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VANCOUVER PLAYHOUSE
INTERNATIONAL
WINE FESTIVAL 
Mar 28 - Apr 3, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PLAYHOUSE WINE FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2011 TRADE COMPETITION AWARD WINNERS

Vancouver, BC, April 1st, 2011 – The Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival announced this year's trade competition winners at the 8th Annual Awards Lunch on Friday, April 1st, 2011. "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 our region," says Festival Executive Director Harry Hertscheg. In honour of the awards, guests enjoyed lunch prepared by culinary talent Blair Rasmussen, Executive Chef to the VCC, and toasted winners with wines from Spain, this year's Festival theme region.

SPIRITED INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL (SIP) AWARD

The Spirited Industry Professional Award annually honours an individual who has made a significant contribution to the sales, service or promotion of wine in British Columbia. The sixth annual SIP Award goes to internationally acclaimed food and wine critic, **Jurgen Gothe**. Gothe has seen his columns run in over 100 publications over the past few decades, and is currently the weekly wine columnist for the *Georgia Straight*. After 23 years hosting CBC Radio Two's *DiscDrive*, Gothe retired as the station's only double-gold-medal winning program host. Today, he does weekly spots for CBC on everything oenophilic, and can also be found on The Peak FM airwaves commenting on BC's local flavours.

SOMMELIER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The 11th annual Sommelier of the Year Award recognizes outstanding wine knowledge and wine service. This year's award goes to **Owen Knowlton** for his 500+ wine list at West restaurant, which also took one of the most coveted accolades in the trade competition: the Platinum Wine List Award. Driven to provide West guests wine that is high in value and quality (with a splash of boutique bottles and sommelier favorites), Knowlton has been sipping, spitting, and perfecting his wine knowledge over the last decade. The Sommelier of the Year is awarded based on votes by key members in the industry and is also included in the May Restaurant issue of *Vancouver Magazine*.

WINE LIST AWARDS

Celebrating the best food and wine pairings in the business, restaurants in Metro Vancouver, Whistler, Vancouver Island, the Interior and Alberta have all been recognized for creating wine lists that complement their establishment's unique menu and concept. Candidates submitted

their wine and menu lists, and were then visited by judges who reviewed their programs. The top restaurants were awarded Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze, or commended with an Honourable Mention. The Wine List Awards are sponsored by *Vancouver Magazine*.

METRO VANCOUVER

Platinum

Blue Water Café + raw bar

West Restaurant

Gold

C Restaurant

Cioppino's Mediterranean Grill & Enoteca

CinCin

Wine Room at Joey Bentall One

L'Abattoir

Au Petit Chavignol

Salt Tasting Room

Silver

Cactus Club Cafe

Provence Marinaside

The Observatory

The Salmon House

Zest Japanese Cuisine

Chambar

Bronze

ShuRaku Sake Bar & Bistro

Poor Italian Ristorante

Lift Bar Grill View

Yew Restaurant + Bar

Raincity Grill

Joe Fortes Seafood and Chop House

Honourable Mention

Goldfish Pacific Kitchen

Gramercy Grill

Joey Restaurants

Hart House Restaurant (Burnaby)

WHISTLER

Gold

RimRock Cafe Whistler

Silver

Araxi Restaurant + Bar

Honourable Mention

Ric's Grill

VANCOUVER ISLAND AND GULF ISLANDS

Silver

The Pacific Restaurant (Victoria)

Bronze

Nautical Nellies Restaurant (Victoria)

Stage Small Plates Wine Bar (Victoria)

Veneto (Victoria)

Honourable Mention

The Landing West Coast Grill (NanOOSE Bay)

The Marina Restaurant (Victoria)

BC INTERIOR

Silver

La Bussola (Kelowna)

Honourable Mention

Emerald Lake Lodge (Field)

Local Lounge . Grille (Summerland)

The Restaurant at Painted Boat (Madera Park)

Whitetooth Mountain Bistro (Golden)

ALBERTA

Gold

Divino Wine & Cheese Bistro (Calgary)

River Café (Calgary)

Vin Room (Calgary)

Silver

Cilantro (Calgary)

Bronze

The Ranche Restaurant (Calgary)

Ric's Lounge and Grill (Calgary)

Honourable Mention

Taste (Calgary)

Ric's Grill Steakhouse (Grande Prairie)

WINE PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE

The Wine Professional Challenge gives sommeliers and wine professionals a chance to compete for the coveted Puddifoot Award. Currently in its sixth year, competitors were required to rotate around 5 judging stations and speak for 3 minutes on topics related to technical and varietal distinctions, flight tasting and customer service. This year, the challenge winner was **Jay Whiteley** of Hawksworth Restaurant. The Wine Professional Challenge is sponsored by Puddifoot.

FETZER GREAT BEGINNINGS WINE & APPETIZER CHALLENGE

Vancouver's top chefs vied for gold on Wednesday night at Fetzer Great Beginnings, Flavours of the City. Chefs from Bearfoot Bistro, One Hundred Nights at OPUS Hotel Vancouver, Cibo Trattoria, DiVino Wine Bar, Sandbar, Diva at the Met, Prestons, Terminal City Club, and Uli's Restaurant all vied for top prize from a panel of judges that included the city's top food and wine journalists. This year's award for best food and wine pairing went to **Diva at the Met Executive Sous Chef Jeff Kang**.

QUADY DESSERT COMPETITION

The Quady Winery of Madera California hosted the 23rd Annual Quady Dessert Competition, inviting British Columbia's top pastry chefs, cooks and students to complement their orange muscat dessert wine, *Essensia*. At stake was a Grand Prize trip for two to California, as well as Silver and Bronze Prizes and Certificates of Merit for the top 10 competitors. First Place went to **Lisa Ip** of the Four Seasons Hotel, Second Place and Top Student from the Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts went to **Maria Darquier**, while **Michael Gelinis** of Thomas Haas Fine Chocolates & Patisserie took Third. Competitors were judged on taste, wine pairing with *Essensia*, technique, presentation, and practicality by a respected panel of pastry chefs, executive chefs, sommeliers and food and wine media.

ABOUT THE PLAYHOUSE WINE FESTIVAL

The Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival, Canada's premier wine show, runs

from March 28th to April 3rd, 2011. The Playhouse Wine Festival is one of the biggest and oldest wine festival events in the world. In 2011, the theme region will be Spain and the global focus, Fortified Wine. The Festival features a week of special events including the Bacchanalia Gala Dinner + Auction, wine seminars, wine minglers, winery dinners, and lunches and brunches at fine restaurants and hotels. The Playhouse Wine Festival is produced by the Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival Society, which has three mandates: provide an informative, educational and entertaining wine experience for public and trade; be a premier marketing opportunity for the wine industry and Festival partners; and raise funds for the Vancouver Playhouse Theatre Company. Since its inception in 1979, the Festival has raised over \$7.2 million to enable Western Canada's leading theatre company to mount 223 productions and develop extensive community outreach and educational programs.

The Shore Club generously presents the Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival.

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