



## CANADIAN CULINARY CHAMPIONSHIPS: A CELEBRATION OF CANADIAN EXCELLENCE

January 17, 2008

Toronto, ON: Who will be named Canada's Best Chef? The answer will be revealed during the Canadian Culinary Championships held in Toronto February 7, 8 and 9, as seven regional winners from cities across the country meet to compete. Culinary aficionados are invited to experience the three-day competition that brings together Canada's leading chefs, Olympic and Paralympic athletes and culminates in an exciting podium finish. Justin Trudeau, Honourary ambassador, Jim Cuddy of Blue Rodeo, actor Sonja Smits and Olympic gold medalist Curt Harnett are just some of the celebrities attending this weekend celebration of Canadian excellence.

Vying for top honours this year are seven of Canada's most inspired, passionate and talented chefs:

**Melissa Craig** of Bearfoot Bistro in Whistler (Vancouver)

**Paul Rogalski** of Rouge (Calgary)

**Judy Wu** of Wild Tangerine (Edmonton)

**Anthony Walsh** of Canoe (Toronto)

**Michael Moffatt** of Beckta Dining and Wine (Ottawa-Gatineau)

**Roland Ménard** of Manoir Hovey (Montréal)

**Martin Ruiz Salvador** of Fleur de Sel (Halifax)

### **The Black Box Competition – Thursday, February 7**

Leading off the competition is the spirited Black Box challenge where chefs are led away into a "cone of silence" then brought forth one by one to the competition kitchens where each will be handed the Black Box containing six secret ingredients. Iron Chef-style, they will have one hour to create two dishes for each of the judges, using all the ingredients from the box and anything they wish from the communal pantry. This is always the most exciting and intense part of the Championships, when stress levels and sometimes tempers run high.

*This competition will be held at George Brown College, Adelaide East campus beginning at 6 p.m.*

### **Mystery Wine-Pairing Competition - Friday, February 8**

Prior to this event, each chef is given an unlabelled bottle of the 2007 Canadian Culinary Championship's "mystery wine" with instructions to create a dish that would perfectly match the wine and a small sum of money with which to buy ingredients.

This competition demands that each chef stretch their dollar and explain why they believe their dish is perfectly paired with the wine. Chefs then present their dishes for guests to taste and vote on.

There will be entertainment – the amazing Dr. Eugene Draw – and Honourary judges such as Jim Cuddy of Blue Rodeo joining the party.

The surprise guest is the winemaker who created the mystery wine and who will present the ***Great Unveiling*** later in the evening.

*The Mystery Wine-Pairing Competition will be held at The Century Room Night Club, King St. West beginning at 6 p.m.*

### **Grande Finale Saturday - February 9**

David Lawrason, wine writer and critic, and National Wine Advisor to Gold Medal Plates, will be presenting medal winning wines from the top ten wineries at the 2007 Canadian Wine Awards. Each of the chefs will be preparing one dish at his or her food station for everyone to taste, paired with his or her chosen wine from any winery in Canada. Star-studded entertainment and a host of celebrities round out this exciting final event.

After that, the judges' marks for the whole weekend are tabulated and the winning chef will be crowned 2007 Canadian Culinary Champion. Apart from the prestige of being named the winner of Canada's most significant national culinary competition, the Canadian Culinary Champion will go on to be Executive Chef for a day at Olympic Village, cooking for the athletes during the Vancouver Winter Olympic Games in 2010.

*The Grande Finale event happens at the Arcadian Court, atop the Bay at Queen and Yonge Streets beginning at 6 p.m.*

In addition to the competitive elements of the weekend, guests can enjoy a number of exclusive culinary adventures including:

**Friday February 8, 10 a.m.:** An exclusive, behind-the-scenes wine tasting tour of the Niagara region led by David Lawrason. This package includes transportation, all wine tastings and a gourmet lunch. Guests will be back in time for the Wine Pairing competition.

**Saturday, February 9, 12 noon:** Celebrate Chinese New Year with a spectacular dim sum lunch specially prepared for guests by Lai Wah Heen's dim sum master, Terrence Chan, widely regarded as the best dim sum chef in Canada. Metropolitan Hotel, Chestnut St.

**Saturday, February 9, 3 pm:** For the single malt aficionados, join James Chatto for rare and exquisite single malt Scotch whiskies while discussing the fine art of distillation. Soho Met Hotel on Wellington St. W.

Tickets are still available to attend the full weekend of events and competition, or on an individual event basis. Price list as follows:

Full weekend: \$895 + tax

Niagara Wine Tour: \$250 + tax

Black Box Competition - Thursday: \$100 + tax

Dim Sum at Lai Wah Heen: \$85 + tax

Wine Pairing Event - Friday: \$150 + tax

Single Malt Scotch Tasting: \$75 + tax

Grande Finale: \$295 + tax

Since its inception, Gold Medal Plates has donated more than \$2 million to support Canadian Olympic and Paralympic athletes and has elevated the profile of Canadian cuisine and wine. For more information visit [www.goldmedalplates.com](http://www.goldmedalplates.com)

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