

## **Wolfgang Puck**

The name Wolfgang Puck is synonymous with the best of restaurant hospitality and the ultimate in all aspects of the culinary arts. The famous chef has built an empire that encompasses three separate Wolfgang Puck entities: **Wolfgang Puck Fine Dining Group**, **Wolfgang Puck Catering**, and **Wolfgang Puck Worldwide, Inc.**

Puck began cooking at his mother's side as a child. She was a chef in the Austrian town where he was born, and with her encouragement, Wolfgang began his formal training at fourteen years of age. As a young chef he worked in some of France's greatest restaurants, including Maxim's in Paris, the Hotel de Paris in Monaco, and the Michelin 3-starred L'Oustau de Baumannière in Provence. At the age of 24, Wolfgang took the advice of a friend and left Europe for the United States. His first job was at the restaurant La Tour in Indianapolis, where he worked from 1973 to 1975.

Wolfgang came to Los Angeles in 1975 and very quickly garnered the attention of the Hollywood elite as chef and eventually part owner of Ma Maison in West Hollywood. His dynamic personality and culinary brilliance that bridged tradition and invention made Ma Maison a magnet for the rich and famous, with Wolfgang as the star attraction. He had an innate understanding of the potential for California cuisine, and was pivotal in its rise to national attention during the late 1970s.

### **Wolfgang Puck Fine Dining Group**

From Ma Maison, Wolfgang went on to create his first flagship restaurant, Spago, originally located in West Hollywood on the Sunset Strip. From its opening day in 1982, Spago was an instant success and culinary phenomenon. His early signature dishes, such as haute cuisine pizzas topped with smoked salmon and caviar, and Sonoma baby lamb with braised greens and rosemary, put him and Spago on the gourmet map, not just in Los Angeles but throughout the world. Wolfgang and Spago earned many accolades during its popular eighteen years in West Hollywood, including winning the prestigious James Beard Foundation Award for Outstanding Chef of the Year, twice, in 1991 and 1998, and the James Beard Foundation Award for Restaurant of the Year in 1994. Wolfgang is the only chef to have won the Outstanding Chef of the Year Award two times.

## Wolfgang Puck Bio

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In 1983, following the success of Spago, Puck went on to open Chinois on Main in Santa Monica. His early exposure to Southern California's multicultural population intrigued him, inspiring him to fuse the Asian flavors and products of Koreatown, Chinatown, and Thaitown with his French- and California-based cuisine in a fine dining setting. Chinois on Main brings diners a fresh and imaginative Asian-fusion menu that laid the groundwork for fusion cooking in America.

In 1989, Wolfgang opened his third restaurant, Postrio, in the Prescott Hotel off San Francisco's Union Square. Postrio also drew upon the multi-ethnic nature of its surroundings.

In 1997, Wolfgang moved Spago to an elegant setting on Cañon Drive in Beverly Hills. His menu blazed new ground, with a combination of updated Spago classics and newly conceived items created by the award-winning talents of Managing Partner/Executive Chef Lee Hefter and Executive Pastry Chef Sherry Yard. The seasonal menu also draws from Wolfgang's favorite childhood dishes, offering a selection of Austrian specialties such as Wienerschnitzel and Kaiserschmarren. Spago Beverly Hills recently garnered two coveted Michelin Stars, one of only three Los Angeles restaurants to achieve this accolade.

In 2006, Wolfgang opened CUT, a sleek, contemporary steakhouse at the acclaimed Beverly Wilshire, a Four Seasons Hotel. After only one year, CUT earned a prestigious Michelin star among numerous other top accolades.

Wolfgang has changed the way Americans cook and eat by mixing classic French techniques and Asian- and California-influenced aesthetics with the highest quality ingredients. He also has changed the face of dining in cities throughout the nation, first in Los Angeles, then in Las Vegas, where he was the first star chef to create a contemporary fine dining restaurant, paving the way for other celebrated chefs and the city's metamorphosis into a dining destination.

