

Eat, Drink, and Be Giving

THE SUMMER CHARITY SEASON ENDS WITH TWO FOODIE CROWD-PLEASERS: L.A. LOVES ALEX'S LEMONADE AND PROJECT ANGEL FOOD'S DELISH.

BY ERIC ROSEN

For the past four years, superstar chef Suzanne Goin, her business partner, Caroline Styne (together the two operate Lucques, A.O.C, and Tavern), and her husband, chef David Lentz (of The Hungry Cat), have gathered chefs and mixologists from all over the world for an event called L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade, which raises funds to combat pediatric cancer.

In all, L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade has raised more than a million dollars. Last year alone, more than 1,200 people attended the event and raised \$500,000-plus—and this year's food and drinks fest is expected to break that record.

It is a fitting legacy for a cause that began back in 2000, when 4-year-old cancer patient Alexandra "Alex" Scott decided to start a lemonade stand to help raise money for other children with cancer. Although Alex did not survive her battle, her story and philanthropic spirit live on.

L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade embodies the sense of vitality, initiative, and energy that little Alex instilled in those around her. Lentz explains how the trio decided to get involved with Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, saying, "Five years ago I was at Marc Vetri's Great Chefs event in Philadelphia with Suzanne. Liz Scott (Alex's mother) gave a very powerful and emotional speech. We had recently had twins ourselves, and our daughter is named Alex, so it really struck a nerve."

So much so, continues Lentz, that, "On the flight back to Los Angeles, we decided that we needed to do something to help in the fight against pediatric cancer. Soon after that we were

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Holy Trinity! Mega fundraisers Suzanne Goin, David Lentz, and Caroline Styne with Nikolas Zdrazil (IN RED) and his brother Corey, a kidney cancer survivor and beneficiary of L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MOLLY CRANNA

SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY

FROM LEFT: Laura Dern with her children Ellery (CENTER) and Jaya (RIGHT) and a friend at a 2012 benefit for Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation; Project Angel Food's Delish fundraiser features tasty treats—and a great view.



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approached by the foundation to do a West Coast benefit, and we gladly said yes.”

“Suzanne and I had talked for years and years about doing our own fundraiser but hadn’t found the right charity,” says Styne. “But when Suzanne and David came home and told me all about the foundation—how moved and inspired they were—we decided that Alex’s Lemonade was the perfect cause.”

So the three pooled their resources and contacts, calling upon their chef friends to help. Since then, the event has grown every year, but it has also evolved, explains Lentz. “Each year we look at the event and really ask ourselves how can we make it better,” he begins. “At a lot of events like this, children are discouraged, but last year we included a really great area for kids so families could come. We don’t just want the ‘foodie’ demographic. We want to reach out to everyone that this horrible disease could affect. We want everyone to hear Alex’s message.”

Styne agrees. “Every year, the event gets a little bigger, with slightly different chefs, but it always maintains an intimate quality as well.”

From her perspective, Styne says there are plenty of elements that set L.A. Loves Alex’s Lemonade apart from other fundraisers. “There are many really wonderful events in Los Angeles,” she says, “but the unique thing about ours is the caliber and reach of the chefs that we bring together, as well as the incredible lineup of wineries and mixologists. We also feature a presentation mid-event about the foundation and introduce the attendees to some of the heroes and to Alex’s parents. It’s incredibly moving and reminds everyone why we do this event in the first place.”

Between cooking demonstrations and musical performances, guests are invited to listen to the stories of pediatric cancer patients and their families—including Liz and husband Jay Scott—for a poignant and often triumphant counterpoint to the charitable revelry.

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Giada De Laurentiis and Chris Bianco at the third annual L.A. Loves Alex’s Lemonade event.



CITY OF ANGELS

Project Angel Food’s Delish event nourishes the body... *and* spirit.

Since its founding in 1989, Project Angel Food has served millions of nutritious meals to Angelenos struggling with illness and prepared and delivered more than 12,000 meals a week and 600,000 meals a year to 2,200 individuals in 2012.

But success goes much further than the numbers for an organization whose mission is “to nourish the body and spirit of men, women, and children affected by HIV/AIDS, cancer, and other life-threatening illnesses.”

Apart from day-to-day operations, Project Angel Food’s efforts extend beyond those in need and those in the kitchen by opening up to the entire Los Angeles community each year at its Delish event. Jacqui Farina, Project Angel Food’s director of marketing and special events, explains, “We are all endlessly fascinated by what food is, how it is prepared, and how it makes us feel. Food is more than a meal. At Delish, culinary experts, mixologists, and chefs come together to demonstrate how a great food dish is more than the sum of its ingredients... it’s an experience.”

This year’s event will be happening on the evening of Sunday, September 29, and will include up to 50 food stations serving everything from breakfast to late-night snacks, as well as teaching guests how to roll their own sushi and incorporate their favorite beverages into desserts.

