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CARNIVALE DU VIN BRINGS THE SPIRIT OF THE BIG EASY BACK TO THE VENETIAN IN LAS VEGAS

Fifth Annual Gala & Wine Auction Unites 40 of the Country's Top Chefs & Vintners – Proceeds to Benefit Children's Charities in Las Vegas and the Gulf Coast

NEW ORLEANS (June 18, 2009) – The special fifth anniversary **Carnivale du Vin** gala and wine auction benefiting the Emeril Lagasse Foundation will bring together over 40 prestigious names in the culinary and wine worlds on Saturday, **November 14, 2009** at **The Venetian Resort-Hotel-Casino** in Las Vegas. As a result of this event, which continuously ranks among the "Top Ten U.S. Charity Wine Auctions" in *Wine Spectator* magazine, the foundation has granted over \$3 million to charities on the Gulf Coast since the inaugural gala held in Las Vegas in October 2005.

Chefs and vintners who have participated in the preceding four events are returning to assemble the ultimate grand tasting experience. The all-star line-up of chefs joining Emeril Lagasse includes **Mario Batali, Daniel Boulud, Michael Mina, Charlie Palmer, Wolfgang Puck, and Nancy Silverton** to mention just a few. Some of the world-class vintners pouring exquisite wines are **Au Bon Climat, Domaine Serene, Gemstone Vineyard, Kosta Browne Winery, Pride Mountain Vineyards, Schrader Cellars and Williams Selyem**.

"Following Hurricane Katrina, the Las Vegas community and our friends at The Venetian welcomed Carnivale du Vin with an outpouring of support. I'm honored to have so many of my friends and colleagues join me again to celebrate the fifth anniversary," says Emeril Lagasse. "The proceeds from our first event enabled some very worthy projects in New Orleans that have helped grow our recovery. We're excited to expand our partnerships with children's culinary and education programs here in Las Vegas this fall."

"Carnivale du Vin's host city has been New Orleans for the past three years, so we're looking forward to returning to Las Vegas, uniting these two cities famous for their entertainment and cuisine," says Kristin Shannon, Emeril Lagasse Foundation Executive Director. "We're thankful to have so many talented chefs, along with the team from Emeril's restaurants nationwide, contributing their time as we put on our biggest culinary event yet."

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Patrons will celebrate to the soulful sounds of **The Neville Brothers** and other leading New Orleans entertainers. The wine auction will feature haute-cuisine and highly sought-after private dining experiences prepared by America's most renowned chefs, rare and deep wine collections and unique travel experiences. Distinguished Louisiana artist George Rodrigue, most famous for the "Blue Dog" series of paintings, is also creating commemorative artwork for the auction.

A portion of the proceeds from the fifth annual event will benefit not-for-profit organizations in Las Vegas, building on the Foundation's mission to support children's culinary arts and education programs in communities where Emeril Lagasse's restaurants operate.

Individual ticket donations begin at \$1,000; early registration discounts are available for table reservations. Suite accommodations at The Venetian and The Palazzo are available at a group rate. For a complete listing of participating chefs and vintners, to explore sponsorship, purchase tickets, and for information on special suite discounts, please visit www.carnivaleduvin.com.

About the Emeril Lagasse Foundation (ELF): The Emeril Lagasse Foundation seeks to inspire, mentor and enable all young people, especially those from disadvantaged circumstances, to realize their full potential as productive and creative individuals. The foundation supports and encourages programs creating developmental and educational opportunities for children within communities where Emeril's restaurants operate. Established in 2002 as the realization of Chef Emeril's dream to improve the quality of young people's lives, Emeril Lagasse Foundation awards grant funding to non-profit organizations providing educational programs. The foundation has helped major capital projects at Edible Schoolyard at Green Charter School, St. Michael Special School and Café Reconcile. It also supports afterschool and summer programs throughout New Orleans. As of 2009, Emeril Lagasse Foundation has given \$3 million to culinary, nutrition, garden, arts and life skills programs in New Orleans and Gulf Coast. For more information on Emeril Lagasse Foundation, please visit www.emeril.org.

About The Venetian Resort-Hotel-Casino: The Venetian Resort-Hotel-Casino, the largest property in the country to receive AAA's Five Diamond Award and Mobil Four-Star, is one of the world's most luxurious resort and convention destinations. Re-creating Venice's legendary landmarks, the resort offers unmatched service and quality for leisure and corporate guests. Located in the heart of the Las Vegas Strip, The Venetian features The Grand Canal Shoppes, an indoor streetscape complete with gondolas and singing gondoliers, the Canyon Ranch SpaClub®, world-class gaming, exquisite restaurants, and a wide variety of entertainment such as *Phantom-The Las Vegas Spectacular*, *Blue Man Group* and Wayne Brady on its premises, as well as extensive convention and corporate services. For additional information, visit www.venetian.com.