



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

February 20, 2014

Dear Friends:

It is a great pleasure to welcome everyone to the Italian Wine and Food Institute's 29<sup>th</sup> Annual *Gala Italia*.

I have always been proud of my Italian roots and all of the customs and traditions that come with them. One of the best parts of growing up Italian has to be the food and it's safe to say that I know a thing or two about great Italian cuisine. And that is why I am delighted that our city is once again hosting this exciting event that showcases the very best in Italian food and wine. For more than three decades, IWFI has worked to educate Americans about the high quality foods, wines, and products that proudly bear the "Made in Italy" stamp, and thanks to its annual *Gala Italia*, this organization has helped to preserve Italian culture in our city and beyond by highlighting top Italian restaurants, fashion, and music. With hundreds of exhibitors, this year's event is a terrific way to strengthen New York City's bond with the people of Italy, and I am proud to lend my support to this celebration of all things Italian.

On behalf of our great City, I offer my best wishes for a delicious evening and continued success. *Buon appetito!*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill de Blasio".

Bill de Blasio  
Mayor