



April 22, 2011

Miami Wine & Food Festival Raises Funds for the United Way

By [Kara Franker](#)



Photo courtesy Miami Wine & Food Festival.

The wine flowed freely at the [Miami Wine & Food Festival](#) last Friday at the Intercontinental Hotel downtown. The night was a magical, chaotic mix of several rounds of Bacardi cocktails, all the wine your little heart could drink, and a four-course interactive dinner. The best part was that the proceeds of the evening, including an auction, benefited the [United Way](#).

I chatted with the director of the festival, [Lyn Farmer](#), who has raised over \$12 million for the United Way since he began hosting the [Miami Wine & Food Festival](#) 16 years ago. “Wine and food bring people together,” he said with a charismatic smile. “I love to host a good party and to give back to the community.” Lyn Farmer is not only passionate about wine, but he is passionate about people. He hosts the festival every year in order to bring his two passions together to help the [United Way](#).



Chef Dewey LoSasso, photo courtesy Miami Wine & Food Festival.

Celebrity chef **Dewey LoSasso** of **The Forge Restaurant**, strummed along on his Taylor guitar, which would be auctioned off later in the evening. The chef was not only providing the entertainment, he was directing more than 500 attendees through the process of cooking a four-course dinner. Chef LoSasso's bold, clean flavors and modern approach to American cuisine made him the natural choice for the event's celebrity chef. The interactive experience was the ultimate good time for foodies, where tables teamed up to cook each course under Chef LoSasso's tutelage. Much of the fresh ingredients were from local farmers, including the calabaza blossoms that were filled with ricotta and pecorino on a bed of smoked tomato vinaigrette.

I sat at a table with the chef's singers: **Joseph Kennerly, Jr.**, **Marybeth Desarle** and **Charlotte Henderson-Ingram**. The talented group performed a Rolling Stones classic and Chef LoSasso played the guitar while our black truffle matzo ball soup sizzled on the fire.



Photo courtesy Miami Wine & Food Festival.

Chef LoSasso effortlessly entertained and intrigued us all as we followed his directions in the creation of each course on the menu, ending with Stone Farms filet mignon with wheat berry fig salad and local Malabar spinach gratin. It was a delightful evening with good food and great wine.

Lyn Farmer and Chef LoSasso have positively impacted thousands of families through the funds they raise each year for the **United Way**, hosting the **Miami Wine & Food Festival** - this is an event that you want to come back to year after year.