After opening Spago in the Forum Shops at Caesars in 1992, Wolfgang went on to open additional restaurants including Postrio at The Venetian and Trattoria del Lupo in the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in 1999, Wolfgang Puck Bar & Grill at MGM Grand in 2004 and CUT at The Palazzo in 2008. In 2010, Puck will open two new concepts in Las Vegas: Brasserie PUCK and The Pods by

Wolfgang Puck, both located at Crystals, the spectacular 500,000-square-foot retail, entertainment and dining district situated within the heart of CityCenter's urban metropolis.

Since 2001, Wolfgang and his Fine Dining Group have opened restaurants across the United States from Atlantic City (Wolfgang Puck American Grille at the Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa in 2006) to Maui (Spago at the Four Seasons Resort in 2001). These also include The Source in Washington, DC (2007), Wolfgang Puck Grille at MGM Grand Detroit (2007), Spago at The Ritz Carlton, Bachelor Gulch in Colorado (2007), Five Sixty by Wolfgang Puck at Reunion Tower in Dallas (2009) and Wolfgang Puck Bar & Grill at L.A. Live (2009).

### **Wolfgang Puck Catering**

Wolfgang formed Wolfgang Puck Catering (WPC) in May 1998, alongside partner Carl Schuster. The company brings a new level of innovation and inspiration to restaurant and special event catering and dining services for cultural, corporate and entertainment venues across the country.

Under the leadership of Chef-Partner Matt Bencivenga, WPC offers a restaurant-quality experience in a special event setting for such high profile events as the annual Governors Ball, where Puck has been honored to serve as official chef for the post-Academy Awards® celebrity banquet for the past 15 years, as well as the GRAMMY awards celebration, the ESPY awards, American Music Awards, presidential galas and fundraisers.

WPC also is responsible for operating iconic cultural and architectural venues in major markets including L.A. LIVE, Sony Pictures Studios, Hollywood & Highland, and Pacific Design Center (Los Angeles); Union Station, Reunion Tower, and Nasher Sculpture Center and AT&T Performing Arts Center (Dallas); Museum of Contemporary Art, University of Chicago GSB Gleacher Center, and Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies (Chicago); St. Louis Art Museum; Museum of Science and Institute of Contemporary Art (Boston); Walker Art Center (Minneapolis); Indianapolis Museum of Art; Benaroya Hall (Seattle); Newseum (Washington, DC); Springs Preserve (Las Vegas); Georgia Aquarium (Atlanta); Walt Disney Family Museum (San Francisco) and La Jolla Playhouse (San Diego).

WPC's strategic partnership with Compass Group has fueled its dramatic growth over the last five years, including joint ventures with sister company Restaurant Associates and a national concession agreement with concert promoter Live Nation.

**Wolfgang Puck Worldwide, Inc.**

Wolfgang Puck Worldwide, Inc. is a privately held corporation that includes a rapidly growing portfolio of company-owned and franchised locations of casual Wolfgang Puck Bistro restaurants and fast-casual Wolfgang Puck Express restaurants, consumer products including Wolfgang Puck branded packaged foods and beverages, book publishing, and other licensing and merchandising projects.

Wolfgang Puck Bistro is a contemporary casual restaurant where the guiding principle is "Simple is Delicious." Simple as in farm fresh food expressed in the form of extraordinary pizzas, salads, artisan sandwiches and daily Chef's Additions of fish, pasta and meat. All original. All irresistible. All surprisingly affordable and uniquely Wolfgang Puck. The menu rotates new, seasonal specials throughout the year, highlighting the local produce of the season and includes a specially priced boutique wine list of more than two dozen selections.

In 1991, Wolfgang launched a chain of fast-casual restaurants, now called Wolfgang Puck Express. The Express restaurants, which also subscribe to the "Simple is Delicious" principle, use only the finest ingredients to prepare its fresh-to-order items in just minutes for people on the go. The menu features Wolfgang's signature pizzas, pastas, sandwiches, soups, fresh salads, including Wolfgang's famous Chinois™ Chicken Salad, and Wolfgang's classics at affordable prices. Today, Wolfgang Puck Express boasts more than 80 locations in major urban and suburban retail centers, convention centers, airports, universities and supermarkets throughout the United States, Canada and Japan.

