

**AMERICAN  
MASTERS**  
**CHEFS FLIGHT**



**JAMES BEARD  
JULIA CHILD  
JACQUES PÉPIN  
ALICE WATERS**

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***James Beard: America's First Foodie* Launches  
"Chefs Flight" on THIRTEEN's *American Masters*  
Friday, May 19, 9 p.m. on PBS**

*"Chefs Flight" features four documentaries on acclaimed chefs James Beard,  
Julia Child, Jacques Pépin and Alice Waters*

The James Beard Foundation Award is the most coveted honor in the American food industry. It is often referred to as the "culinary Oscars." But what do we really know about the man whose name has become synonymous with culinary excellence?

The new documentary, ***James Beard: America's First Foodie***, premiering nationally Friday, May 19 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS as part of the 31<sup>st</sup> season of ***American Masters*** (check local listings.), chronicles a century of food through the story of the man behind the medal, the iconic cookbook author, journalist, television celebrity and teacher.

Major Funding for  
*Chefs Flight*



Major Support for  
*American Masters*



The film is the first of **American Masters** “Chefs Flight” of four documentaries on culinary legends including Julia Child, Jacques Pépin, and Alice Waters. New documentaries on **Beard (1903-1985)** and **Jacques Pépin** will be paired with encore presentations of films on Julia Child and Alice Waters respectively. Immediately following Beard, *American Masters – Julia! America’s Favorite Chef* will air at 10 p.m. ET.

“James Beard was an enormously important figure in American cooking at a time when American cooking was really sort of a desert,” said **Ted Allen**, television host and James Beard Award winner.

America’s back-to-basics food movement can be traced to the pioneering work of this one man. Dubbed the “Dean of American Cookery” by *The New York Times*, Beard was a Portland, Oregon native who loved and celebrated the bounty of the Pacific Northwest. He spoke of the importance of localism and sustainability long before those terms had entered the culinary vernacular. He was a forerunner of the farm-to-table movement and helped create the iconic Four Seasons concept and menu.

When the world was focusing on “all things French,” Beard appreciated what America had to bring to the table. A pioneer foodie, he was the first chef to go on television hosting the show *I Love to Eat* on NBC in 1946 to teach not only women but men how to cook.

He authored 22 cookbooks, penned a syndicated newspaper column and wrote countless magazine articles. He introduced Julia Child to New York – later becoming best buddies with her – and ran an acclaimed cooking school out of his townhouse in New York City.

Through a recorded and print oral history crafted by Beard himself, letters to friends and colleagues, rare archival footage, vintage photographs, and interviews with Beard’s friends and peers, the documentary reveals Beard’s talents, sense of humor, and genius.

Among those appearing on the film are James Beard Award Foundation President **Susan Ungaro** and Executive Vice President **Mitchell Davis**, James Beard Award winners, and noted chefs including Pépin, Waters, **Daniel Boulud**, **Wolfgang Puck**, and more.

Among the many highlights in the documentary are **Boulud** and restaurant critic **Gael Greene** telling how Beard helped start Citymeals on Wheels; **Pépin** reminiscing about cooking with Beard; **Martha Stewart** sharing how Beard’s cookbooks influenced her; **Allen** disclosing Beard’s challenges being an “out” gay man at a time when same-sex sexual activity was illegal; chefs **Jonathan Waxman** and **Larry Forgione** reflecting on Beard’s mentorship and its impact on their career; **Puck** recounting how he helped found the James Beard Foundation; **Waters** explaining how Beard discovered Chez Panisee; chef **Jeremiah Tower** offering insight into Beard’s relationship with Marion Cunningham; chef **Naomi Pomery** demonstrating how to make the famous *James Beard’s Onion Sandwich*; and next generation chefs such as **Marc Forgione**, **Greg Higgins**, and **Pomeroy** discussing how Beard’s influence is still felt today.

