

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 25, 2017

Contact: Megan Postiglione  
Festivals Inc.  
(425) 295-3262 Ext. #117  
MeganP@festivals-inc.com

### **Learn to Cook from the Best Chefs in the Northwest at *The Taste Cooks!***

Take a look inside a professional chef's kitchen at *The Taste Cooks!* presented by Albert Lee Appliance at Emerald Queen Casino's Taste of Tacoma® presented by BECU, June 23-25 at Point Defiance Park. Located at the north end of the park, *The Taste Cooks!* stage provides high energy culinary demonstrations by some of the Tacoma Area's best chefs from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

The lineup changes each day, with 'fresh' chefs, eager to share their delicious handpicked recipes. *The Taste Cooks!* kitchen stage is fully-equipped, courtesy of Albert Lee Appliance. During the chef demos, the audience can get a real 'taste' of what it's like to be inside a professional chef's kitchen. All recipes will be available for the audience to take home, so they can 'take a stab' at the recipes themselves.

Select chefs will also be competing in *The Taste Cook-Off!* where their culinary skills are put to the test. The competing chefs are given 30 minutes to create a masterpiece from three mystery ingredients, a basic pantry and a large selection of produce, donated by Charlie's Produce.

Three lucky audience members will be selected to critique each chef on their dish and performance. The criteria is creative use of ingredients, presentation, tastiness and overall entertainment. The winning chef will be announced live and receive a \$100 donation to a charity of their choice.

Two notable chefs participating in *The Taste Cooks!* stage are Jon Maley and Derek Bray. Both have impressive backgrounds in the culinary industry. Chef Maley studied Culinary Arts at Le Cordon Bleu in San Francisco and is currently the executive chef at The University of Washington Club. Chef Maley got his start as a dishwasher at 14 years old and from that point on, he knew his future was in the food industry.

Meanwhile, Chef Bray's passion for the culinary arts sprouted his final year at Washington State University while preparing simple bar food. After college, he convinced a local diner to hire him and he worked his way up the food industry. Since then, he opened *The Table*, a restaurant in Tacoma. Chef Bray is passionate about philanthropy and has developed strong relationships with local nonprofits.

Amanda Westbrooke, TV Tacoma's *CityLine* host, will return for a fifth year as *The Taste Cooks!* stage emcee. Each year Westbrooke brings excitement to the stage with her enthusiasm of the culinary arts.

"I am looking forward to the cook-offs. I am constantly amazed by the creativity and the nerve of each chef. Cooking in front of a live audience while the audience is asking questions on a 30 minute time frame is so much harder than it looks on television" Westbrooke said.

The *Taste Cooks!* stage is sponsored by Albert Lee Appliance, KOMO News and Seattle Refined. To find out more information on *The Taste Cooks!* stage or the Taste of Tacoma®, please visit [www.tasteoftacoma.com](http://www.tasteoftacoma.com).

## 2017 Taste Cooks! Schedule

### **Friday, June 23**

12:00-1:00 PM Kelly Wilson, Rhein Haus Tacoma  
1:00-2:00 PM Taste Cook-Off! (Derek Bray vs. Kelly Wilson)  
2:00-3:00 PM Jon Maley, *ChUcH*  
3:00-4:00 PM Derek Bray, *The Table*  
4:00-5:00 PM Taste Cook-Off! (Jon Maley vs. James Bacher)  
5:00-6:00 PM James Bacher, *The Valley*  
6:00-7:00 PM Hudson Slater, Tacoma Yacht Club

### **Saturday, June 24**

12:00-1:00 PM Ta'ani Ma'ame, *Boathouse 19*  
1:00-2:00 PM Taste Cook-Off! (Ta'ani Ma'ame vs. Saffron Hodgson)  
2:00-3:00 PM Justin Mevs, *Lobster Shop*  
3:00-4:00 PM Aura Mae, *Kitchen Beautician*  
4:00-5:00 PM Taste Cook-Off! (James Bacher vs. Aura Mae)  
5:00-6:00 PM Saffron Hodgson, *BushCooking.com*  
6:00-7:00 PM Abigail Bardwell, *Happy Belly*

### **Sunday, June 25**

12:00-1:00 PM Aura Mae, *Kitchen Beautician*  
1:00-2:00 PM Douglas Kim, *JW Restaurant*  
2:00-3:00 PM Taste Cook-Off! (Chris Lewis vs. Abigail Bardwell)  
3:00-4:00 PM James Bacher, *The Valley*  
4:00-5:00 PM Taste Cook-Off! (Hudson Slater vs. Anessa McClendon)  
5:00-6:00 PM Wesley McLain, *Indo Asian Street Eatery*

###