



FOR RELEASE JANUARY 14, 2014

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BIG BREW – A NEW DESTINATION CRAFT BEER EVENT – UNVEILED BY FOOD & VINE TIME PRODUCTIONS, INC. AND HOUSTON FIRST CORPORATION

HOUSTON (January 14, 2014)...Big Brew, a week-long celebration of craft beer at the George R. Brown Convention Center, was announced today by Food & Vine Time Productions, Inc. and Houston First Corporation, which operates the convention center. Big Brew kicks off October 20, 2014 with events around the city, followed by larger events October 23-26 at the GRB. Designed for beer lovers in Houston and across the nation, participants will enjoy more than 1,000 featured beers, meet the best and brightest brewers in the craft beer industry, and quench their thirst on never-before-tasted brews and rare finds.

Mayor Annise Parker was on hand for the announcement at the GRB. "A destination event like Big Brew spotlights Houston's role as a leader in the craft beer industry," Mayor Parker said. "We look forward to welcoming craft beer lovers to Houston this fall."

Offerings for the week-long event include VIP experiences, pub crawls, craft beer dinners, food and beer pairings, beer education seminars, intimate meet-and-greet opportunities, a Best in Texas event focused on Texas offerings only and two grand tasting sessions. The festival is sponsored by Spec's Wine, Spirits and Finer Foods.

"Spec's is thrilled to be a part of this citywide craft beer event," said Lisa Rydman, third generation Spec's family. "We've long focused on making available hard-to-find craft beers, especially those produced in Texas, and on providing products and craft beer education for enthusiasts as well as those just joining the craft beer movement. It's an exciting time for the craft beer industry."

Excitement for events like Big Brew is growing. "Part of our long-term strategy for growth downtown is to develop events that generate business for hotels and restaurants," said Dawn Ullrich, president and CEO of Houston First Corporation, which operates the GRB.

"Looking at the success that other cities have had with craft beer events, we believe Big Brew will be a home run for Houston, especially in light of the fact that Texas is the third fastest growing state for the number of small, independently owned craft breweries," Ullrich said.

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BIG BREW DESTINATION CRAFT BEER EVENT ANNOUNCED ADD 11111

“We are so excited to be partnering with the GRB to bring Houston and the region a week-long celebration focused on the craft brewing industry,” said Food & Vine Time Productions Co-Founder Clifton McDerby. “We’ve watched the industry grow exponentially since we launched BrewMasters in Galveston five years ago. The demand for craft beer continues to explode across all socioeconomic groups. This event gives beer lovers the opportunity to meet the brewers in person, taste beers they’ve never tasted before and learn more about their favorite beers. We’ve long admired other world-class beer festivals and felt that Houston, with its incredible craft beer scene, should also have a festival building toward that scale,” McDerby said.

Also supporting the craft beer industry are culinary legends Robert Del Grande, Michael Cordua and Randy Evans. The super-star chefs co-chair a Culinary Committee that will enrich Big Brew with crafted beer dinners and food pairing experiences. “Gone are the days when meals are paired with wine alone. Craft beer, with its range of tastes, has a place at the table, and we’re looking forward to showcasing food and craft beer in unique and delicious ways,” said Evans.

Another important component of Big Brew will focus on the burgeoning home brewing segment, offering home brewing seminars and demonstrations. Many craft brewers started as home brewers before embarking on a full-scale brewing operation. Big Brew gives participants the opportunity to hear more about how home brewers got their start and hear tips on creating their own home brews.

Tickets for Big Brew go on sale on February 17 and start at \$45. For events, tickets and all things Big Brew visit www.bigbrewhouston.com. Big Brew benefits the University of Houston Conrad N. Hilton College, a leader in hospitality education.

About Houston First Corporation:

Houston First Corporation operates the city’s finest convention and arts facilities to position Houston as a world-class destination. Houston First manages more than 10 city-owned buildings, plazas and parking facilities, including Hilton Americas-Houston, George R. Brown Convention Center, Miller Outdoor Theatre, Wortham Center and Jones Hall. For more information, please visit www.HoustonFirst.com.

About the George R. Brown Convention Center:

The George R. Brown Convention Center ranks among the 10 largest facilities in the United States with nearly 1.2 million sq. ft. of exhibition, meeting and registration space. For more information, please visit www.HoustonConventionCtr.com.

About Food & Vine Time Productions, Inc.:

Food & Vine Time Productions, Inc. is a brand leader in finely crafted consumer culinary, wine and craft beer lifestyle events. Launched in 2002, Food & Vine Time Productions, Inc. focuses on a shared passion for food, wine and craft beer celebrating all the many benefits these pleasures contribute to personal and business relationships. It currently produces 10 events across the Houston-area, including its signature Wine & Food Week, which celebrates 10 years in 2014; BrewMasters Craft Beer Festival; Haute Wheels Houston, THE Food Truck Festival; Zest in the West; Katy Sip ‘n Stroll; CyFair Wine Fair; FROSTED and the first ever BIG BREW at the GRB fall 2014.