“Jim never really changed over all the years, says **Larry Forgione**, restaurateur and James Beard Award winner. “He still believed in the philosophy of American food and the great bounty America had to offer. It just took us a while to catch up to him.”

“Beard was a passionate teacher, who nurtured a generation of American chefs and cookbook authors,” said Michael Kantor, executive producer of *American Masters*. “His pioneer work transformed American cuisine and forever changed the way we cook, consume and think about food.”

The full “Chefs Flight” schedule follows below:

***American Masters – James Beard: America’s First Foodie***  
Premieres Friday, May 19, 9-10 p.m. on PBS (check local listings) **New**

***American Masters – Julia! America’s Favorite Chef***  
Friday, May 19, 10-11 p.m. on PBS (check local listings) **Encore Presentation**

Celebrate the life and legacy of Julia Child (1912-2004), fondly remembered for introducing French cuisine to American home cooks through her television series – beginning with WGBH’s *The French Chef* in 1963 – and books. The film tells two love stories: one between Julia and Paul Child, the other between Julia and French food. Originally broadcast in August 2004, the film features previously unseen photos, including several from Paul Child’s personal archive, granted exclusively to the film’s producers. Child was a pioneer in public television’s long tradition of cooking programs, revolutionizing the way America cooks, eats and thinks about food. Directed by Marilyn Mellowes. A WGBH production.

***American Masters – Jacques Pépin: The Art of Craft***  
Premieres Friday, May 26, 9-10 p.m. on PBS (check local listings) **New**

Discover the story of Chef Jacques Pépin (b. December 18, 1935), a young immigrant with movie-star looks, a charming Gallic accent, and a mastery of cooking and teaching so breathtaking he became an early food icon—joining James Beard and Julia Child among the handful of Americans who transformed the way the country views the food world. Not content cooking in French palaces, where he was the personal chef to three French presidents including Charles de Gaulle, Pépin’s American journey took him through the kitchens of Howard Johnson’s, bringing his commitment to great taste, craftsmanship and technique to American popular food. With his landmark cookbooks and television shows, he ushered in a new era in American food culture – a story that continues to unfold. Produced and directed by Peter L. Stein. Executive producer Michael Isip. Co-executive producer Susie Heller. Narrated by Stanley Tucci. A KQED Production in association with THIRTEEN’s *American Masters* for WNET.

***American Masters – Alice Waters and Her Delicious Revolution***  
Friday, May 26, 10-11 p.m. on PBS (check local listings) **Encore Presentation**

Follow Alice Waters (b. April 28, 1944) through a year of seasonal shopping and cooking, and discover both the recipes and vision of an artist and an advocate. She and her now-famous restaurant Chez Panisse became a major force behind the way Americans eat and think about food, launching the explosion of local farmers’ markets and redesigned supermarket produce departments. Distressed by the food she saw in public schools, Waters started an organic garden with an integrated curriculum at the Martin Luther King Middle School near her house, an idea inspired by The Garden Project at the San Francisco county jail. The idea of an Edible Schoolyard has now spread across the U.S. – and inspired similar programs worldwide. She is an activist with a flawless palette who has taken her gift for food and turned it into consciousness about the

environment and nutrition, and a device for social change. Originally broadcast March 2003. Directed by Doug Hamilton. A production of THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC's *American Masters* for WNET

Launched in 1986, ***American Masters*** has earned 28 Emmy Awards — including 10 for Outstanding Non-Fiction Series and five for Outstanding Non-Fiction Special — 12 Peabodys, an Oscar, three Grammys, two Producers Guild Awards and many other honors. To further explore the lives and works of masters past and present, the ***American Masters*** website (<http://pbs.org/americanmasters>) offers streaming video of select films, outtakes, filmmaker interviews, educational resources and *In Their Own Words: The American Masters Digital Archive*: previously unreleased interviews of luminaries discussing America's most enduring artistic and cultural giants as well as the *American Masters Podcast*. The series is a production of [THIRTEEN](#) PRODUCTIONS LLC for [WNET](#) and also seen on the WORLD channel.

