

WOMEN'S FOOD ALLIANCE CELEBRATES 13 YEARS IN 2026

story and photos provided by **LEIGH CORT**

The Women's Food Alliance (WFA) is celebrating tides of change in the hospitality landscape 2026. With a sprawling panorama of business options and talents, WFA nurtures and supports the achievements made and successes yet to come! The future in hospitality reveals promising trends -- as WFA expands through its Leadership Team and members. We stand together and discover opportunities as a 'sorority' of business leaders.

Launched in Ponte Vedra Beach in 2013, the WFA continues to flourish and open doors to women in hospitality from St. Augustine to St. Simons Island, Georgia! 2025 has been a landmark 12th anniversary. With 47 new members that brings membership to 175-plus, it's been a memorable year of events that continue to carry the excitement into 2026. The diversity of careers and cultures makes this



Havana Nights at Paladar Cuban Eatery

hospitality organization for women one of the foremost business associations in the Southeast USA. Members continue to invite others to learn how the Women's Food Alliance opens doors to its sanctuary of trusted advice, genuine support and place to grow. It's a unique society of business-women who cherish Friendship First!

Hospitality offers a vibrant career path today. Led by founder Leigh Cort, the Women's Food Alliance is dedicated to

empowering members and providing them with connections, opportunities and tools needed to advance. Continuous learning and networking are essential! Through the members' experiences, building a strong caring network opens doors to new ideas and support from peers. Simply engaging with industry associates, attending meetings and events -- plus participating (showing up) -- expands those connections. Sharing trends and technologies is crucial to staying ahead.

Through the years, WFA members have become trusted mentors, playing a pivotal role in career growth. Fostering a supportive organization is vital. Female leaders are reshaping the industry with diverse perspectives, marking a pivotal shift toward inclusion. Gender diversity in hospitality advances through mentorship and skill development with technological

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Teddy Bear TEA

November 29th, December 6th, December 13th,
December 20th, December 21st

Adults- \$55
Children- \$35



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strides and AI-driven tools. The landscape promises progress and a commitment to creativity. Through openness and respect, WFA creates a comfortable environment where everyone has an opportunity to thrive as WFA charts a course toward the future.

What a year for WFA in 2025:

- Retreat on Jekyll Island
- Unraveling the Mystique of Branding
- Havana Nights at Paladar Cuban Eatery
- Inside the Heart of a Chef – Panel at Culhane's Irish Pub
- Breads of the World at Raintree Restaurant
- Specialty Food Divas – Showcase at Capital Grille
- Seashore Luncheon at Lynda's
- Ultimate Italian Dinner at Bella Vista
- 14 Prime – Chef's Epicurean Luncheon
- The Chef's Garden – 24K evening
- Retreat at Mission Resort + Club
- Holiday Luncheon @ Gemma San Marco



WFA Leadership Team 2025

What are members saying?

"The Women's Food Alliance is a dynamic circle of connection and growth, where each diverse gathering inspires new friendships, mentorships and collaborations that continue to enrich our community long after the event ends." – Susan Phillips, president and CEO, St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors &

Convention Bureau

"The Women's Food Alliance, to me, means being part of a vibrant community where diversity is celebrated, education inspires growth, mentorship empowers success and friendship nourishes our hearts, passions and our palates!" – Cindy Stavelly, executive director, The Pirate Museum and The Colonial Quarter St. Augustine

"I love how the Women's Food Alliance bridges work and play, creating a true alliance of women in hospitality who show up for each other at every stage of life. For some, it's simply fun; for others, it's about building business connections – but I believe for all of us, it's rooted in friendship." – Jen Earnest, partner/The Chef's Garden Catering & Events

"Being part of the Women's Food Alliance has enriched me through its diversity – connecting me with inspiring women, new friendships and meaningful collaborations that continue to grow each month." – Isela Gonzalez, partner, Paladar Cuban Eatery

To learn about Women's Food Alliance, contact Leigh Cort on www.womensfood-alliance.com.



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