



Délice Network Gathering in Tucson, Arizona

*An international celebration of superstar foods:
Making the best of local products and dishes*

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TUCSON, Arizona. – Tucson will host the Délice Network Gathering, an international meeting based on the theme of gastronomy and culinary tourism, at various venues citywide, May 1-3, 2019. Representatives from 16 of the network's 28-member cities will gather for three days of sharing, learning, connecting with local peers and welcoming new member cities.

The focus of the 2019 gathering is "superstar food," meaning how a product or food reflects a city's culture and defines its sense of place. Participants will discover how Tucson approaches its superstar agave plant at private and public events, including:

Superstar Food: Making the best of your famous products and dishes, May 3, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. with roundtable discussions. Tucson Electric Power (TEP), 88 E. Broadway Blvd., open to the public, no charge – A conference session focused on superstar foods and products. The keynote speakers, food marketing experts Gwen Morrison and Mark Cotter (U.S.), will inspire participants to frame their superstar food to spark development of interesting marketing initiatives. A roundtable discussion will include panelists Edie Jarolim (Tucson), Thierry Rassam (Montreal, Canada) and Olivier Marette (Brussels, Belgium).

For the first time within the network, the 2019 gathering will feature cocktails along with food. The gathering was planned to coincide with Tucson's **Agave Heritage Festival**, April 23-May 5, a tribute to the native plant used to make tequila, mescal and other liquors. Top mixologists from member cities will join their Tucson counterparts to prepare cocktails using a mezcal-based spirit at these two public events:

MEZCrawl, May 2, 7-10 p.m., downtown Tucson bars and lounges, \$50 -- Agave spirit enthusiasts will create a unique cocktail with one common ingredient, mezcal.

Agave: Spirit of the World, May 3, 6-8 p.m., The Carriage House, \$45 – A team of the world's best mixologists will use agave spirits to reimagine their signature cocktails, while James Beard Award-winner Janos Wilder will create a menu celebrating Tucson UNESCO City of Gastronomy.

Participating Délice Network member city mixologists: Tony Abou-Ganim (U.S.), Pierre Milour (Brussels, Belgium), Marc Bonneton (Lyon, France), Diego Valencia Dominguez (Mérida, Mexico), and Carlos Gaitan (Cali, Colombia).

Participating Délice Network member cities: Barcelona (Spain) / Brussels (Belgium) / Buenos Aires (Argentina) / Cali (Colombia) / Chicago (USA) / Gaziantep (Turkey) / Gothenburg (Sweden) / Helsinki (Finland) / Kobe (Japan) / Lisbon (Portugal) / Lyon (France) / Madrid (Spain) / Mérida (Mexico) / Puebla (Mexico) / Riga (Latvia) / Stavanger (Norway) / Tucson (USA).

As host city, Tucson will spotlight its position as an international culinary destination and share its approach to marketing food and gastronomy, while meeting delegates will be treated to a taste of Tucson's vibrant culinary and cultural scene and will interact with local partners involved in food-based projects. Delegates will be offered culinary tours and attractions visits.

Tucson accepted the invitation to join Délice in September 2018 and, with Chicago, represents the United States in the network. Tucson organizations led by Visit Tucson see this membership as a valuable tool to boost food and gastronomy potential and to effectively promote urban economic development and global visibility for Tucson and Southern Arizona.

About Délice Network - The Délice Network is a nonprofit professional association of global food destinations whose common aim is to preserve and promote their local cuisine through learning, sharing and connecting with peers worldwide. Each Délice member has its own specificity, approach and culture, bringing the strength to the network. For more information: www.delice-network.com

About the Gathering – The 2019 Délice Network Gathering is organized and hosted by Visit Tucson with support from Pima County; City of Tucson; Arizona-Mexico Commission; University of Arizona College of Social & Behavioral Sciences-Mexico Initiatives; Arizona Lodging & Tourism Association; Rio Nuevo; UNESCO Tucson City of Gastronomy; Agave Heritage Festival, Casino Del Sol; and Tucson Electric Power. For more information: <https://bit.ly/2UDBnyl>

About Visit Tucson - Visit Tucson is the official destination marketing organization for Tucson and Southern Arizona. For more about travel in Tucson: VisitTucson.org

About Tucson, Arizona - Arizona's second-largest city located 65 miles north of the United States-Mexico border, Tucson was named as a City of Gastronomy by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2015 and is home to Tucson Originals, a model for independent restaurant entrepreneurship. For more about Tucson UNESCO City of Gastronomy: <https://bit.ly/2V6lVdB>.

Contacts:

Camille BENOIST, Délice Network Manager

camille.benoist@delice-network.com

www.delice-network.com

Marisol Vindiola, Director of Mexico Initiatives, Visit Tucson

Mvindiola@visittucson.org

520-770.2167

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