



**For immediate release  
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## **PLAYHOUSE WINE FESTIVAL CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE: TRADE COMPETITION WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

**Vancouver, British Columbia....**The 2009 Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival has announced the winners of its seven trade competitions. Winners were honoured at the *6<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Lunch* on Friday, March 27, 2009. "The trade competitions give the Festival an opportunity to honour and celebrate those professionals who have developed and enhanced the extraordinary wine and food culture of this region," said Festival Executive Director **Harry Hertscheg**.

### **SPIRITED INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL (SIP) AWARD**

The fourth annual **Spirited Industry Professional Award** went to **John Schreiner**, wine writer, Chair of the Festival's Winery Selection Committee, and a leading expert on British Columbia wines. The SIP Award annually honours an individual who has made a significant contribution to the sales, service or promotion of wine in British Columbia. The prize is a Trade Super Pass to the 2010 Wine Festival.

### **SOMMELIER OF THE YEAR AWARD**

The 10th annual **Sommelier of the Year Award**, which recognizes outstanding wine knowledge and wine service, went to **Andrea Vescovi**, sommelier at Blue Water Café + Raw Bar. The Award is voted on by members of the industry, and in years where the vote is close – such as 2009 – the top three candidates are asked to send in a one-page brief on their wine program for a tie-breaking vote. "I am absolutely delighted with the choice of Andrea as the winner of the Sommelier of the Year for 2009," says Mark Davidson, a member of the awards committee. "He has been going quietly about his business for many years and epitomises all the qualities of a true professional in our field." The award is sponsored by the International Sommelier Guild of Canada.

### **WINE LIST AWARDS**

Restaurants in Metro Vancouver, Whistler, Vancouver Island, the Interior and Alberta have been recognized for creating wine lists that complement their establishment's unique menu and concept. Candidates submitted their wine lists and menus for consideration and judges visited the restaurants to review the programs. Recipients received Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze or Honourable Mention awards. The Wine List Awards are sponsored by *Vancouver Magazine* and the Playhouse Winefest.

“This competition is not just about creating a great wine list, it’s about developing a thoughtful program that successfully marries food and wine and trains staff who can enthusiastically share with their customers what it means to eat and drink harmoniously,” said Festival Awards Producer Sonia Fraser.

## **METRO VANCOUVER**

### **Platinum**

Blue Water Café + Raw Bar, Vancouver  
West Restaurant, Vancouver

### **Gold**

C Restaurant, Vancouver  
Chambar Belgian Restaurant, Vancouver  
CinCin, Vancouver  
Cioppino’s Mediterranean Grill + Enoteca, Vancouver  
Fuel Restaurant, Vancouver  
Salt Tasting Room, Vancouver  
Vij’s, Vancouver

### **Silver**

Cactus Club Café  
The Fish House in Stanley Park, Vancouver  
The Observatory at Grouse Mountain, North Vancouver  
Pearl on the Rock, White Rock  
Province Marinaside, Vancouver  
La Quercia, Vancouver  
Rangoli, Vancouver  
Seymour Golf & Country Club, North Vancouver  
YEW restaurant + bar, Vancouver

### **Bronze**

The Beach House, West Vancouver  
Bistrot Bistro, Vancouver  
Bravo Restaurant & Lounge, Chilliwack  
Brix Restaurant & Wine Bar, Vancouver  
Diva at the Met, Vancouver  
Earl’s Restaurants  
The Flying Tiger, Vancouver  
Joe Fortes Seafood & Chop House, Vancouver  
Goldfish Pacific Kitchen, Vancouver  
Gramercy Grill, Vancouver  
Gudrun, Richmon  
Lift Bar Grill View, Vancouver  
Nu Restaurant + Lounge, Vancouver  
Onyx Steakhouse & Lounge, White Rock

Pair Bistro, Vancouver  
The Salmon House, West Vancouver  
La Terrazza, Vancouver  
Zest Japanese Cuisine, Vancouver

**Honourable Mention**

Hart House Restaurant, Burnaby  
Haus Uropa Restaurant, Gibsons  
restaurant 62, Abbotsford  
Tomato Fresh Food Café, Vancouver  
The William Tell Restaurant, Vancouver

