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All We Can Eat

The Food section serves up recipe tips, food trends and more.



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All We Can Eat is a meeting place for the food-obsessed, a traffic signal at the ever-crowded intersection of politics, culture, aesthetics, desire and the dinner plate.

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Jose Andres wins culinary arts prize

Just when you thought that [José Andrés](#) had won every culinary award out there – the James Beard Best Mid-Atlantic chef, Bon Appetit Chef of the Year, Food & Wine's 35 under 35 – here comes another one.

The [Vilcek Foundation](#), which honors immigrant contributions to the arts, will award the Spanish-born chef its 2010 prize of \$50,000. The six-judge panel included New York chef [Dan Barber](#), former Gourmet magazine editor [Ruth Reichl](#) and James Beard Foundation president Susan Ungaro. Past winners include film director Mike Nichols and conceptual artists [Christo and Jeanne-Claude](#).



Jose Andres will use his \$50,000 prize to start a food foundation. (Pablo De Loy)

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"José Andrés is a chef for the future. He's an food innovator, pushing different flavors and techniques in ways that have not been seen before. And he's a traditionalist, with cooking that's deeply rooted in a cultural context," Barber said in an interview. "He manages to be at once wildly innovative and deeply traditional, forgetting nothing of the past but reinterpreting it for the future."

Andrés began his career in Washington at Jaleo. He now owns a small empire of restaurants, including [Minibar](#), [Zaytina](#), [Oyamel](#) and [Bazaar](#) at the SLS Hotel in Los Angeles. He will be honored at a reception tonight at the home of the Spanish ambassador. The award ceremony will be held at on April 7 in New York.

Founded by Dr. Jan Vilcek, a professor and research scientist at the New York University School of Medicine, and Marica Vilcek, an art historian, the foundation highlights a new area of the arts each year. This year, the foundation focused on culinary arts because "it's at a zenith moment," said Rick Kinsel, the foundation's executive director. "Culinary arts are in a period of wild experimentation. For literature, I don't think the same statement could be made."

Andrés said he was "unbelievably thrilled" to receive the award. "At Minibar we serve only 12 people. but we know that we are followed by many. That feels good." But he added that food is about more than dreaming up fanciful food and feeding those who can afford it. "I believe this award isn't only given to me. It's given to the industry to do much more. We should be here to see how we can fight hunger in our city and how we can feed our children better. I'm happy that Minibar gets national and international attention because it gives me the possibility to be part of these other conversations."

Andrés intends to use the prize money to launch a foundation called Food and Life, which aims to introduce a food curriculum in schools and improve cafeteria food.

-- Jane Black

By Jane Black | March 9, 2010; 10:00 AM ET

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