***James Beard, America's First Foodie: American Masters*** is a production of Federici Films LLC and THIRTEEN PRODUCTIONS LLC's *American Masters* for WNET. Written, and Directed by Elizabeth Federici. Produced by Elizabeth Federici and Kathleen Squires. For this production, Federici compiled 100 hours of raw interviews, thousands of photographs and rare archival footage. Squires, an award-winning food writer of two decades, recruited participants, conducted many of the interviews and helped shape the story.

Funding for "Chefs Flight" is provided by Feast it Forward. Major support for ***American Masters*** is provided by AARP. Additional funding is provided by Rosalind P. Walter, Ellen and James S. Marcus, Lillian Goldman Programming Endowment, The Philip and Janice Levin Foundation, The Blanche & Irving Laurie Foundation, Judith and Burton Resnick, Vital Projects Fund, Cheryl and Philip Milstein Family, The André and Elizabeth Kertész Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, Lenore Hecht Foundation, Michael & Helen Schaffer Foundation, and public television viewers.

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### **About WNET**

WNET is America's flagship PBS station and parent company of [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#). WNET also operates [NJTV](#), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its broadcast channels, three cable services (KidsThirteen, Create and World) and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each week. WNET produces and presents such acclaimed PBS series as [Nature](#), [Great Performances](#), [American Masters](#), [PBS NewsHour Weekend](#), [Charlie Rose](#) and a range of documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings. WNET's groundbreaking series for children and young adults include [Get the Math](#), [Oh Noah!](#) and [Cyberchase](#) as well as [Mission US](#), the award-winning interactive history game. WNET highlights the tri-state's unique culture and diverse communities through [NYC-ARTS](#), [Theater Close-Up](#), [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#) and [MetroFocus](#), the daily multi-platform news magazine focusing on the New York region. In addition,

WNET produces online-only programming including the award-winning series about gender identity, [First Person](#), and an intergenerational look at tech and pop culture, [The Chatterbox with Kevin and Grandma Lill](#). In 2015, THIRTEEN launched Passport, an online streaming service which allows members to see new and archival THIRTEEN and PBS programming anytime, anywhere: [www.thirteen.org/passport](http://www.thirteen.org/passport).

#### **About Feast it Forward**

Exploring beyond the plate, bottle and guitar, Feast it Forward Network seeks to feed the soul with entertaining, inspiring and educational programming. As their Ultimate Airstream Film Lounge continues to hit the road and engage viewers while hosting unique lifestyle events, its flagship “live studio showroom” will open in downtown Napa Spring of 2017. A two story experiential estate, it will feature a 16 premier vintner tasting collective, a full demonstration studio kitchen, educational outdoor entertaining space, performing music stage, interior design showroom and much more. Beyond the growing online network programming which features master chefs, actors, tastemakers, and musicians, this live studio will truly bring Feast it Forward Network to life as viewers will be able to personally experience all things food, wine and philanthropy...with a taste of music. More information can be found at [feastitforward.com](http://feastitforward.com)

#### **About PBS FOOD**

PBS FOOD on-air programming this summer includes: **AMERICAN MASTERS ‘CHEFS FLIGHT,’** a series of four documentaries about iconic chefs James Beard, Julia Child, Jacques Pépin, and Alice Waters airing May 19 and 26; season four of the international cooking show phenomenon **THE GREAT BRITISH BAKING SHOW**, premiering June 16; **FOOD – DELICIOUS SCIENCE**, the scientific story of food that reveals the physics, chemistry and biology hidden inside every bite; and season five of **MARTHA STEWART’S COOKING SCHOOL**, which explores treasured recipes from the Arabian Gulf. PBS and its member stations have a long and storied history of presenting the best in food programming, from groundbreaking cooking shows to documentaries to highly rated competition shows and more. PBS FOOD at [pbs.org/food](http://pbs.org/food) compiles the best articles, videos, and recipes from across public television.