

Tastebuds tickled as five day food event sizzles

By Tania Theriault

The Bermuda Gourmet Getaway officially opened on Thursday night with a VIP reception at Gosling's Wine Cellar followed by a new but already immensely popular event for the festival — Taste Bermuda.

Sponsors, guests and celebrity chefs were treated to a slate of special cocktails and fine wines at Gosling's where the elimination round in the fish chowder competition was also held.

Five amateurs and five professionals are competing for the Island's chowder crown this year. Event producer Michelle Halpin of Total Marketing and Communications said the final rounds will be held at BGG's Viking Village at Southampton Princess.

The finals of the Amateur category will take place today while the Professional category will be judged by Viking Village patrons tomorrow and the winners of both will be announced on Sunday.

You can still cast your ballot for the top chowder with a visit to the Village which will also offers cooking demonstrations, loads of food and wine tastings and competition for the title of Bermuda's top chef as four competitors square off in the Escoffier Cup. There will also be a Kids Village for the youngsters so patrons are encouraged to bring the family.

BGG has brought in Rahman 'Rock' Harper — the winner of Season Three of the television programme 'Hell's Kitchen' — to host the five-day foodie event, to the apparent delight of those attending Taste Bermuda last night, who mmhmm'd over the handsome celebrity chef almost as much as the tasty delights on offer at the Bacardi-hosted event.

Chef Harper said Bermuda has already offered him a warm welcome — and the ladies at the Taste Bermuda seemed keen to make that welcome hotter. Sorry ladies, Chef Harper, now the head chef at Terra Verde Green Valley Ranch in Las Vegas after winning the Gordon Ramsey-hosted TV cooking competition, is a married father-of-two.

Taste Bermuda drew out a healthy crowd to its inaugural event at Bacardi's headquarters. With Bacardi-themed cocktails and over a dozen restaurants and food producers offering up tasty dishes, Taste Bermuda is sure to be back. There was something for everyone on offer with sushi, oysters, rum cakes, delicious fried fish and more — no one went home hungry.

This reporter had intended to review the event but there was simply too much delicious food on offer — I swear it had nothing to do with the cosmos!

BGG continues today with the popular Champagne Brunch at Wadson's Farm, the Viking Village, the Grillin and Chillin event at the Bermuda, Aquarium, Museum and Zoo and Celebrity Chef and Winemakers dinners at four local restaurants.

The celebrity chefs will be teaming up with the house chefs to offer one of a kind menus with paired wines. Chef Jeff Tunks of TenPenh, Ceiba and Acadiana will be at Seahorse Grill, Matt Gennuso of Chez Pascal in Providence, Rhode Island will be Café Coco, Jason Wilson of Crush in Seattle will be at Blu and Todd Winer of New York's Metropolitan Club will be at Waterlot Inn.

With the exception of Chillin and Grillin all these events will also take place on Sunday.

For more information on the Gourmet Getaway check out <http://www.bermudagourmetgetaway.bm/>.