Concurrently with his restaurant and catering operations, Wolfgang Puck has made a name for himself as a communicator. He has written six cookbooks and has been a regular guest on ABC's *Good Morning America* since 1986, the year he also produced his first instructional cooking video, *Spago Cooking with Wolfgang Puck*. His Emmy Award-winning television series, "*Wolfgang Puck*," debuted on The Food Network in 2000 and aired for five seasons. Wolfgang also has made guest appearances on a

multitude of television shows including *The Late Show with David Letterman*, *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*, *The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson*, *The Ellen De Generes Show*, *Entertainment Tonight*, *E! Entertainment Television*, *Hollywood Squares*, *Politically Incorrect with Bill Maher*, *Frasier*, *The Simpsons*, *The History Channel*, *Wheel of Fortune*, *Las Vegas*, *Shark* and *What's My Line*. In 2001, the A&E Network featured the life of Wolfgang Puck on their popular *Biography* series.

Wolfgang's syndicated newspaper column, "Wolfgang Puck's Kitchen," appears in 30 newspapers in the United States and Canada, reaching more than 5.3 million people each week.

The chef is known to millions of television viewers who see him regularly on Home Shopping Network, where he demonstrates recipes using his growing line of Wolfgang Puck branded housewares. These include stainless steel cookware, small kitchen electrics such as panini grills, food processors, blenders and electric grills, flatware, cutlery, bakeware, and other kitchen gadgets and tools.

In addition to his branded housewares, Wolfgang Puck's consumer products include a wide range of foods. He launched his first line of frozen food in 1987 to meet his customers' desire to enjoy Spago-quality food at home. Wolfgang Puck All-Natural Frozen Pizzas and Appetizers; All-Natural and Organic Wolfgang Puck Soups, Stocks and Broths; Estate Grown Organic Coffees and Ready to Drink Coffees and Culinary Iced Coffees; Wolfgang Puck Refrigerated Entrees; and Wolfgang Puck All-Natural No-Stick Cooking and Baking sprays are available at grocery stores nationwide. Gelson's supermarkets in Southern California offer Wolfgang Puck fresh-packaged foods, and Wolfgang Puck coffee blends are sold through Amenity Services to hotels, resorts, local market office distribution and websites.

### **Community Relationships**

Wolfgang is actively involved in many philanthropic endeavors and charitable organizations, including his own Wolfgang Puck-Barbara Lazaroff Charitable Foundation. Each year since 1983 the foundation hosts the annual American Wine & Food Festival, which has benefited the Meals-on-Wheels programs of Los Angeles and has raised more than \$14 million over the past two decades. The Harvard Business School of Southern California presented additional funds to Meals-on-Wheels when they presented Wolfgang with their honored *Business Statesman of the Year* award in 2001. Wolfgang is also

a major supporter of the American Cancer Society, the Alzheimer's Association, Ireland Cancer Center at University Hospitals of Cleveland, the Animal Foundation, the Gateway Green, the Special Olympics, the Cystic Fibrosis Society, the Race to Erase MS, the Carousel of Hope Ball for the Children's Diabetes Foundation and the Fire and Ice Ball for Revlon/UCLA Women's Cancer Research Program.

**Wolfgang's Eat, Love, Live™ (WELL)**

Central to all of Wolfgang Puck's endeavors is his **Wolfgang's Eat, Love, Live™ (WELL)** philosophy. This stands for culinary passion for eating and dining WELL, which means a commitment to provide food made with only the freshest and most natural and organic ingredients available, to celebrate local farmers and seasonal ingredients, and to use only humanely raised animal products.

Wolfgang Puck lives in Los Angeles, with his wife, Gelila, and has four sons, Cameron, Byron, Oliver, and Alexander.

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