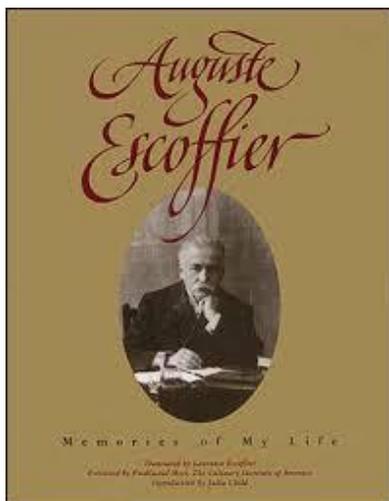


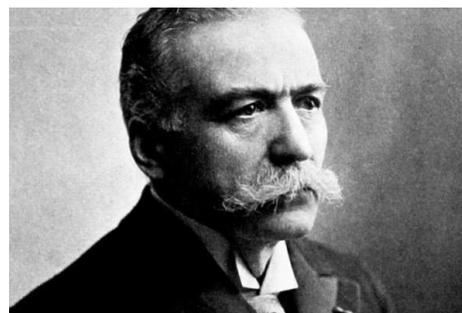
## Who was Auguste Escoffier ? (1849-1935)



In general, he was a famous chef, culinary writer and restaurant owner. He is given primary credit for popularizing traditional French cooking methods, and for making it accessible and simplified for the masses to use. He has a reputation for championing an orderly, clean, and well-run kitchen – efforts that had tremendous public health benefits. He also wrote an influential cookbook still used as a reference work, and invented a few famous French dishes, especially desserts named after women like *peach melba*. He worked early in his career at The Savoy, met the future founder of the Ritz hotel chain, Cesar Ritz and built a lifelong partnership.

In the 1930s an all-men's culinary society was formed, using his name as their inspiration: **Les Amis d'Escoffier**.

- Although he gets credit for formalizing French cooking, he based his work on that of an earlier chef. His primary contribution was making the other chef's work simpler and more accessible.
- In 1878, Escoffier married Delphine Daffis. *Escoffier apparently won her hand in a gamble with her father, publisher Paul Daffis, over a game of billiards.*
- In 1897, the Savoy Hotels board of directors began noticing their revenues were falling despite business increasing. They discreetly hired an auditing company who in turn hired a private investigation company who began secretly tailing Cesar Ritz and Escoffier. *They made a report to the board which detailed substantial evidence of fraud.*
- **Escoffier himself was chiefly guilty of taking bribes and kickbacks from suppliers (then a common practice, as it may still be in some big institutions). But there were huge sums involved – not much short of \$3 million in today's money.**
- Escoffier made payments to the Savoy to make up for the "astounding disappearance of huge amounts of wine and spirits in the first six months of 1897" as well as "the wine and spirits consumed in the same period by the managers, staff and employees. *The confessions added up to 15 counts of wrongdoing.*
- *Escoffier arranged for weekly skimming of food and supplies from the hotel which was sent to an unspecified address in another town. He spent most of his life living in a different country than his wife, and there was always heavy speculation that he had a 2<sup>nd</sup> family that he was feeding from hotel coffers.*



- *In January 1900 Ritz and Escoffier made signed confessions, admitting to actual criminal acts, including fraud. They never served jail time after making restitutorial payments to the hotel (which for obvious reasons preferred to keep the matter from public eyes).*
- *Never good with money, all his business ventures failed. He supported and educated a huge extended family, and died in 1935 in Monte Carlo, leaving almost nothing.*



Carol Brock, inspired by Boston's **Les Dames des Amis d'Escoffier** (the Ladies of the Men's Club of Escoffier) a dining society of women formed in 1959 as a subset of the all-male Boston chapter of Les Amis d'Escoffier, received a charter from the New York Chapter of Les Amis d'Escoffier in 1973. Her intent, however, was to garner visibility and elevate women in the culinary space. In 1976, Brock established the first chapter of Les Dames d'Escoffier as a response to inequalities of women working in the culinary industries; it was the first professional platform to promote and support women in the food, beverage and hospitality industries.

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**LDEI Mission** *To inspire, advance and support women in food, beverage and hospitality to achieve excellence in leadership and philanthropy. The by-invitation membership, composed of over 2,400 members in 45 chapters in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France and Mexico, is highly diversified and reflects the multifaceted fields of contemporary gastronomy and hospitality.*

**LDEI Vision** *To be the preeminent global professional association for women leaders in the food, beverage and hospitality industries.*



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#### ***Our Guiding Principles***

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- **Philanthropy:** We are committed to creating lasting change in our communities through focused philanthropy.
- **Diversity:** We celebrate the value of differences among people and cultures throughout the world, in our communities and in our Chapters.
- **Leadership and Professional Development:** We are committed to life-long learning, mentoring, career advancement and professional development for our members.
- **Professional Excellence:** We subscribe to the highest standards of professional conduct, ethics and integrity.
- **Innovation:** We are committed to assuring continuing relevance and influence in an ever-changing environment through adaptation, innovation and openness and responsiveness to change.

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#### ***Our Code of Ethics***

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- Support the Mission/Vision/Guiding Principles of LDEI and abide by the bylaws of both the organization and her local chapter.
- Will not use her membership or the name of the organization or her local chapter for her personal monetary advantage.
- Never allow the membership list of the organization or her local chapter to be sold or used for merchandising, promotional purposes or commercial endorsement outside of the organization and its partners.
- *Sponsor for membership only those individuals known to her to have high ethical standards and professional stature in the area of food, beverage, hospitality and other fields as they relate to these disciplines.*
- *Maintain the dignity and integrity of the organization and her local chapter by holding herself to the highest professional standards*

#### **LDEI Core Value:**

*Professional Excellence: We subscribe to the highest standards of professional conduct, ethics and integrity.*

**Auguste Escoffier would not qualify as a member under LDEI's Guiding Principles and Code of Ethics.**

***In 2020 as we make recommendations to embrace and celebrate the values of Diversity, Inclusion and Equity, and the integrity of our Guiding Principles, should our beloved Carol Brock's vision for "Les Dames de Culinaire" be linked, symbolically and literally, to a man with a criminal past and White Male Chefs Clubs?***



## Sources:

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- A [new BBC documentary on the chef](#) has unearthed signed confessions by both Escoffier and his colleague, Cesar Ritz (Ritz hotel chain), admitting to defrauding the Savoy Hotel to the tune of \$3 million. They stole over \$750,000 worth of wine and spirits from the Savoy-owned Carlton Hotel, but the majority of that \$3 million came to Escoffier in the form of kickbacks from the Savoy kitchen's suppliers.
- A whole book <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2018/07/19/ritzy-business/>
- The Telegraph is a respected British publication. Includes recent documentary on Escoffier. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/foodanddrink/9320918/The-master-chef-who-cooked-the-books.html>
- Sections: Fraud, The Savoy, Early Life (includes wife reference) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auguste\\_Escoffier?wprov=sfti1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auguste_Escoffier?wprov=sfti1)
- Auguste Escoffier appointed first honorary President WACS, 1928 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_Association\\_of\\_Chefs'\\_Societies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Association_of_Chefs'_Societies)
- All Male "Friends" - Les Amis d'Escoffier <http://www.escoffier-society.com/history.php>
- Les Dames d'Escoffier International website <http://www.ldei.org/>