

## **THE ULTIMATE COOK-OFF: WILLOWS LODGE ANNOUNCES SECOND ANNUAL IRON VINTNER CHALLENGE WITH PRIZED LOCAL WINEMAKERS**

*Woodinville Winemakers from DeLille Cellars, Gorman Winery, JM Cellars and Sparkman Cellars battle in month-long culinary competition; concludes with Championship Winemaker Dinner at Barking Frog to benefit Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center*

**Woodinville, Wash.** (January 10, 2011) – Willows Lodge, a Northwest retreat in the heart of Woodinville Wine Country, announces the second annual 2011 **Iron Vintner Challenge**, a month-long culinary competition where prized local winemakers battle for the title of Iron Vintner. The event concludes with a Championship Winemaker Dinner at Barking Frog to benefit Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center in Woodinville.

Back by popular demand, this year's competition will be led by Executive Chef Bobby Moore of Barking Frog and feature Winemakers John Bigelow of JM Cellars, Chris Gorman of Gorman Winery, Chris Sparkman of Sparkman Cellars and Chris Upchurch of DeLille Cellars.

"We are thrilled to announce the continuation of the Iron Vintner Challenge," said Shaun Tucker, General Manager, Willows Lodge. "Last year's event really hit our community's sweet spot, offering attendees a way to enjoy great food and wine while supporting a deserving local charity."

During each competition, attendees will be in the middle of the action watching as participating winemakers strategize, cook and compete against their rival. The competition begins as each winemaker and their partner are given a box of products selected by Chef Emcee Moore from which to create an appetizer and an entrée in 60 minutes. A panel of celebrity foodie judges will sample the competitors' dishes and select a winner each week based on presentation, flavor and creativity.

The Iron Vintner Challenge will conclude with a Championship Winemaker Dinner at Barking Frog to benefit Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center in Woodinville. Chef Moore will prepare a four-course dinner featuring wine pairings by the winner and the other participating winemakers.

The Iron Vintner Challenge cooking competitions will occur on three consecutive Wednesdays in June from 5:30 – 7 p.m. The challenge will conclude on Wednesday, June 29 at 7 p.m. with a Championship Winemaker Dinner at Barking Frog to benefit Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center. Chef Moore will prepare a four course dinner featuring wine pairings by the winner and the other participating winemakers.

The 2011 Iron Vintner Challenge schedule is as follows:

- **June 8, 2011** – Preliminary Round 1 (TBA): Winemaker 1 VS. Winemaker 2
- **June 15, 2011** – Preliminary Round 2 (TBA): Winemaker 3 VS. Winemaker 4

- **June 22, 2011** – Championship: Winner of Round 1 VS Winner of Round 2  
**June 29, 2011** – Championship Dinner at Barking Frog: All participating winemakers attend

**Each of the cooking competitions in the Iron Vintner Challenge are \$35 per person and include tastes from each winery competing that night. To attend the final Championship Winemaker Dinner, it is \$135 per person. Willows Lodge will extend a special 15 percent discount on the best available room rate for Iron Vintner Challenge attendees to stay overnight on the Wednesday evening of the competitions. Please visit [www.willowslodge.com](http://www.willowslodge.com) for additional information and tickets.**

#### **About Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center**

Founded in 1976, Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center is a leader in the field of therapeutic horseback riding and the first nationally accredited program of its kind in the Northwest. Little Bit's mission is to improve the bodies, minds and spirits of children and adults with disabilities through equine-assisted therapy. The center also strives to be an inspiration and educational resource to the therapeutic riding profession and was recognized with the Delta Society's Model Program Award of Excellence for provided outstanding service, while bringing people and animals together. [www.littlebit.org](http://www.littlebit.org)

#### **About Willows Lodge**

Willows Lodge, a Northwest style lodge located in Woodinville Wine Country just outside of Seattle, features 84 luxury guestrooms, a full-service spa and high-tech equipped meeting space. Executive Chef Bobby Moore's American regional cuisine at Barking Frog reflects the seasonal and organic produce found in Puget Sound, and is artfully paired with an extensive list of Washington wines. Willows Lodge also boasts Fireside Cellars, offering a casual and sophisticated atmosphere tucked away in the lobby with an outdoor patio overlooking the expansive surrounding landscape. [www.willowslodge.com](http://www.willowslodge.com).

Woodinville-based, Willows Lodge, is managed by MTM Luxury Lodging, operating the Northwest's premier collection of boutique hotels. Among its other exquisite properties in the Northwest are Cave B Inn at SageCliffe (Quincy); Hotel 1000 (downtown Seattle); Willows Lodge (Woodinville); and Woodmark Hotel, Yacht Club & Spa (Kirkland). Other MTM luxury properties from coast to coast include The Liberty Hotel (Boston) and Bardessono (Napa Valley). Without exception, MTM managed hotels are among the very best in the markets they serve. [www.mtmluxurylodging.com](http://www.mtmluxurylodging.com)

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