Chinatown New York*, and *Diners, Drive-ins and Dives*

“Each year LDNY strives to recruit a diverse group of new members from a broad spectrum of the food and beverage industry,” said Melanie Young, president of Les Dames d’Escoffier New York. “Many run their own businesses and serve as standard bearers in their areas of expertise. We are truly delighted to welcome these exceptionally talented colleagues to Les Dames d’Escoffier.”

The reception, hosted at The Darby restaurant, included a sublime selection of passed hors d’oeuvres—from The Darby’s signature Oysters ‘Rockefeller’ and Pork Belly Sliders on Toasted Brioche, to Skewered Duck Breast with Roasted Grapes and mini pizzas of slow-roasted Hen-of-the-Wood Mushrooms with Toasted Hazelnuts—created by Executive Chef and Dame Alex Guarnaschelli. Dame Nora Favelukes paired the menu with wines from Chile: a Santa Carolina Sauvignon Blanc and Vina Casablanca Pinot Noir. This evening was the celebration of the 2012 membership campaign, conducted by Dame Beth Allen, Chair, and committee members Dames Alison Awerbuch, Ursula Massoud, Suzen O’Rourke and Susan Westmoreland.

Les Dames d’Escoffier New York is committed to education, advocacy, and philanthropy within the culinary arts and hospitality fields. These endeavors are primarily achieved through corporate, academic, private and membership funding of its scholarship and mentoring programs to help empower talented and deserving women pursue and achieve leadership roles in their chosen careers. For more information, visit www.ldny.org. Follow LDNY on Facebook/Les Dames d’Escoffier New York and Twitter @LesDamesNY.



Left to right: Founder of Les Dames d’Escoffier Carol Brock, and LDNY Membership Chair Beth Allen, with new LDNY members Barbara Sibley, Bethany Scherline, Aileen Robbins, Christine Koury, Ellen Negrin, Saori Kawano, Ann Volkwein, Transferee Martha Teichner (from Charleston Chapter) and LDNY President Melanie Young. Back right: New Members Jo Anne Cloughly and Claire Burke Gill. New Members not in Photo: Einav Gefen, Laura Maniec, Maricel Presilla. Taken at The Darby restaurant, September 19th. Photo: Vanessa Trost

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