

Most people know Rick Bayless from winning the title of Bravo's *Top Chef Masters*. His highly rated public television series, *Mexico: One Plate at a Time*, is broadcast coast to coast and his nine cookbooks have earned multiple high-profile accolades. The Government of Mexico has bestowed on Rick the Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle—the highest decoration bestowed on foreigners whose work has benefitted Mexico and its people.

Located in Chicago, Rick and Deann Bayless' Frontera Grill and Topolobampo have each received the "Outstanding Restaurant of the Year" designation from the James Beard Foundation — an unprecedented feat for side-by-side restaurants. Their wildly popular fast-casual Xoco debuted in 2009 and Tortas Frontera at Chicago's O'Hare airport has changed the face of airport dining. In 2016, they opened Frontera Cocina in Disney Springs. In 2018, Rick and Deann expanded their Clark Street restaurants by opening Bar Sótano, a Oaxacan-inspired mezcal bar with modern Mexican bar food led by daughter Lanie Bayless. Tortazo, Rick's fast-casual concept, debuted in 2020 in Chicago's iconic Willis Tower, with new outposts popping up in several locations, including Las Vegas.

In 2012 and again in 2014, Rick joined forces with Lookingglass Theatre Company to create *Cascabel*, the story of food's capacity to change lives. *Cascabel*'s audience shared a meal with the cast of actors, musicians, singers and circus performers as the tale of unrequited love resolved into magical beauty.

Always philanthropists, Rick and Deann established the Frontera Farmer Foundation in 2003 to support small Midwestern farms. To date, the Foundation has awarded nearly 200 grants totaling over \$3.5 million. In 2017, they established the Bayless Family Foundation to support the city's vibrant theater scene. Led by Kevin Sullivan, the foundation has awarded grants to Chicago theater companies totaling nearly \$4 million to date.

In 2019, Rick founded Impact Culinary Training, a restaurant job readiness program on the city's west side. Deann Bayless is one of the founding members of Let's Talk Women, an organization founded in the heart of the 2020 COVID pandemic to "...build the camaraderie, counsel, visibility, bargaining and economic power of its women entrepreneurs."