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Paula Deen Featured at the Sandestin Wine Festival

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By Jan Ross

Forget about touring the vineyards of California and France; the place you want to be from April 18-21 is on the crystalline white beaches of Destin, Florida for the Sandestin Wine Festival. Truly a gourmand's delight, the 27th annual Wine Festival was named the "Best Annual Event" by Destin Magazine and offers an unprecedented opportunity to taste a variety of an incredible 800 wines, attend wine dinners with celebrity chefs, and meet winemakers.



Sandestin Wine Festival 2013

The big draw for this year's event will be Paula Deen, the internationally known food personality, author and restaurateur. She has sold over 10 million books about her life of Southern cooking and has her own magazine. She will be hosting a Southern Lunch which will offer some of her favorite dishes, paired with wines, and she will also be holding a book signing. In addition, she will present a 30 minute demo on that great, tasty Southern cooking for which she is so famous.

Paula won't be the only chef showcased at the event as there will be cooking demonstrations on the Coastal Living Cooking Stage several times on both Friday and Saturday. Regional chefs and national food personalities will demonstrate wonderful ways to prepare the delicious seafood of the Gulf Coast area in 30-60 minute events.

One of the best things about this wonderful wining and dining event is that it will take place at The Village of Baytowne Wharf in the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, one of my favorite places in all of Destin, Florida. Baytowne Wharf is a great place to shop with lots of interesting, kitschy little stores and a wonderful place to have lunch or dinner. I personally recommend Bistro Bijoux for an incomparable French dinner or the Marlin Grille for some of the best pan-fried grouper you will ever taste.

In between wine tastings, pay a visit to the Destin Spa and Salon at the resort one morning for a wonderful, relaxing massage, then have brunch at Another Broken Egg. Order a fresh omelet and some of the incredible blackberry grits – truly unique and truly delicious!

When you are ready to be more active, try a game of golf at the award-winning golf course or rent a bike to ride around the beautiful, tree-lined streets. Of course, you will make time

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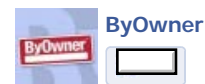
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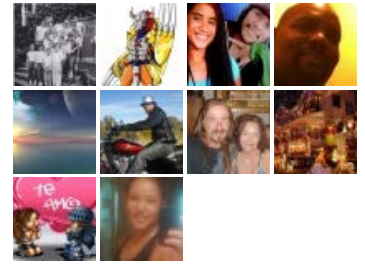
to relax on the beautiful, Caribbean-like beaches of the area. The sandy beaches in this area are blindingly white and soft as powder. Rent a beach umbrella, spread out your towel, get out that book you have been meaning to read, and let your troubles just melt away.

If you are a shopper, you will be in heaven as the Silver Sands Outlet Mall is just a few minutes away from the Sandestin Resort. With hundreds of great shops and a Cheeseburger in Paradise restaurant for lunch (try the fish tacos!), you can have a blast and spend the whole day. Pick up a new Coach bag like me – for a great price!

If you're paying a visit and looking for great accommodation, be sure to check out our Sandestin Vacation Rentals listings!

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