

Monday, Sept 10, 2011

TORONTO, Ont. //-- The Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance (OCTA) is proud to announce the winners of the 2011 Culinary Tourism Awards! The 2011 Culinary Tourism Leadership Award winner is **Savour Stratford Perth County**. The 2011 Culinary Tourism Experience Award winner is **The Apple Pie Trail**.

Winners were honoured at the 2011 Ontario Tourism Summit, taking place in Hamilton, Ontario.

The Ontario Culinary Tourism Awards celebrate the passion and excellence of those dedicated to advancing the culinary tourism movement in Ontario. Through their steadfast leadership and unique experiences, both winners and finalists set the bar for what culinary tourism in Ontario represents. Presented by the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance, these awards recognize those who work hard to tell the stories of our growers, producers, chefs, winemakers and brewers.

Also of note were the awards runners up: *For Leadership*, it was WindsorEats.com; *For Experience*, it was Oktoberfest at Beaus All Natural Brewing Company in Vankleek Hill.

Deciding this year's winners was a panel of esteemed judges: Hersch Jacobs, Valerie Howes, J. Charles Grieco and Ivy Knight. Dr. Hersch Jacobs amongst other things, a Research Associate of the Ted Rogers Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Research at Ryerson University. Valerie Howes is a Toronto-based travel writer and the food editor of Reader's Digest. J. Charles Grieco is the Chair and President of the Ontario Hospitality Institute. Ivy Knight is a Toronto based food writer whose platforms include the Globe & Mail, Toronto Star, Toronto Life and more.

Congratulations to the winners! For nomination criteria and additional information about the awards, please visit: <http://ontarioculinary.com/>

About the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance:

The Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance (OCTA) is an industry-driven organization that builds capacity for the culinary tourism in Ontario by connecting growers, producers, processors, tourism operators and others rooted in our agri-food and travel sectors. In partnership with over 30 member organizations, our work lies in developing relationships between growers and processors, chefs and restaurateurs, accommodation providers and distributors, government and industry organizations.

Our mission? Commitment. Collaboration. Communications.

OCTA strives to build and sustain regional identities by supporting sustainable agricultural and aquaculture resources, as well as food and beverage supplies. We accomplish this through our online and social media platforms, customized member services, strong media connections, timely communications and event programming. Above all, we act as the leading voice to share Ontario's culinary tourism stories with passion and pride. In addition, OCTA is leading efforts in culinary tourism-related research, education and product development as outlined in the *2011-2015 Ontario Four-Year Culinary Tourism Strategy & Action Plan*. Within this paradigm, OCTA has the goal of developing Ontario into the premier international culinary tourism destination.

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