

Local ingredients inspire Fairmont Whistler chef

By Kathryn Reed



WHISTLER, British Columbia – “Bring on the Games” is Vincent Stufano’s approach to the Olympics, which begin this week in his native country.

Stufano, who hails from Montreal, is the executive chef at the Fairmont Chateau Whistler.

Fortunate for him, his favorite Olympic sport, the luge, can almost be seen from where he works. The course is up the mountain a short ways just outside of the Blackcomb side of the mega-resort.

Here is what the chef has to say:

LTN: What are some of the locally grown-raised ingredients used in your dishes? How does using these items make your food better?

Stufano: Some of my favorite locally grown ingredients from neighboring Pemberton area are pumpkins, potatoes, sunchokes, quince, crones, cherries, white peaches, poultry, beef, hazelnuts and chestnuts; fresh seafood from the coast. Using the locally grown ingredients is great because it allows for us to receive the products at the optimal time of freshness and ripeness.

LTN: Food seems to be a bigger component for people as they

travel, no matter the destination. As people's food tastes have become more developed-sophisticated through the years, do you notice having to change the menu or be more innovative? Do you try to keep up with other resorts-restaurants?

Stufano: People seem to be looking for comfort food that is to a higher standard and incorporates flavors they recognize. I don't try to keep up with others. They try to keep up with me. *(He smiles.)*

LTN: In the era of celebrity chefs, do you see destinations like Whistler buying into this? The Ritz-Carlton at Northstar-at-Tahoe has Traci des Jardines. Does a well-known chef bring people to the table?

Stufano: I think people like the "celebrity" aspect but I simply do not know if Whistler will follow in this trend. We will have to wait and see.

LTN: When you aren't cooking for others, what do you fix for yourself, your family?

Stufano: We enjoy comfort foods and simple meals. We try to use organic local ingredients from the farmers market and the area, and be health conscious.

LTN: Do you have plans to create dishes specifically for any of the athletes? Who and what? Or any special dishes for people coming for the Olympics?

Stufano: At this time there are no special requests coming in, however, we are very excited for when the Games arrive and those special requests start coming in. We are pretty equipped to make anything happen and we are looking forward to the challenges ahead. We thrive on the busy and chaotic times and love the challenges, the more the better. There will be a nightly buffet in The Wildflower and I will be designing it to meet the needs of all the different cultures and nationalities that will be staying with us with a variety of dishes and

different themes each night.

Below is one of Stufano's signature dishes. Susan Wood was *LTN's* taste tester at the Wildflower last month. She is ready to go back just for the meal.

Vincent Stufano's Cedar Roast Salmon



Cedar Roast
Salmon

Serves 4 people

In the Wildflower restaurant, this salmon is glazed with Maple Syrup, which has been aged in our very own Canadian Oak Whiskey Barrels, served with roasted Pemberton Farm Fingerling potatoes and lightly steamed seasonal vegetables.

Qty	Size	Ingredient
4	6 oz	Salmon portion (We recommend Wild Sockeye)
4		Cedar Papers (soaked in warm water)
2	Tbsp	Olive oil
Cure for Salmon		
1	Cup	Kosher Salt
4	Oz	Maple syrup
1	Lemon	Zest only
1	Orange	Zest only
½	Tsp	Fresh cracked black pepper
Fingerling Potatoes		
1	Lbs	Fingerling potatoes (If available we recommend local Pemberton Farm)
2	Tbsp	Pommery Mustard
To Taste		Sea salt
To taste		Fresh cracked black pepper
2	Tbsp	Olive oil
Vegetables		
1	Lbs	Fresh seasonal vegetables
		(We recommend haricot verte & sugar snaps peas)
2	Tbsp	Extra virgin olive oil
		Fine herbs (flat leaf parsley, chervil & thyme leaves)
To Taste		Sea salt
To Taste		Fresh cracked black pepper
Red Onion Marmalade		
1	Medium	Red onion
4	Oz	Red wine vinegar
4	Oz	Honey
2	Sprig	Fresh thyme

For Maple Syrup:

First Chef Stufano purchases old Oak Whiskey 200 L barrels and soaks them in water until the wood has expanded enough to seal the barrel to prevent maple syrup from leaking out. A bottle of whiskey is then poured into each barrel. Four times daily, Chef checks the barrel stirring the whiskey and changes the angle in which the barrel sits. This process continues for two weeks. Maple syrup is then poured into the barrels along with a fresh bottle of whiskey and is left to sit for two months. When aging is completed Chef uses this maple syrup to glaze the Cedar Roast Salmon.

Salmon Method:

combine salmon cure ingredients in a large bowl

spread a thin layer of cure on a baking sheet

place salmon portions top side down on cure for one hour

remove from cure and wipe off excess cure

in large skillet heat olive oil and lightly sear bottom side of salmon

wrap soaked cedar paper and tie with butchers twine

place salmon in 350 degree oven and bake for 5-7 minutes

Pemberton Farm Fingerling Potatoes:

toss halved potatoes with seasoning and olive oil

roast in oven till tender and toss with pommery mustard

Seasonal Vegetables:

lightly steam vegetables and toss with olive oil, seasoning and fine herbs

Red Onion Marmalade:

julienne onion and place in small sauce pot

cover with honey, red wine vinegar and thyme sprigs

bring to simmer and reduce until liquid become a syrup like consistency

Plating:

evenly divide potatoes and vegetables between 4 plates

cut string and pull back paper topped with a spoon of red onion marmalade

garnish plate with a little garnish of some Maple Syrup and extra virgin olive oil