

# NAPLES<sup>®</sup> ILLUSTRATED

## TOPPING OFF CHARITY

By Gaylene Salomons and Jane E. Enos, Naples Illustrated, March 2023

*Held since 2001, the Naples Winter Wine Festival (NWWF) is one of the most successful charity auctions in the world, supporting more than 50 nonprofits in Collier County through the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF). Alongside a team of dedicated employees, trustees, and volunteers, several local businesses have made long-standing contributions to the multiday wine extravaganza.*



*Top bidders enjoy themed gourmet feasts, courtesy of Bleu Provence*

### Gourmet Goodness

A notable business that continually supports the NWWF is Bleu Provence, an award-winning restaurant offering the finest in French cuisine, as well as an extraordinary selection of wines.

“We have had the honor and privilege to support the Naples Winter Wine Fest since its inception 19 years ago,” explains Jacques Cariot, who co-owns the much-loved Naples dining spot with wife Lysielle, the restaurant’s chef de cuisine.

“Helping the NWWF is a natural thing to do when you want to give back to the community that supports you, when you love and respect kids, when you love wine and food, and when you want to show gratitude to the people who have built this county and town where we live.”

Almost every single year, Bleu Provence has donated a lot to be auctioned consisting of a delectable gourmet fest for 20 to 80 epicures, made from the best ingredients the world has to offer and served with unrivaled wines. Most often, the dinner takes place within the intimate walls of the restaurant, which is closed for the occasion and transformed and decorated according to a selected theme.

“We try each time to exceed our guests’ expectations,” says Cariot. “No expense in the world is spared, and every effort is made to help the NWWF raise more money with this lot every year. It is impossible not to be attracted and committed by this caritative organization’s spirit of excellence, especially when our business – Bleu Provence – is based on the same values.”