

Maui Gold pineapple dessert contest tops off the Kapalua Seafood Festival

Hundreds of wine connoisseurs and food enthusiasts will pair premier wines with fresh ocean catch at the Kapalua Seafood Festival, which takes place Sunday evening as the grand finale of the Kapalua Wine & Food Festival.

The event is so popular, in fact, that Coastal Living Magazine just named it one of the "Top 10 Seafood and Wine Festivals in the United States."

To make the Kapalua Seafood Festival even sweeter, Maui Pineapple Company will host the Maui Gold pineapple dessert contest between local bakeries, a few island restaurants and the Maui Culinary Academy before the event.

Pastry chefs will submit desserts that will incorporate Maui Gold pineapple in it for judging and the winner will be announced at the Seafood Festival in The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua's Aloha Pavilion.

The good news for attendees is the Maui Gold desserts will also be showcased at the event and they are invited to sample all of the contestants' culinary creations.

"I like using the freshest ingredients from fruits and vegetables grown locally, and when it comes to pineapple, I only use Maui Gold," said Executive Chef Ryan Luckey of the Pineapple Grill Restaurant.

"I won't give away the dessert I'll enter in the contest, but the Maui Gold pineapple upside-down cake is one of the favorites at our Pineapple Grill Restaurant."

Besides Luckey, participants include Vasi Zaferis of Gourmet Catering & Tropical Desserts by Vasi in Haiku; Pat Pimental of Cravings Bakery in Kahului; Executive Chef John Zaner of host hotel, The Ritz-Carlton, Kapalua; Executive Chef George Gomes Jr., of the brand new Merriman's Kapalua; and Pastry Chef and Instructor Teresa "Cheech" Shurilla of Maui Culinary Academy.

The desserts will be judged on overall taste, texture, presentation and incorporation into and innovation of the recipe with Maui Gold pineapple.

"Maui Pineapple Company has proudly donated all Maui Gold pineapples necessary to make the contestants' desserts," says Tracy Johnson, public relations manager.

Festival host Fred Dame, Vice President of Events Management at Kapalua Resort Nancy Cross, and guest celebrity chefs, Pano Karatassos, Frank Ostini and Mary Clarke,

will be the judges.

The winner will be announced right at the beginning of the Kapalua Seafood Festival. A first place blue ribbon will be on display next to the award-winning dessert throughout Sunday evening.

A number of master sommeliers and other wine experts will be on hand to assist with pairings for the desserts. Attendees should feel free to ask for recommendations to go with these sweet treats.

The grand prize winner will receive a gift certificate for two to enjoy the eco-adventure experiences at the new Kapalua Adventures, valued at about \$800.

Located at Kapalua Resort, the Kapalua Adventures' Mountain Outpost features one of the largest zipline systems in the United States with eight dual-track ziplines, two suspension bridges, a comprehensive ropes challenge course, a four-station climbing tower and giant swing.

To purchase tickets or for more details, call 665-9160 or visit kapalua.com.



STEVE BRINKMAN photo
Pineapple upside-down cake is one of the signature desserts at the aptly named Pineapple Grill in Kapalua.

