



Media Release

Media Contacts: Bill Stone, (262) 490-1830, or Linda Fellenz, (414) 254-4813
Or visit www.chocolatefest.com

BURLINGTON – Burlington ChocolateFest 2008 is dripping with new ways to enjoy the four-day festival, May 23-26.

New events are planned on the ChocolateFest grounds, located off of Highway 36 just north of Echo Park, as well as throughout Chocolate City USA.

“We have new music acts, a new chocolate and wine tasting event and several new chocolate-themed contests at ChocolateFest this year,” Bill Stone, co-director of marketing, said. “Area businesses are also getting more involved then ever in helping to make this a community-wide event.”

Art du Chocolat

A group of specialty shops in Burlington’s historic downtown are getting in on the fun and will present Art du Chocolat, a sidewalk art show from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, May 24-25.

Artists will display their works in front of downtown shops and in Wehmhoff Park, adjacent to the library off of Pine Street. Live local musicians will also perform throughout the business district and a free shuttle to and from the ChocolateFest grounds north of Echo Lake will be provided. The goal is to bring more foot traffic to businesses located in the heart of the city while giving local artisans a venue to sell their work.

The annual farmer’s market will also begin its season by dovetailing with this event.

Chocolate Indulgence

Exclusive chocolate will be paired with fine wines at a new event in the Chocolate Experience Tent. The evening of "Chocolate Indulgence" will take place from 8-10 p.m. Saturday, May 24. The after hours wine and chocolate tasting event is for adults only. However, children are invited to watch a free showing of “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” in the adjacent Kids Kanopy tent with complimentary chocolate popcorn.

A \$5 ticket, sold separate from the admission ticket, includes a special Chef presentation by Jimmy Wade, owner and chef at Heaven City (and his band), 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. Wade will make a Chocolate Covered Candied Morel Mushroom piped with Dark Belgium Chocolate Mousse.

New Music and More

ChocolateFest main stage staples, like The Toys and the Love Monkey’s will return again this year, joined by Seven Nations, a newly booked Celtic rock group to perform from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Main Stage. A new focus on providing music for the teen and young adult crowd brings several up-and-coming local artists to the Diamond Stage. New this year will be: The Thumbs, an all-female rock band, and Stukenberg, a progressive folk group, performing at 7 p.m. at 8:45 p.m. Saturday, respectively; and Martha Berner, a folk rock and pop singer, and Day to Day, a rock band, at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. Sunday, respectively.

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More New ChocolateFest Events

A children's parade will be held on Saturday to get the youngest of festival goers involved in the fun. Strollers or wagons should be decorated with a pirate, Memorial Day or chocolate theme. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. at the Information Booth and judging begins 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.

A BMX Bike Show and an Antique Tractor Show have also been added to the long list of entertainment and Willow Creek Ranch, a local therapeutic riding center, will provide riding opportunities.

Project Yum-Way

A new event at ChocolateFest inspired by Bravo's hit show Project Runway, will pit teams of designers against each other and the clock in a race to construct a wearable outfit made of candy wrappers for judging by the audience on the runway.

There will be two opportunities to compete for fun prizes - 6 p.m. Friday, May 23, and 1 p.m. Sunday, May 25. Teams of three to five designers will be provided \$100 in "mocha money" to purchase yards of candy-wrapper, basic materials and accessories at the festival's "Chocolate Store."

Each team will have 30 minutes to design and construct their outfit. Local fashion experts and sewing masters will consult with and offer advice to teams as they work. Each team's fashion will be exhibited down the runway by one of the team's own members.

Chocolate Geocache

A geocache hunt will take people all around Chocolate City USA this year in search of what else - chocolate.

As if that isn't prize enough, locally-themed prizes and gift certificates, and the right to start Morsel the Moose on its year-long geo-caching adventure will also go to the winning team.

The contest will be a timed event held Saturday, May 24. Up to 10 teams of four people will be assigned a start time the week before the contest. Rules are available on the event Website. The entry fee is \$20 per team and includes a pass to the festival grounds and a t-shirt. Because space is limited those interested in participating are encouraged to register early.

For more information visit www.chocolatefest.com