

LT Autumn Food and Wine Fest lines up slew of chefs

The Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival is celebrating a milestone – 25 years – Sept. 10-12.

Culinary aficionados and hungry travelers can return to the cobbled streets at the Village at Northstar in Truckee for chef battles, free cooking demonstrations, along with wine seminars.

Visitors can join in with noted celebrity chefs, presenters and vintners, including a special Celebrity Chef Luncheon with Chef Traci Des Jardins of Manzanita at the Ritz-Carlton Highlands; a live cooking demonstration with Chef Joseph Keller of Bouchon at Yountville, Las Vegas and Beverly Hills; outdoor grilling with Chef Lars Kronmark, a chef instructor at the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone in the Napa Valley; cooking demonstrations with Jason Gronlund, former executive chef with Tabasco; and Lake Tahoe's Chef Michael Plapp of Baxter's Bistro & Lounge; kids' cooking class with Chef Lara Ritchie of Nothing To It Culinary Center in Reno; food and wine pairing seminar with Roger King of Suisun Valley Vintners and Growers Association; Silver Oak Cellars vertical wine tasting and Olivier Napa Valley food and wine pairing with Silver Oak Senior Wine Educator Kim Caffrey; and the Charbay Artisan Winery & Distillery Annual Launch Party with Marko & Jenni Karakasevic.

The 25th festival will also host a number of other events and programs, such as a Grape Stomp, 25th Anniversary Welcome Reception at the Ritz-Carlton Highlands, Lake Tahoe; sushi rolling class with Mikuni Japanese Restaurant & Sushi Bar; a Gourmet Marketplace Vendor Fair; Plein Air Painters, Art & Sculpture Show; a Wine Walk, Blazing Pans Mountain Chef Cook-Off (Iron Chef style) and a Chocolate Class, as well as live

entertainment and winemaker dinners throughout the week.

The weekend culminates with the Grand Tasting and Culinary Competition, when dozens of regional chefs serve their finest creations paired with premium California and international wines. An auction of unique wines and libations follows.

Guests can come early to take advantage of the region's most delicious week and its exceptional values by attending the inaugural Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week (Sept. 5-12), when more than 30 of the area's best bistros, eateries and resorts are offering 3-course prix-fixe menus for \$20, \$30 and \$40 per person.

Many of this year's Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival events, including the cooking classes, are free. Ticketed events range from \$20 to \$90 and are on sale now.

For more information, call 888.229.2193 or go to www.TahoeFoodandWine.com. Special room rates will also be available during the festival, click to the North Lake Tahoe Visitors Bureaus' website, www.GoTahoeNorth.com, and then Cool Deals.

The Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival is a fundraiser for the Community Fund of North Lake Tahoe through the nonprofit Truckee Tahoe Community Foundation.