



## ZAGATBUZZ

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## NYC Wine & Food Fest Wrap-Up

### Meatball Madness

On Thursday, **Giada De Laurentiis** kicked off the weekend with her annual Meatball Madness party – a ball of balls, if you will. Two dozen chefs presented their prized spheres, and many had the cojones to share cooking tips too. **Nate Appleman** of [Pulino's](#) endorsed a high concentration of bread in his balls, while **Missy Robbins** of [A Voce](#) cites cold, fresh-ground meat and lots of olive oil as the key. [Porter House's](#) **Michael Lomonaco** stated what might not be so obvious: "The most important thing is that meatballs should never bounce."

[The Lion's](#) **John DeLucie** added that having a bona fide Italian grandmother – specifically his Nonna Julia – helps in preparing a good meatball. The chef also hailed his recent appearance on *Sesame Street* as a career high. "I've done a lot of media, and this was by far the coolest." His favorite characters? "Bert and Ernie, definitely, but I relate most to Oscar the Grouch, especially during service."

**Jason Zukas**, a runner-up "Champion" on *Chopped*, helped DeLucie dish while promoting his soon-to-open Queens spot, **Tazzina**. Guests also got a preview of **Shea Gallante's** [Ciano](#) with a black truffle-glazed veal ball with herbed polenta. Meanwhile, **Danny Holzman** and **Michael Chernow** of the [Meatball Shop](#) dropped subtle hints about their expansion. Will 2011 see a second shop? "Eleven is my lucky number," Chernow said.

Defending "Best Meatball" champion **Andrew Carmellini** ([Locanda Verde](#), the upcoming [The Dutch](#)) was back with his lamb meatball sliders, but his title was usurped by **Donatella Arpaia**. Her [Mia Dona](#) meatball slider on potato focaccia with cacciocavallo cheese won the most votes; her red mini-dress and matching chef's coat (not to mention her [vote-getting strategy](#)) got several nods of approval too.