



Windstar Cruises Announces 2024 James Beard Foundation Guest Chefs & Sailing Dates



Above from left: Omar Anani, Tanya Holland, Loryn Nalic

MIAMI, FL, September 19, 2023 – Small ship cruise line [Windstar Cruises](#) has announced its lineup of [James Beard Foundation®-affiliated guest chefs](#) for its series of three themed culinary cruises in 2024.

The trio of acclaimed visiting chefs – Omar Anani, Tanya Holland, and Loryn Nalic – each bring their regional culinary expertise on board which purposefully matches the sailing destination.

Windstar is the Official Cruise Line of the [James Beard Foundation \(JBF\)](#). The nonprofit organization’s mission is to celebrate, support, and elevate the people behind America’s food culture and champion a standard of good food anchored in talent, equity, and sustainability. The Foundation firmly aligns with Windstar’s commitment to fresh and local epicurean experiences around the world, as well as efforts to reduce food waste.

“I’m always blown away by the epicurean superstars – all selected by the esteemed James Beard Foundation – that make up our yearly roster of culinary themed cruises,” says Windstar Cruises President Christopher Prelog. “2024 is no different, including a first-ever Middle Eastern James Beard Foundation culinary cruise with Palestinian-Egyptian American restaurateur Chef Omar Anani. These cruises are not just about the food and wine, but also about getting to know the chefs on a personal level and seeing the destination through their eyes. It’s this difference that makes our culinary themed cruises so unique, and, as we say at Windstar, 180 degrees from ordinary.”

All three themed cruises in 2024, detailed at the links below, include two on-board cooking demonstrations, as well as four dishes by the visiting chef at a hosted dinner with wine pairings. Each chef will also lead a market tour, gathering fresh and local ingredients for dishes served on board. In addition, all three chefs will provide multiple recipes to be featured on Windstar's menus across all cruises—adding to a growing number of special menu items from James Beard Foundation-affiliated chefs served across the fleet on every sailing.

Feb. 1, 2024 with Chef Omar Anani on the 10-day [Sparkling Sands & Cities of the Persian Gulf](#) aboard 312-passenger *Star Legend*

Chef Omar Anani is a Palestinian-Egyptian American restaurateur. His [Saffron de Twah](#) restaurant is an award-winning modern Moroccan bistro on the eastside of Detroit, while his food truck, The Twisted Mitten, was the first halal food truck in Michigan and has been recognized as one of the best food trucks in the country by *USA Today* and the Food Network.

In 2020 Anani launched the Saffron Community Kitchen initiative to provide meal relief to Detroiters in need, and in 2022, he became a member of the Chef Corps at World Central Kitchen. The Chef Corps is a global network of prominent culinary leaders who champion World Central Kitchen's work providing fresh meals following crises.

This sailing marks the first-ever themed culinary cruise for Windstar in the Middle East (a region Windstar begins exploring in November of 2023). Guests on all of Windstar's sailings in the Middle East will enjoy local flavors and spirits (like Arak) on Windstar's regionally inspired menus; however, those seeking further immersion will enjoy joining Anani as he guides them through the region's best flavors with his personal favorites.

Anani is a two-time finalist for the James Beard Award for Best Chef - Great Lakes.

May 28, 2024 with Chef Tanya Holland on the 10-day [Cuisines & Cultures of Spain, Portugal and France](#) aboard 312-passenger *Star Legend*

Chef Tanya Holland has an extensive background in French cuisine (a must for this itinerary) and is the executive chef/owner of the beloved and internationally renowned Brown Sugar Kitchen restaurant located in Oakland, California. Author of *The Brown Sugar Kitchen Cookbook* and *New Soul Cooking*, she competed on the 15th season of *Top Chef* on Bravo and was the host and soul food expert on Food Network's *Melting Pot*. Holland leads a critically-acclaimed podcast *Tanya's Table*, interviewing many celebrity guests such as Questlove, Alice Waters, Danny Meyer, and Carla Hall.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Russian Language and Literature from the University of Virginia, as well as a Grande Diplôme from La Varenne Ecole de Cuisine in Burgundy, France. In addition, Holland was appointed as a Culinary Diplomat by the United States' Foreign Service Department and has taught classes in France for gastronomic travelers, making her an excellent teacher and seasoned guide for Windstar guests.

Holland is a frequent contributor to the James Beard Foundation as a writer and chef. In addition, she is Awards Committee Chair of the James Beard Awards and a James Beard Foundation Board of Trustee.

August 28, 2024 with Chef Loryn Nalic on the 8-day [Adriatic Archipelagos & Greek Goddesses](#) aboard Windstar's flagship, 342-passenger *Wind Surf*

Chef Loryn Nalic (along with her husband Edo - a Bosnian refugee) are the owners of [Balkan Treat Box](#) where they serve Balkan-inspired cuisine straight from the heart of St. Louis, Missouri. The restaurant, which began as a food truck, has earned accolades

such as *Food & Wine's* "Best Bites of the Year" and was named one of *Bon Appetit* "Top 50 Restaurants."

To recreate the classic Balkan recipes on offer, Chef Nalic traveled around the region learning age-old culinary traditions from locals. While traveling through each city center, she was also inspired by the varying forms of food sold on the streets, which later became the concept for their restaurant. This itinerary includes ample time in Croatia and Montenegro – a perfect fit for Nalic's regional expertise and first-hand knowledge. *Nalic has received two semi-finalist nominations from the James Beard Foundation for Best Chef Midwest.*

Downloadable images of the chefs for media usage are available [here](#).

Find out more about [JBF theme cruises](#) with Windstar. For more details on Windstar Cruises, visit www.windstarcruises.com.

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About Windstar Cruises

Windstar Cruises operates a fleet of six boutique all-suite and sailing yachts carrying 148-342 guests. Small ship cruises sail throughout Europe, the Caribbean, Costa Rica and the Panama Canal, Asia, New England and Eastern Canada, the Middle East, and the South Pacific, including a ship year-round in Tahiti. Windstar launched the \$250 Million Star Plus Initiative to transform the three all-suite Star Plus Class yachts with new suites, restaurants, and a world-class spa and fitness center. The award-winning line is known for immersive experiences, destination authenticity, port-intensive itineraries, exceptional service, and an innovative culinary program. Windstar Cruises is part of the Xanterra Travel Collection®, a group of global hospitality and travel companies, one of which traces its history back over a hundred years of operating our country's iconic national parks, including Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Glacier, Death Valley, and many others. Xanterra Travel Collection®, is owned by The Anschutz Corporation, the ultimate owner of the Broadmoor, Sea Island, and entertainment giant AEG, Anschutz Entertainment Group.

About the James Beard Foundation

The James Beard Foundation (JBF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that celebrates and supports the people behind America's food culture, while pushing for new standards in the restaurant industry to create a future where all have the opportunity to thrive. Established over 30 years ago, the Foundation has highlighted the centrality of food culture in our daily lives and is committed to supporting a resilient and flourishing industry that honors its diverse communities. By amplifying new voices, celebrating those leading the way, and supporting those on the path to do so, the Foundation is working to create a more equitable and sustainable future—what we call Good Food for Good®. JBF brings its mission to life through the annual Awards, industry and community-focused programs, advocacy, partnerships, and events across the country. For the first time in the Foundation's history, exceptional culinary talent, industry leaders, and visitors from NYC and beyond can experience unforgettable dining and educational programming at [Platform by the James Beard Foundation](#)—and be the first to try new food concepts at the Good To Go by JBF kiosk—inspiring food and beverage devotees

for decades to come. Learn more at jamesbeard.org, sign up for our newsletter, and follow @beardfoundation on social media.