

Palm Beach Daily News

THE SHINY SHEET®

'Food & Wine' editor earns Beard honors

Cowin learns while on vacation in town that she's an inductee into food, beverage hall of fame.

By **ROBERTA SABBAN**
Daily News Food Editor

A relaxed Dana Cowin, editor in chief of *Food & Wine* magazine, settled into a banquet at Top of the Point restaurant for a celebration dinner last week.

Cowin, of Manhattan, had been on vacation at The Breakers with her husband, Barclay Palmer, and their children, Sylvie and William, when she learned she's to be inducted into the James Beard Foundation's Who's Who of Food and Beverage Hall of Fame at Lincoln Center on May 7.

The award is like the Oscar of the American culinary world. It recognizes those identified by peers as having displayed remarkable talent and achievement in the food industry. Cowin is being honored for her contributions as an editor and journalist.

"I feel very proud," she said.

Mitchell Davis, executive vice president of the James Beard Foundation, said approximately 20 names are submitted to the 230 members to select by ballot.

"The awards give the foundation an opportunity to recognize the contributions made by non-chefs," he said.

Other honorees

Also being honored this year are chef and author Grant Achatz of Chicago, a leader in molecular gastronomy and progressive cuisine; and Mark Bittman, journalist and author of the *Minimalist* cookbook se-



Daily News Photo by Chris Salata

Dana Cowin, editor in chief of 'Food & Wine' magazine, pictured at the Phillips Point Club in West Palm Beach, will be inducted into the James Beard Foundation's Who's Who of Food and Beverage Hall of Fame.

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COWIN

'There are more travel-related articles because people today travel to eat'

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ries and host of the *Bittman Takes on American Chefs* series on PBS.

Past inductees have included author Ruth Reichl, the last editor in chief of *Gourmet* before the magazine closed; author Kevin Zraly, who founded the Windows on the World Wine School; Ella Brennan, owner of Commander's Palace in New Orleans; Fritz Maytag, founder of Anchor Brewery and the maker of Maytag blue cheese; and authors Ariane and Michael Batterberry, who founded *The International Review of Food & Wine*, later renamed *Food & Wine*.

From kitchen to world

Cowin has had an eclectic background in the publishing world. Before coming to *Food & Wine* in 1995, she had been managing editor at *Mademoiselle* and *House & Garden*, and an associate editor at *Vogue*. This gave her a unique vantage point. Her vision for *Food & Wine* was to move it from the kitchen into the world, and turn it into a lifestyle publication.

"I wanted the magazine to have a modern point of view, (be) a publication for men and women," Cowin said. "I wanted to bring the best of the world to readers."

Food has become a lifestyle, a passion. There are more travel-related articles because people today travel to eat."

The magazine began to preview up-and-coming restaurants, promote young chefs and follow trends. It runs a kitchen that tests every recipe *Food & Wine* publishes and is constantly "bumping up" traditional recipes for the home cook. There are more travel-related articles now because the gourmet traveler is insatiable in his or her quest.

Like a family

Cowin said her management style is to run the magazine like a family. Her team at *Food & Wine* has been with her for more than 10 years.

People should be happy to come to work each day, Cowin said. She has a "fuzzies" program that includes asking well-known chefs to come to the office to give food demonstrations for the staff. For example, Jacques Torres spent an afternoon making a mountain of chocolate treats, and

Belvedere Vodka sent mixologists to whip up its latest cocktail recipes.

Booming brand

The *Food & Wine* brand includes the monthly magazine, circulation 925,000; its website FoodAndWine.com; mobile applications and iPad editions; and a books division, which published *Best of the Best Cookbook Recipes*, the *Food & Wine Wine Guide* and several other titles.

"Cookbooks are objects of beauty, collections of memories, dictionaries for

inspiration," Cowin said. "Instructional cooking videos move too fast, and they don't tell you enough."

The company also maintains a lending library for employees. Cowin also serves as editorial adviser to *Food & Wine China*, the publication's first international edition.