

TRENDING

5 Getaways With Local Food Festivals That Are Worth the Trip

Hotels are expanding beyond their on-site restaurants, throwing food festivals to lure travelers at different times of the year. Here are five resorts and seven festivals worth checking out.

By Shivani Vora

June 13, 2018

Some hotels try to create buzz by opening restaurants with high-profile chefs. Lately, however, a growing number of properties want to offer more, and are throwing entire food festivals instead.

Michael Heflin, senior vice president of the hotel division of Travel Leaders Group, thinks that hotels are getting into the festival business because they want to offer guests — as well as the local community — special culinary experiences. “A food festival, especially one with well-known chefs, helps a hotel distinguish itself from other properties,” he said. “It also brings in business from locals and entices travelers to stay at the property when the festival is happening.”

In April, for example, the Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain Resort & Spa in Scottsdale, Ariz., hosted Nirvana, a food and wine festival with notable chefs such as Scott Conant, Todd English and Stephanie Izard and also highlighted the talent of regional chefs. Here are a few more to look forward to.

Local Chefs and Cuisine in Italy

The Hotel Regina Isabella in Ischia, an island in the Gulf of Naples, has an annual food festival celebrating the local food and wines of that region and other parts of Italy. The dates for this year are Nov. 1 to 4. They haven't released the exact program yet, but they have invited renowned Italian chefs and vintners to share their products with guests and other industry people. And they usually have some chocolate, coffee, cheese and purveyors in addition to the meals prepared by the chefs.

Three Festivals to Choose From in St. Lucia

The Anse Chastanet resort in St. Lucia has three food festivals planned for this year. In June, the resort turns into a mango lover's paradise. During its Mango Madness Festival, guests experience interactive classes on cooking and mixology, a five-course mango-themed dinner and many other opportunities to taste the exotic flavors of different mango varieties.

October, on the other hand, is all about spices, including a tour of the resort's new spice garden and cocktails spiced with nutmeg, ginger, vanilla and cloves. The resort's culinary team offers a special five-course menu for the event featuring local spices, and an interactive beach tandoori cooking class. Guests can also take part in a hands-on spice blending class and take home their favorite mixtures. In December, at the Discover Chocolate Festival, guests get the true "bean to bar" experience, starting with a tour of Emerald Farm, where more than 2,000 cocoa trees are carefully tended. Tour guides teach guests how the beans are harvested, dried, roasted and turned into chocolate.

An Island Food Festival Getaway in Hawaii

From Sept. 17 to 20, the Four Seasons Resort Hualalai, in Hawaii, will host a Chef Fest, with dinners, interactive cooking classes and tastings from prolific chefs like Andy Ricker of Pok Pok, in Portland, Ore., and New York, and Michael Cimarusti of

Providence in Los Angeles.

Southern Food and Hospitality in Georgia

The food festival at Sea Island resort, in Georgia, is called Southern Grown; the event, held over Labor Day, celebrates Southern cuisine and local music through dinners, concerts, cooking demonstrations and a marketplace. Though this year's lineup is still in the works, last year's event included the James Beard Award winner Mike Lata, of FIG Restaurant in Charleston, and the Atlanta chef Linton Hopkins.

Celebrity Chefs and Great Eats in Atlantic City

Though the hotel food festival trend is recent, a handful have been around for several years: Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa, in Atlantic City, N.J., will host its 11th annual Savor Borgata in early November. The event is known for its roster of celebrity chefs including Wolfgang Puck, Bobby Flay, Michael Symon and Geoffrey Zakarian.

A version of this article appears in print on June 16, 2018, on Page TR2 of the New York edition