



## **COUNTY OF LAKE**

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

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**September 9, 2008**

### **LAKE COUNTY WINE AUCTION TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 19 - 20, CHEF JOHN ASH COOKING DEMONSTRATION KICKS OFF WINE AUCTION WEEKEND**

**KELSEYVILLE, CA** — Chef John Ash, internationally recognized wine country chef, educator, and author is a special guest of the Lake County Wine Alliance, which will kick off its ninth-annual Lake County Wine Auction, a benefit for the arts, health, and community of Lake County, on September 19-20, 2008.

During a cooking demonstration and luncheon on Friday, September 19, the day preceding the gala Wine Auction charity benefit, Ash will present an ambitious menu that starts with an antipasti plate of wild mushrooms, grilled asparagus with lemon olive oil and Pecorino, and grilled shrimp with Sangrita. His “Fire and Ice” Pear Salad is served with goat cheese, figs, and Prosciutto. The menu moves on to an entrée of fresh halibut in a spicy coconut curry broth and ends with a dessert of lemon polenta cake with fresh raspberries.

Each course of the meal will be paired with a fine Lake County wine, representing several of the vintners participating in the annual Lake County Wine Auction.

A limited number of tickets are available for the cooking demonstration and luncheon, which will start at 10:00 a.m. at the Buckingham Homeowner’s Association Clubhouse, 2850 Eastlake Drive, Kelseyville. Each ticket is \$75 per person, after the purchase of a Wine Auction ticket for \$100 per person.

Chef Ash will be assisted in the demonstration and in preparing the luncheon by Lake County chefs Jeremy Zabel of the Saw Shop Gallery Bistro in Kelseyville, Robert Cabrerros of the Yuba College Culinary Arts Program, and Julie Hoskins of Chic Le Chef in Hidden Valley Lake. Students from Yuba College will serve the meal.

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Other special events on the evening of Friday, September 19, include winemaker dinners hosted by six Lake County wineries at special venues. Participating wineries are Ceago Vinegarden, Langtry Estate & Vineyards, Moore Family Winery, Shannon Ridge Vineyards & Winery, Steele Wines, and Wildhurst Vineyards. Capacity at each venue is limited. Tickets are \$75 per person, after the purchase of a Lake County Wine Auction ticket.

The Lake County Wine Auction will be held on Saturday, September 20, at 5:00 p.m., under the big tent at the Buckingham Golf and Country Club, 2855 Eastlake Drive, Kelseyville. U. S. Congressman Mike Thompson, First District of California, is the event chair. Andy Beckstoffer, CEO of Beckstoffer Vineyards, is the master of ceremonies. Auctioneers are Archie McLaren, founder of the Central Coast Wine Classic and a rare and fine wine consultant, and Jed Steele, owner and winemaker of Steele Wines of Lake County.

More than 20 Lake County wineries will pour wines, while 12 restaurants and caterers will present food to accompany the vintners' selections. The evening includes live and silent auctions of wine lots, wine and travel packages, and fine art. Jim Williams & Friends will provide music for dancing.

Ten community organizations and local agencies have been chosen to receive the proceeds of this year's Lake County Wine Auction. Over the past eight years, the Lake County Wine Alliance has donated more than \$621,500 to local programs.

This year's beneficiaries include: Kids 4 Broadway, Lake County Special Olympics, Wiloth Equine Therapy and Riding Center, Hospice Services of Lake County, Adult Day Care/Respite of Clearlake, the Military Funeral Honors Team, Church Women United, Operation Tango Mike, the Lake Family Resource Center, the Lake County Literacy Coalition, and the fine arts programs at five Lake County high schools.

The Buckingham Junior Golf Program receives support through the auction of golf balls to fund activities of the Lake County Junior Golf Council.

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Nationally renowned as a wine and food educator, Chef Ash has served for many years as the Culinary Director for Fetzer and Bonterra Vineyards and is on the faculty of the Professional Wine Studies Program at the Culinary Institute of America, Greystone. He also is the chair of a new program at Greystone for home cooks called The Sophisticated Palate and was voted Cooking Teacher of the Year in 2008 by the International Association of Culinary Professionals.

Members of the Lake County Wine Alliance board include Margaret Walker-Stimmel, president; Marie Beery, vice president; Pamela Shine-Duncan, secretary; Rob Roumiguere, treasurer; and Jim Fetzer, Judy Luchsinger, Wilda Shock, and Janet Thompson. The volunteer board and a large Wine Auction committee of volunteers meet throughout the year to plan the charity event.

For more information and to purchase tickets for any of the events, call 866-279-WINE.

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. Within Lake County, five other AVAs exist — Clear Lake AVA, Benmore Valley AVA, Guenoc AVA, and the recently approved Red Hills AVA and High Valley AVA. 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).

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