



draft release.

## *2009 West Coast Chocolate Festival: The Box of Chocolates has been Reopened!*

September 2009

*Coquitlam, BC*

Stimulate your senses and feed your soul at this year's West Coast Chocolate Festival, a flavourful and enlightening array of events and experiences October 15 to November 10, 2009 in Coquitlam, Port Moody & Port Coquitlam, and this year expanding to locations around the Lower Mainland, **including Pacific Institute of Culinary Arts at Granville Island** and the new Delta Hotel in Burnaby.

First launched in 2002, the Festival continues its unique high caliber chocolate-themed adult and all-ages events that reflect emerging trends such as culinary tourism, experiential travel, small affordable indulgences, and a rapidly increasing appreciation of the healthy benefits of good – preferably dark – chocolate.

Back by popular demand is the Festival's signature trio of alcohol and chocolate pairing evenings: **Scotch and Chocolate**, **Beer and Chocolate**, and **Wines, Chocolates and Liqueurs**. Sophisticated pairings are led by experts such as John Gerum of West Coast Wine Education, Marcus Von Albrecht of Mava Foods, and Colin Jack of Just Here for the Beer, as well as numerous knowledgeable chocolate experts. Each event includes tasting notes on the beverages and chocolates presented, and follow the reserved seating format preferred by past festival-goers. This year, a special wine and chocolate pairing evening also takes place at the new Club Illia restaurant located atop Burnaby Mountain in SFU's UniverCity.

New this year is a unique and innovative afternoon event fusing two classically elegant delights: tea and chocolate. **A Tealicious Chocolate Tasting** will take place October 25 at Port Coquitlam's Gathering Place, and November 1 at the new Tealicious Heritage Teahouse in Port Moody.

Always keen to help people appreciate the finer points of the 'food of the gods,' the Festival again offers its **School of Chocolate**. Appropriate for all ages, guests learn about the history, growing and making of chocolate, and are led through a progressed tasting of various types of chocolate. Check the festival website for various dates, times and locations. This event is suitable for presentation at community centers or other locations with a minimum number of guests. Contact the festival to see about scheduling a location close to you.

This not-for-profit festival remains an ambitious, dynamic, volunteer-driven operation dedicated to providing work and mentorship experiences for youth while showcasing emerging talent in the local arts and chocolate industries. The Festival offers something for everyone, and upholds the idea that adults *want* to support kids. At the West Coast Chocolate Festival they do it by just showing up for chocolate.

The Festival's successes are many— half of all attendees come from outside the host region, the majority of events sell out each year, and the festival continues to have a growing annual attendance averaging 1700-2500. The West Coast Chocolate Festival has been the subject of two overseas university projects, has a website that ranks #1 on nearly all major search engines, and was recently recognized for its contribution to making the Tri-Cities a youth-friendly community with a 2008 R.E.A.C.H award.

Six successful years— and a host of high-profile sponsors, many in-kind— has helped prove that the vision has a future. With assistance from CTV, CKNW, JACK-FM, Thrifty Foods, Chapters, Rubens Chocolate & Chocolate Works, Rogers' Chocolates, Sutton Place Hotel, Charlie's Chocolate Factory, BC Chefs' Association, Minuteman Press, Summerhill Pyramid Winery, Purdy's Chocolates, Executive Plaza Hotel, Coast Capital Savings, Starbucks, and so many more, the festival has been made possible by partners who share the vision of empowering youth and providing valuable experiences that will benefit them for years to come.

If this—and chocolate— appeal to you, more information about sponsorship opportunities, event details, and ticket purchasing can be found on the website.

©The 2009 West Coast Chocolate Festival: 604.939.8068  
[chocolatefestival.ca](http://chocolatefestival.ca) / [festivalduchocalat.ca](http://festivalduchocalat.ca)