



## Media Release

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BURLINGTON – The “Pirates of the Chocolate Be’an” are sailing into Chocolate City USA, May 23-26, and are bringing with them more of that ooey-gooey goodness that attracts us all to the annual event.

In addition to top entertainment on four stages, the first carnival of the season, a grand fireworks display, and a Memorial Day parade, there will be plenty to get chocoholics collectively singing, “Yo, ho, ho.”

Not only will there be opportunities to eat that delectable treat, but also to wear it, create works of art with it, pair it sophisticatedly with fine wine, and literally, get your hands full of it.

Among the new events this year are: Project Yum-Way, a candy-wrapper fashion design contest inspired by Bravo’s hit series Project Runway; Chocolate Indulgence, an evening of wine and chocolate tasting; a children’s parade and a geocache treasure hunt.

“We have events for all ages and more chocolate than ever,” Chocolate Experience chair Caryn Bird said. “Many of the chocolate events are centered around this year’s ‘Pirates of the Chocolate Be’an’ theme.”

The festival grounds are located off of Highway 36, across from Echo Lake Park on Maryland Avenue. Gates are open from 4 p.m. to Midnight, Fri., May 23; 10 a.m. to Midnight, Sat. and Sun., May 24 and 25, and from noon to 8 p.m. Mon., May 25. The fireworks display will be at dusk Friday. The Memorial Day parade, in downtown Burlington, is at 9 a.m. Monday. Main stage headlining acts include the Eddie Butts band, The Toys, the Love Monkeys, Pat McCurdy, The Legends and Stukenberg. There will be more than 20 musical acts total.

Last year the four-day festival brought about 42,000 people to Burlington.

“This year we are anticipating more than 45,000,” said marketing co-chair Linda Fellenz.

The event is a catalyst for local charities, non-profit groups and youth organizations to raise money to support local programs. Since the festival’s inception in 1987, it is estimated more than \$1.4 million has been re-invested in the community. Last year \$164,000 was funneled to these groups, Fellenz said.

Tickets for the festival are \$7 for adults (\$6 in advance), \$6 for seniors, and \$3 for children ages 5-12. Children under age five are free. The Cruncher Ticket, that includes admission, unlimited rides and parking, is \$25 in advance, available at Burlington grocery stores and local schools until Friday, May 23. For ticket information visit [www.chocolatefest.com](http://www.chocolatefest.com).

Also, back by popular demand, is the \$2 Chocolate Chip Taster Ticket, redeemable for chocolate samples from premier chocolate vendors under the Chocolate Experience tent. The ticket also serves as entry into daily drawings and a grand prize 32" Flat Screen HD TV donated by Nestle’.

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## The Chocolate Experience Tent

The following events, some of which require advance registration and others which can be entered on-the-spot, are planned under the Chocolate Experience Tent. For more information about these chocolate events visit [www.chocolatefest.com](http://www.chocolatefest.com).

**Nestle Chocolate Creation** – Stroll in to see what amazing, giant chocolate sculpture is being created this year or visit [www.chocolatefest.com](http://www.chocolatefest.com) to watch it take shape as the event nears.

**Chocolate Indulgence** – An after hours wine and chocolate tasting event for adults only from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, May 24. A \$5 ticket includes a special Chef presentation, a commemorative wine glass, wine samples, and a trip through the chocolate experience line filled with specialty desserts, including samples of the Bake-Off entries, warm Midwest Airlines Chocolate Chip cookies, and desserts from Lakeview Farms.

**Project Yum-Way** – A candy-wrapper fashion design contest and show. Teams will compete to design a wearable outfit made using candy wrappers within 30 minutes. The audience will choose the winner on the runway. Fun prizes. Register in advance or the day of the event. Contests will be 6 p.m. Friday, May 23 and 1 p.m. Sunday, May 25.

**ChocolateFest Geocache** – Travel Chocolate City in search of the cache. This is a timed event for 10 teams of up to four members. Prizes include chocolate and gift certificates from area businesses. Cost is \$20 and includes a t-shirt and entrance into the festival. Pre-registration is required.

**Chocolate Kiddie Parade** – Decorate your stroller or wagon with a pirate, Memorial Day or chocolate theme and join the parade through the ChocolateFest grounds Saturday, May 24. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. and judging will begin at 10 a.m. Each entrant will receive a Goodie Bag full of treats that includes a return ticket for the next day. First through third place winners in each of the three categories will receive a prize.

**Chocolate Bake-Offs** – Amateur bakers of all ages are invited to enter their favorite chocolate cake, cheesecake, cookies, fudge or candy in the annual bake-off. Registration will take place 30 minutes prior to the event starting time. Chocolate of some form must be one of the main ingredients. Judging will be based on overall appearance, use of chocolate, creativity and flavor. Complete rules are available at [www.chocolatefest.com](http://www.chocolatefest.com).

**Chocolate Carving Contest** – A chocolate sculpting contest open to the public. Two age groups: 12 and up; under 12. There is a \$5 entry fee. Register by May 1 by submitting an idea for a sculpture to Chocolate Carving Contest, P.O. Box 411, Burlington, 53105. Chocolate cylinder to be picked up at Chocolate Expressions May 7. Carving must be returned to Chocolate Expressions by May 21.

**Chocolate Chef Demonstrations** – Watch as some of the Midwest's finest chefs create chocolate masterpieces. Saturday, May 24: 11 a.m., Chef de Cuisine Rick Starr of Ristorante' Brissago at Grand Geneva Resort and Spa, preparing Flourless Chocolate Cake with Rhubarb and Olive Oil; 1 p.m., Corporate Pastry Chef Karl Helfrich of European Imports Ltd., preparing Valrhona Intense Chocolate Brownie; 3 p.m., Executive Pastry Chef Sergio Avila-Favela of Potawatomi Bingo Casino, preparing Chocolate Lovers Dream; 8:30 p.m., Wine Tasting and Chocolate Pairing (Adults Only) Chef/Owner Jimmy Wade of Heaven City, preparing Chocolate Dipped Candied Morel Mushroom with Piped Dark Mousse. Sunday, May 25: Noon, Executive Chef Robert Ash of Kil@wat Restaurant at The Intercontinental Milwaukee Hotel, preparing Frozen Hot Chocolate with Orange Scented Espuma and Chocolate Straw; 2 p.m., Chef/Owner Dave Swanson of Braise on the Go, Traveling Culinary School, preparing Mascarpone Risotto with Omanhene Chocolate and Red Wine Cherries; 5 p.m., Executive Chef Adam Carson of Jimmy Wade's Heaven City, preparing an Edible Martini Glass with Fresh Berries. Monday, May 26: 1 p.m., Executive Chef Michael Lavin of Gooseberries & Courtyard Caterings, preparing Triple Chocolate Mousse Tart with Kahlua Glazed Cherries; 2 p.m., Pastry Chef Michelle Odden of The Pfister Hotel preparing "White Chocolate Cheesecake Lollipops and Chocolate Amaretto Truffles."

**Candy Bar Eating Contests** – Schneider Family Dentistry is again sponsoring chocolate bar eating contests. The contests will take place several times a day with winners facing off on Monday.

**Hands-On Chocolate Mural** – Dip your hands in chocolate and display your chocolate handprint on a community mural.

**Chocolate Olympics** – Participate in a variety of on-the-spot games and contests involving what else – chocolate.

**Chocolate Create-A-Thon** – Use grab and go ingredients to make a chocolate dessert.

**Treasure Hunt** – Search and find pirate symbols and enter prize drawing.

**Chocolate Treasure Pool** – Dig through the candy for pirate loot.

**Treasure Land** – Pirate-themed life-size board game.