The food, drink, and fun are expected to be, well, delish. But even more delicious is participating in a great LA-based cause that helps fellow Angelenos in need.

Delish will take place Sunday, September 29 from 5–8 PM. For locations, call 323-845-1800, ext. 210 or visit angelfood.org.



A young guest enjoys lunch at a special kids' area at the L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade fundraiser.

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Whether it's geared to foodies or not, there are still guaranteed to be plenty of them in attendance, both for the gourmet fare and the chance to support a great cause. How could they stay away when this year's lineup of chefs includes distinguished toques such as Matthew Accarrino from San Francisco's A16 and SPQR, April Bloomfield of The Spotted Pig in New York, Brian Huston from The Publican in Chicago, Michael Cimarusti of Providence (and now Connie and Ted's), Vinny Dotolo and Jon Shook of Animal and Son of a Gun, Susan Feniger of Street, and celebrity chef Giada De Laurentiis, among many others.

Lentz adds, "I think the array of chefs, vintners, and mixologists is second to none compared to any other event in Los Angeles." Styne, too, loves seeing everyone get together and is thrilled when she experiences "the camaraderie and festive [mood] of the event."

"We don't just want the 'foodie' demographic. We want everyone to hear Alex's message [about pediatric cancer]."

—DAVID LENTZ

But you won't find tasting menus or over-the-top fancy foods here. "The goal was always to make it really fun," explains Lentz. "To model it after a great cookout."

Lentz's own eatery, The Hungry Cat, will be serving a raw bar and pit beef sandwiches with pickled onions and horseradish aioli.

The event also features both silent and live auctions with items and experiences, including some of the participating chefs coming into winners' homes and preparing special meals just for them.

Although L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade garners much-deserved attention, Goin, Styne, and Lentz's involvement isn't limited to the annual affair. "My kids and I always participate in Lemonade Days and have lemonade stands at our house and school to raise money for the charity," says Styne. "We also feature special cocktails at the restaurants and give a portion of the sales to the foundation."

In fact, Lentz recalls, "Several years ago we decided to donate \$2 from every sale of our Luke's Lemonade specialty cocktail from all of The Hungry Cat locations." He notes with a sense of pride, "We have contributed thousands of dollars, and The Hungry Cat is one of the top 100 contributors to Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation." Now that's another fitting legacy. *L.A. Loves Alex's Lemonade will be held Saturday, September 28 from 12-4 PM at Culver Studios, Culver City; alexslemonade.org. LAC*

Charity Register

OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE.

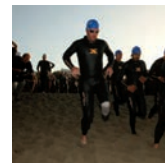
NAUTICA MALIBU TRIATHALON

Who: The Nautica Malibu Triathlon presented by Equinox, which takes place September 7-8, supports The Basic and Transitional Cancer Research Program of the Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. The research program provides groundbreaking therapies and treatments for children with life-threatening forms of cancer.

What: The race course features a half-mile ocean swim, an 18-mile bike ride, and a four-mile run through Zuma Beach.

Where: Zuma Beach, Malibu

Website: nauticamalibutri.com



MACY'S PASSPORT PRESENTS GLAMORAMA

Who: For 31 years, Macy's Passport Presents Glamorama has raised more than \$31 million in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

What: On September 12, Macy's will host Macy's Glamorama, a night of high fashion and entertainment. Guests will see the latest collections from Calvin Klein, Diesel, and Tommy Hilfiger, along with performances from the Backstreet Boys, Cirque du Soleil, and others. This event supports AIDS Project Los Angeles.

Where: The Orpheum Theatre, 842 S. Broadway, LA

Website: macys.com/glamtickets

NORDSTROM AT THE AMERICANA AT BRAND OPENING GALA

Who: After 30 years, Nordstrom is relocating its Glendale store to new 135,000-square-foot digs at The Americana at Brand.

What: The Nordstrom at The Americana at Brand Opening Gala invites guests to preview the new store while enjoying cocktails, dinner and dessert, live entertainment, a fashion presentation, and, of course, shopping. All proceeds will benefit Hillsides, a Pasadena-based group dedicated to creating lasting change in the lives of at-risk children and families, and Ascencia, whose mission is to end homelessness in the greater Glendale area. Nicole Richie is the Gala's honorary chair.

When: Tuesday, September 17 from 7-10 PM

Where: Nordstrom at The Americana at Brand

Website: hillsides.org/nordstromgala



LUPUS LA

Who: Established in 2000 by UCLA and Cedars-Sinai physician Dr. Daniel Wallace, Lupus LA raises funds for its local patient programs and for the Lupus Research Institute.

What: On September 12, Lupus LA will host its annual Get Lucky for Lupus LA silent auction and celebrity poker tournament.

Where: Petersen Automotive Museum, 6060 Wilshire Blvd., LA

Website: lupusla.org