

Famous BC Chefs Bring Big Personalities and Amazing Tastes to Mt. Washington's 3rd Annual Alpine Food Festival

Since its breakthrough as the Comox Valley's premier local food event, the Mt. Washington Alpine Food Festival has become a highlight of Vancouver Island's vibrant food scene. This year's 3rd Annual Alpine Festival promises to be the most exciting and ambitious gathering yet. Famous BC chefs will be on hand to offer cooking classes and create dishes that showcase the Valley's seasonal bounty.

Headlining the festival is celebrity West Coast chef Anthony Sedlak, host of the popular Food Network TV series *The Main*. Throughout the long weekend Sedlak will offer three exclusive cooking classes, giving guests an inside look at how Canada's most popular young chef creates meals that are elegant, appetizing and tailored for the everyday gourmet. Sedlak will also emcee the Alpine Cocktail Reception on Sept. 3 and host the Alpine-to-Valley Gala Dinner on Sept. 4.

In a departure from previous routines, this year's Gala Dinner will pair Sedlak with an outstanding local chef – Jonathan Frazier, executive chef of *The Atlas Café*. Together the homegrown duo will create a multi-course feast using local ingredients fresh from the Comox Valley and the Alpine Marketplace. Every dish will be perfectly paired with a local or BC wine.

Sedlak, who grew up in North Vancouver, is famous for preparing rustic and “simple yet sumptuous” recipes that feature one ingredient as the heart of a dish. “When we cook, it is often a certain ingredient or flavour that motivates us to create an entire meal,” says Sedlak. “This key ingredient can be inspired by an abundance of a certain seasonal vegetable, the fresh scent of a particular herb, or a craving for a specific flavour.” With a wealth of world-class products available from the Valley's farms, ranches and kitchens, Sedlak will cook up three sizzling class menus that will be sure to please guests' eyes and taste buds alike.

The festival's Gala Dinner is a perfect fit for both Sedlak and Frazier, who are famous proponents of cooking from scratch using the freshest, readily available local ingredients. Frazier's first cooking experiences gave him great appreciation for the pleasures of West Coast fare. As a young boy, he'd collect clams off the beaches of Hornby Island to prepare fresh chowder for his family. After completing his apprenticeship at the *Kingfisher Resort* in 2000, Frazier worked in the kitchen at *The Château Victoria* and later in the galley of the charter sailing vessel *The Maple Leaf*. Frazier has been at the creative helm of *The Atlas Café* since 2005.

Sedlak first discovered his passion for food as a teen while rising up the ranks at Grouse Mountain Resort's high-end kitchen. After finishing his culinary studies, Sedlak moved to London and joined the renowned restaurant *La Trompette*. When he returned to BC, Sedlak won the Food Network's Superstar Chef Challenge II in 2006, which led to his successful TV show, *The Main*. Sedlak's new cookbook, *The Main: Recipes*, is a collection of his show's best recipes.

Also returning to the Alpine Food Festival by popular demand is well-known BC chef Tahera Rawji. Rawji will recreate samples from her vast repertoire of sweet and spicy Eastern dishes. Author, teacher and chef Maria Elena will explore another enticing cuisine as she prepares a savoury selection of family recipes from her cookbook *Mexican Culinary Treasures*.

In addition to the chance to learn the kitchen secrets of these famous BC chefs, the festival will feature a true cornucopia of tasty events. The one-of-a-kind Alpine Marketplace will boast dozens of food stalls, artwork galleries, gardening demonstrations, a special guest appearance from Pipi of *Pipi's Home Décor*, Ann Kask and much more.

The 3rd Annual Mt. Washington Alpine Festival runs from Friday, Sept. 3 to Sunday, Sept. 5. For ticket information and complete details on the many events, chefs, cooking classes and the Marketplace, please call (250) 338-1386 or visit www.mountwashington.ca/foodfestival.