



# Ambassador's Activities

2014

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Speech by HE Sylvie Bermann,  
French Ambassador to the United Kingdom

at the *Dîner des chefs*

organized by the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain (CCFGB)

London, 17 September 2014

*Monsieur le Président,*

Ladies and gentlemen,

It's a pleasure and an honour for me to join you, for the first time, at this *dîner des chefs*, at the Alain Ducasse restaurant at the Dorchester.

French gastronomy is known and recognized all over the world. It's been included on the world heritage list. This place is, of course, a magnificent illustration of it; it's a monument to the excellence of French cuisine, its ability to innovate and the values it transmits: sharing, pleasure, respect for the health of others, respect for the planet.

But in this global village, as you know, international competition always exists – increasingly so – and French gastronomy needs our support, your support. That's why I congratulate and thank the French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain for this excellent initiative, which I believe has become a tradition.

As you know, the French President has upgraded the promotion of tourism to a “major national cause”, and on 19 July, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, Laurent Fabius, decided to create five centres of excellence for France, with the aim of enhancing the profile and transparency of our offer and spurring us into action on shared priorities. The Minister chose gastronomy and wine tourism as the first centre of excellence.

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Several flagship initiatives will be launched in the coming months, under the coordination of the Quai d'Orsay. So I'm pleased to announce to you that on Thursday 19 March 2015, as winter turns to spring, the event "*Goût de France/Good France*" aims to bring together 1,000 chefs from five continents to promote French gastronomy. Each chef will be given clear specifications but will nevertheless be free to adapt French-inspired dishes to his or her market and produce. An international panel will be chaired by Alain Ducasse. This establishment, I suspect, might just be part of the operation! Obviously the French Residence will too. So I ask you to publicize this initiative and invite all London's French gastronomic restaurants to take part! The website where restaurants can apply will go live at the end of October.

Mr President, ladies and gentlemen,

Continuing our economic diplomacy will be one of the very top priorities of my mission in London. Gastronomy is of course only one aspect of France's savoir-faire and excellence, which we must promote together.

So I'd like to thank the Chamber once again for all the work it does for France's economic diplomacy in the United Kingdom and tell you that I'm committed to lending you my support over the coming months.

We must continue to grasp every opportunity together and play an active role in the UK, and not just in London. I think it's essential for businesses to know more about the remarkable economic opportunities existing throughout the country, regardless of tomorrow's referendum result! We'll have a chance to talk about this again soon.

Once again, thank you./.