

do-good FOODIES

CHEFS AND RESTAURATEURS ARE nurturers by nature, so it's no surprise to discover that many luminaries in the field are dedicated to charitable causes aimed at ending hunger. *VIVmag* spoke with four leading women in the food industry about how they are making a difference.

BY ANN WYCOFF



BARBARA LAZAROFF

LOS ANGELES

BARBARA'S BIO

A leader in the industry, Barbara Lazaroff's business acumen and award-winning design catapulted the myriad enterprises of her former husband, chef Wolfgang Puck, into a mega-successful empire. Married for 19 years, Lazaroff, 54, and Puck turned their flagship restaurant Spago into Hollywood's Mecca for A-listers, and today, 25 years later, you'll still find Lazaroff holding court at the Friday "power lunch" at Spago Beverly Hills.

Lazaroff and Puck co-own 14 restaurants and a catering business; their Wolfgang Puck Gourmet Express has more than 80 locations. Lazaroff is a founding member of [Women Chefs and Restaurateurs](#). She is currently at work on a book called *The Artful Home* as well as a Barbara Lazaroff home-product line.



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DO-GOOD CAUSE

A tenacious do-gooder, Lazaroff supports causes as diverse as the **Big Sisters of Los Angeles**, the **American Cancer Society** and **Aviva Family and Children's Services** for abused girls. The Puck-Lazaroff Charitable Foundation supports **Meals on Wheels** by hosting the annual **American Wine & Food Festival** in Los Angeles. Now in its 25th year, the event has become a prototype for food and wine festivals across the country and has raised more than \$13 million to help feed the elderly.

"It felt natural to get involved with an important and caring organization like Meals on Wheels. When I think about the elderly in our city not having enough to eat, or going hungry because of an inability to pay for or physically access food, it seems we are failing as a city and a nation," Lazaroff says. "I often say that the true test of a civilized community is how they treat the young and the elders in their midst."



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ADVICE FOR HEALTHIER LIVING

“It’s more than just about food. A healthier America would start with a healthier mind-set. If one person is suffering, we all suffer,” Lazaroff says. “Each one of us can do something. In the Jewish religion we all give, even the poor. I do not understand how people can only think about themselves. If the children around the world are well-fed, comfortable and happy, our children will benefit too. If we want to leave anything to our children, I hope it’s a healthier, more caring world.”



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IF SHE WEREN'T A RESTAURATEUR

“When I was younger, I studied ballet. I wanted to be a ballerina, but the only thing I got was bad toes. Honestly, my family could not afford the advanced training. Actually, I have been performing for years — after all, guests come to have a good time at our ventures and my job is to be as entertaining as I can be. I would have loved to have been a fashion designer. I am pursuing other avenues like acting by developing a television show. There are many more things that I intend to do — like writing books, designing clothing and painting again. After branding Wolfgang Puck for 25 years, I think it’s my time to do it for myself.”



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HER LEGACY

“I’d love to be remembered as an original designer but, more important, as a good parent. [Lazaroff and Puck have two sons, Cameron, 18, and Byron, 13.] The Native Americans say that we raise our children so that they are strong enough to leave, but I hope that we would raise our kids so they can fly, along with giving them a sense of global responsibility and community. You have to take care of your families and the communities that are connected to the world at large.”

SPAGO'S
KAISERSCHMARREN

“So many recipes from my childhood give me a sense of comfort and remind me of that time in my life. Kaiserschmarren is one of my favorites. It makes me think of all the times at Spago that I’ve had to go and beg the chef to make it in the afternoon since we only serve it at night and so many people love it.”





SPAGO'S KAISERSCHMARREN

SERVES 4

KAISER BASE:

(can be made up to 2 days in advance)

- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 ounces fromage blanc
- 3 ounces crème fraîche
- 2 tablespoons dark rum, such as Myers's
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

SCHMARREN:

- 2 tablespoons butter, softened
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 6 egg whites
- 1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 4 tablespoons sugar

To make Kaiser Base:

1. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, whisk together egg yolks and 1 tablespoon sugar until pale yellow.
2. Add fromage blanc and whisk until smooth. Add crème fraîche and whisk until smooth.
3. Add rum. Whisk in flour until combined. Set aside.

To make Kaiser Soufflé:

1. Preheat oven to 400° F; place rack in center of oven.
2. Brush pan with softened butter and dust with sugar. Set aside.
3. In bowl of electric mixer fitted with whisk attachment, beat egg whites until they hold soft peaks. Add cream of tartar.
4. On medium speed, beat egg whites while slowly streaming in 4 tablespoons sugar.
5. Whisk 1/3 of egg whites into Kaiser Base.
6. With a rubber spatula, fold in the balance of the egg whites until completely blended.
7. Spoon mixture into prepared pan and bake for 20–25 minutes, or until center is puddinglike and top is golden brown.

To serve:

Divide Kaiserschmarren among 4 bowls and dust with powdered sugar. If desired, add your favorite puréed-fruit sauce from strawberries, apples or plums. (Lazaroff's favorite is mulberry sauce.) Serve immediately.

Adapted by VIVmag from a recipe by Spago chef Sherry Yard.

GARDEN

