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# Final Lineup Announced for Top Taco New Orleans Festival

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By: Staff



**Press Release** - The 1st annual **Top Taco New Orleans Festival**, presented by Paddlewheeler Creole Queen, will be a festive evening and culinary competition benefitting [One Heart NOLA](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds and awareness for the city's foster children. The event showcases over 40 of New Orleans' acclaimed restaurants; 24 spirits and beverages; live entertainment by Los Pobocytos and Afro-Cuban jazz and groove band Otrá; a silent auction; and the chance to crown winners in four categories: *Top Creative Taco*, *Top Traditional Taco*, *Top Creative Cocktail* and *Top Traditional Margarita*. The event takes place on **Thursday, March 23, 2017 at 6:30PM**, but 5:30PM entrance for 1st Tasting and VIP ticketholders at the Riverwalk's Spanish Plaza.

The event's judges have been announced and they are as follows:

- Jose Ralat – Author of *American Tacos: A History and Guide to the Taco Trail North of the Border*
- Alon Shaya – Executive Chef and Partner of *Domenica, Pizza Domenica* and *Shaya*
- Ian McNulty – Food writer for *New Orleans Advocate*
- Abigail Gullo – Head Bartender of *Compère Lapin*
- Liz Williams – Founder and President of the Southern Food & Beverage Museum (SoFAB)
- Emily Coleman – Director of Partnerships of *Tales of the Cocktail*
- Frank Briggsen – Owner of Briggsen's Restaurant
- Andrew Marin – Food and cocktail writer for *Where Y'at Magazine*
- Dominique Macquet – Chef
- Charles Divins – WDSU Morning Anchor
- Michael Durbin – Texas Taco Council
- Alessandra Madrid and Maggie Robert – Bloggers, *Bebes & Beignets*
- Kimberly Patton-Bragg – Owner/Operator of *Three Muses Maple*
- Leroy Mitchell – Whistle Monsta
- Aaron Wilkinson – Lead vocalist of *Honey Island Swamp Band*
- Jason Rogers Williams – New Orleans City Councilman
- Linda Green – "Yakamein Lady" and winner of *Food Network's Chopped: Pride of New Orleans*
- Hank Staples – Proprietor of *Maple Leaf Bar*
- Sal Agnello – Beverage Director of *Ace Hotel*

Participating restaurants include:

- Johnny Sanchez
- Superior Grill
- Jacques Imo's
- Canal Street Bistro
- Velvet Cactus
- Nacho Mama's
- Mizado
- Lucy's Retired Surfers Bar & Restaurant
- Felipe's Mexican Taqueria
- Barcadia
- Kingfish
- Bourbon House
- Blue Oak BBQ
- Drago's
- Butcher
- Juan's Flying Burrito
- Patois
- bacobar
- Rum House
- The Backyard
- Carret's Grill
- Del Fuego
- Tequila House
- Araña
- Bayou Burger & Sports Company
- Tacos and Beer
- La Casita
- Brugger's Barbecue & Barrel Proof
- Lula's
- Masquerade
- PF Chang's
- El Paso Mexican Grill

Participating spirits/beverage companies include:

- Tres Generaciones
- Hornitos
- Barefoot Wine & Bubbly
- Evamor Water
- El Tesoro
- Sauza Blue
- Lunazul
- Casa Noble
- Patron XO
- Maestro Dobel
- 1800 Tequila
- Cuervo Tradicional
- Gran Centenario
- Tito's Vodka
- El Silencio
- Fortaleza
- Espalón
- Peligroso
- Ghost Tequila
- Casamigos
- Hussong's
- Patron
- Don Julio
- Exotico
- El Mayor
- Tequila Ocho
- Corona Beer
- Negra Modelo
- Modelo Especial
- DeKuyper
- O3
- Patron Citronage

In addition to tasty bites and libations, Top Taco will also feature a curated silent auction with one-of-a-kind packages, laser tag, and a VIP Lounge aboard the Paddlewheeler Creole Queen – with culinary creations from ten exclusive VIP restaurants: Vincent's, Cowbell, Chiba, Horni's, Tracey's, Progue, Feeling's Café, Nemesse, Norma's Bakery and Midway; live music by Muevelo, private Extra Anejo tequila tastings, premium open bar provided by Jim Beam Global and a Patron XO-infused dessert station featuring La Boulangerie and Laurel Street Bakery.

**The event pricing is as follows:**

General Admission passes are **\$65** per person

First Tasting tickets are **\$85** and include early entry

VIP discounted tickets are **\$125** per person which includes early entry plus the VIP Lounge experience on the Paddlewheeler Creole Queen

To purchase tickets visit [www.toptaconola.com](http://www.toptaconola.com).