



Contact: Joanna Leung  
Tel: (778)882-1216  
E-mail: [jleungf@alumni.sfu.ca](mailto:jleungf@alumni.sfu.ca)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.

***A CHOCOLATE FESTA: ENGAGING THE SENSES AND THE SOUL  
WITH THE AROMA OF COCOA***

The 5th annual West Coast Chocolate Festival, a celebration of chocolate and all that it inspires, takes place October 13-19 and November 4, 2006 in the Coquitlam, Port Moody, and Port Coquitlam area of the BC Lower Mainland. Promising new and traditional chocolate tastes to delight the 'senses and the soul', the festival's added mission is to create mentored work experiences and training opportunities for youth.

New to the festival this year, is **Just Here For the Beer... & Chocolate!**, October 14, 7:30pm at Hollywood's Garage in Port Coquitlam. "There's so much more to beer than just a means to an end and an empty glass," said Colin Jack, beer expert and owner of "*Just Here For The Beer*" who is leading the event. Colin will show you how to pair the irresistible taste of chocolates with the perfect, unique beers to create a new distinct experience for chocolate lovers.

The festival's very popular *Chocolate, Port & More* pairing evenings have evolved and now ***Wine, Chocolates & Liqueurs*** takes their place as more and more unique chocolate and wine combinations are found. Choose from three separate sessions, each with a slightly different product line-up: Oct. 14 at Place des Arts, Coquitlam, Oct. 17 at Evergreen Cultural Centre, Coquitlam, and Oct. 19 at Port Moody Arts Centre, Port Moody. Sommelier John Gerum has created the line-ups and presents the pairings, with Starbucks baristas leading the paired coffee sampling that follows the wines and chocolates.

***All Things Chocolate***, Executive Plaza Hotel, Coquitlam, October 15, 11am – 4pm, features booths with samplings/demos, a Chocolate Dream Dessert Buffet, plus continuous stage demonstrations from award-winning chocolatiers Wim Tas of ChocolaTas, Rogers' Chocolates head chocolatiers, George Graham, Thrifty Foods-Coquitlam and more. John Gerum of West Coast Wine Education and Colin Jack along with *Just Here for the Beer* experts will present wine-chocolate and beer-chocolate pairing mini-sessions.

The **Chocolate Pamper Party** is back, Oct 13, 7:30PM, at the Best Western Coquitlam Inn, in Coquitlam. Mini-spa treatments, massage, yoga and chocolate dipping feed the soul, while free pole dancing and salsa lessons get the fun factor going.

**Chocolate Factory Tours**, October 14, 12 – 4 pm, are hosted by Chocolate Works, in Coquitlam, providing chocolate lovers the perfect opportunity to see the manufacturing of this “food of gods” behind the scene. Chocolate sampling follows the tours, led by specially-trained Centennial Secondary students also gaining valuable work experience.

Pitt River Middle School joins the festival and the seniors in Port Coquitlam to create this year’s Willy Wonka-themed **Chocolate Chip Pancake Breakfast**, Oct. 14, 8-11 AM at Wilson Centre, a little Saturday morning fun for *all* ages.

Wrapping up the festival November 4 is **Chocolat ce Soir**, a unique 5-course meal with paired wines, a floor show, and of course – chocolate! This year’s celebrity chef, James Kennedy, brings a wealth of experience to the meal design and preparation, and local culinary arts students will be chosen to gain valuable work experience prepping the meal with him. Heritage Woods tourism students once again receive 5-star hotel banquet training from festival sponsor, John Gerum, and will set up the venue and serve the meal. “Last year this event was truly magical!” says festival coordinator Linda Baker. “People just couldn’t stop raving about it – the exquisite food, the perfectly-paired wines, and the amazing work done by the students. What a win-win – for the guests and the students involved.”

The West Coast Chocolate Festival inspires and entertains through events that celebrate the magic of chocolate and appeal to the senses and the soul. The events facilitate mentored work experiences and training opportunities for youth, as well as creating presentation opportunities for emerging artists and performers.

More information at [www.chocolatefestival.ca](http://www.chocolatefestival.ca). Tickets on sale at Chapters-Pinetree Village, Thrifty Foods-Austin & Mariner (free Rogers’ Chocolate bar with purchase), and online at the festival’s website.

Linda Baker  
Festival Co-ordinator  
604-939-8068