



## **COUNTY OF LAKE**

### **MARKETING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SEPTEMBER 11, 2008**

### **CULINARY CLASSROOM OPENS IN LAKE COUNTY**

#### **HARDESTER'S MARKETS TO BOAST NEW CHIC LE CHEF CULINARY CLASSES**

HIDDEN VALLEY LAKE, CA — In response to the growing interest in culinary appreciation of gourmet foods paired with the opening of numerous fine wineries in Lake County, Hardester's Markets has opened a culinary classroom next door to their market in Hidden Valley Lake.

Hardester's has teamed up with Chic Le Chef, Inc., a private chef and specialty caterer who provides culinary classes to everyone – including youth and teens.

“We've been feeling the pressure to expand our gourmet and specialty food lines for some time, and this concept works nicely into the overall plan,” said Ross Hardester, owner of Hardester's Markets. “We've already done some pilot classes in our Middletown and Hidden Valley markets and the response has been very positive.”

Classes will cover techniques, wine and food pairings, as well as give information on ingredients. In addition, there will be healthy eating classes, guest chef instructors, and interactive kids' classes. “The popular theme of the film ‘Ratatouille’ was that ‘anyone can cook.’ What we want to do is provide people with the awareness, techniques and confidence to cook what they like,” said Julie Hoskins, chef and owner of Chic Le Chef, Inc.

“Thanks to the Food Network and home chefs becoming more interested in ingredients and techniques, culinary classes are hot,” said Duane Harper of Hardester's Markets.

Hoskins explained that exploring the more readily available global foods has become an avid adventure for many and she envisions that the culinary center will offer something for everyone – from basic cooking lessons for kids to gastronomic delights for gourmands.

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Classes are structured to be either a demonstration or hands-on. Participants receive tasting samples, recipe booklets, and valuable information on how to recreate the dishes at home.

The Young Chefs classes will focus on kitchen safety, culinary basics, and build cooking confidence. The Lunch and Learn class combines the lunch hour with healthy culinary instruction.

What's for Dinner Tonight? classes combine easy, affordable menu ideas and are kid-friendly. These classes are scheduled so that two parents and young chefs can work together. Teen classes will be hands-on and teach kitchen safety procedures, such as knife skills.

Guest chefs and local food purveyors also are a part of this culinary vision of bringing good food to the table. The exciting Chef's Table classes are for "foodies" who enjoy the unexpected and include recreating dishes that are based on current trends and seasonal ingredients.

Hardester's Markets began in 1943 with a store in Middletown (21178 Calistoga Road), which is currently undergoing a remodeling effort. There are two other Hardester's Markets locations in Lake County which include Cobb (16295 Highway 175) and Hidden Valley Lake (19849 Hartmann Road), next door to the new culinary classroom.

The Chic Le Chef culinary kitchen with professional equipment also is available for private parties including birthdays, bridal parties, and team building events. Class calendars and registration are available online. For more information, call (707) 987-9664 or visit [www.ChicLeChef.com](http://www.ChicLeChef.com)

Located in beautiful Northern California, Lake County is just two hours by car from the San Francisco Bay Area, the Sacramento Valley, and the Pacific Coast. Lake County is home to Clear Lake, the largest natural freshwater lake in California and possibly the oldest lake on the continent. Visitors to Lake County experience the state's cleanest air basin, spectacular scenic beauty, fine wines, headliner concerts, and unsurpassed recreational opportunities — from hiking, biking, golf, and off-road adventures to boating, fishing, kayaking, birding, and even rockhounding. Lake County is part of the North Coast AVA, which also encompasses Napa, Sonoma, and Mendocino counties. The local area code is 707. For visitor information, contact the Lake County Visitor Information Center at (800) 525-3743 or [www.lakecounty.com](http://www.lakecounty.com).