

Seven Vancouver chefs to showcase Japanese cuisine at Sakura Night Gala

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SEVEN of Vancouver's most notable chefs will treat guests to a spectacular showcase of Japanese cuisine on Sunday, April 22 as they join forces for Sakura Night Gala presented by McMillan LLP, a celebration of Japanese arts and culture that serves as the most important fundraising event of the year for the Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival. In addition to raising funds to support a wide range of free community programming and events, the gala event is a unique opportunity to watch and taste the culinary creativity of seven amazing chefs and restaurants all in one magical evening.

Among the chefs lending their talents to the gala will be Taka Omi from Benkei Ramen, Nathan Lowey of Dosanko, Ken Nakano head chef of Shangri-la Hotel Vancouver, Masayoshi Baba founder of Masayoshi, Will Lew from Notch8 Restaurant & Bar, Nobu Ochi infamous sushi chef of Zen Japanese Restaurant, and Maestro James Coleridge the creative force behind James' Gelato.

In addition to inspiring the chefs, cherry blossoms will be a featured ingredient in some of the dishes. Among the menu highlights already announced for the standing dinner are tori-shio ramen with cherry blossom, sakura onigiri, smoked Manila clams, sakura mochi with duck and shitake mushroom, venison-wasabi leaf-smoked cherry tartare, zen-inspired sushi, salted sakura gelato and ume wine sorbetto. For the first time in the Festival's history, The Sakura Night Gala will also feature sake, beer and wine pairings, harmonizing with selected cuisine.

Renowned bartender and cocktail designer Jay Jones, who oversees Beverage and Media for Vij's Group of restaurants will add his talents to Sakura Night by creating a distinctly new cherry blossom cocktail experience to greet gala goers.

"In a city noted for its culinary offerings and events, our Sakura Night Gala is unique in the way it brings together an all-star lineup of chefs in an uplifting celebration of spring," says Linda Poole, Festival Director, VCBF. "For lovers of the Festival, the gala is a wonderful way to celebrate the blossoms and support everything we do. For foodies in Vancouver, it's a chance to get an up-close view of seven of Vancouver's best culinary teams in action, while also tasting some of the most impressive Japanese cuisine our city has to offer."

Held at the Stanley Park Pavilion (610 Pipeline Road) during the final week of the Festival, tickets for the Sakura Nights Gala are \$160 plus tax, with a \$100 tax receipt issued by VCBF at the event. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., with a standing dinner reception from 6:30-9:30 p.m. and also includes a silent auction and raffle. Early ticket purchase is encouraged as the gala sells out every year.