**WHISTLER**

**Gold**

Araxi Restaurant + Bar

**Silver**

Rimrock Café  
The Wine Room at The Fairmont Chateau Whistler

**VANCOUVER ISLAND**

**Platinum**

Sooke Harbour House, Sooke

**Silver**

Atrevida Restaurant, Galiano  
Il Terrazzo, Victoria

**Bronze**

The Landing West Coast Grill, NanOOSE Bay  
Nautical Nellies Steak & Seafood House, Victoria  
Panache at Bear Mountain Resort, Victoria  
The Pacific Restaurant, Victoria

**Honourable Mention**

Stage Wine Bar, Victoria

**INTERIOR**

**Bronze**

All Seasons Café, Nelson  
Sal's Prime Steakhouse, Kelwona

**Honourable Mention**

The Rotten Grape, Kelwona

## **ALBERTA**

### **Platinum**

Divino Wine & Cheese Bistro, Calgary

### **Gold**

Catch Restaurant, Calgary

The Living Room, Calgary

### **Silver**

River Café, Calgary

### **Bronze**

Chef's Table at Kensington Riverside Inn, Calgary

Raw Bat at the Arts, Calgary

### **Honourable Mention**

La Ronde, Edmonton

## **SOMMELIER CHALLENGE**

The winner of 2009 Puddifoot Award or Sommelier Challenge is **Keith Nicholson** from **Le Crocodile**. Keith received a Riedel carafe, a bottle of Vintage Port and the coveted Puddifoot Award, presented at the Riedel at the Restaurant seminar on Friday, March 27.

## **FETZER presents GREAT BEGINNINGS – BEST NEW FLAVOURS OF THE CITY**

**Ryan Mah** of **Joe Fortes Seafood & Chophouse** is the 2009 winner of Great Beginnings – Best New Flavours of the City. This annual competition presented by Fetzer asks chefs to put their food and wine pairing talents to the test with an appetizer matched to a Fetzer Vineyards wine of their choice. The restaurants showcased their creations at Great Beginnings – Best New Flavours of the City on Wednesday, March 25 at The Fairmont Waterfront Hotel where the final judgment was made.

## **QUADY DESSERT COMPETITION**

**Nadin Buehrer** of **Thomas Haas Fine Chocolates & Patisserie** won the 21st annual **Quady Dessert Competition** for the original dessert creation "Au Coeur du Saveur." Entrants were judged by a panel of industry experts on how well their original creation paired with Quady Essensia, an orange Muscat dessert wine, as well as on presentation, technique and practicality. Chef Buehrer's prize is a trip for two to the Quady winery in California and a horseback camping trip to the High Sierra Mountains in California. Tomiko Mayede of the Terminal City Club placed second with "Chi" and Hitomi Syvertsen of the Pan Pacific Hotel was third with "Enjoué." Kim Dennis of Northwest Culinary Academy was the top student in the competition. The competition is sponsored by Quady Winery and PlanitBC.com. For photos of the 10 finalists' creations visit [www.planitbc.com](http://www.planitbc.com).

## **VINTNERS BRUNCH FOOD & WINE PAIRING CONTEST**

The 2009 Wine Festival closed with one final award, presented at Vintners Brunch, the venerable Sunday brunch that marks the denouement of the Playhouse Wine Festival. A panel of wine and food experts sequestered themselves to determine which chef's dish paired best with the selected wine. This year's well-deserved winner was **Executive Chef Blair Rasmussen** of the host venue, the **Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre**, for his **Slow Braised Bison Short Rib "Do Pizaza" with Crispy Vegetable Pakoras and Raita**, paired with **Pierre Sparr Gewürztraminer Sélection 2007**, a match that had the room buzzing. The contest was presented by *EAT Magazine*.

The 2009 Wine Festival, which ran **March 23-29**, featured **183 wineries from 15 countries serving more than 1700 wines at 61 events** across the city. Approximately 25,000 consumers and trade professionals attended the festival, which highlighted the wines of British Columbia as the theme region and Pinot(s) as the global focus. For more information, visit [www.playhousewinefest.com](http://www.playhousewinefest.com).

The Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival is a fundraiser for the Playhouse Theatre Company and is generously sponsored by The Shore Club.

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