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CULINARY TOURISM TO BE DEFINED AT GROUNDBREAKING SYMPOSIUM

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1st, 2005 – There is a growing demographic of travelers who design their trips, excursions and vacations with food and drink as their primary focus and to satisfy their appetite for regional experiences and culinary knowledge.

To address this enormous possibility for the Province of Ontario, the Canadian Institute of Advanced Culinary Arts (CIACA) and George Brown, The Toronto City College are inviting representatives of the hospitality and tourism industry as well as the agricultural food and beverage producing sector to the first annual Culinary-Tourism Symposium in Toronto. This three day 'learning journey' is planned for March 6th – 8th, 2005.

Ontario's resident Culinary Activist and author Anita Stewart will facilitate what many are calling a history - making experience for the hospitality and tourism industry. "Culinary Tourism holds enormous potential, not only for traditional tourism operators but also for a myriad of other Ontarians, from agriculturalists to publishers; from research scientists to manufacturers; from students to travel writers. If there is one word that defines the phrase best, it is simply "possibilities". We are limited only by our imaginations and our ability to communicate our dreams and our challenges openly" Anita adds that, "The enormous significance of this conference is two fold – it's a first for Ontario and it's a first for Canada. No such meeting, planned and executed by Canadians, has ever been held. We are breaking bread together and we are also breaking new ground. We are not world class – we are Canadian class. This conference is the turning point in the food life of The Province of Ontario."

The Culinary-Tourism Symposium will be addressing the socio-economic possibilities with discussions from leading authorities in the tourism, hospitality, agriculture, government, academia, recreation/leisure and arts and culture sectors. These industry experts are invited to explore the benefits and understand the long and short term impacts of culinary tourism.

"The Hospitality and Tourism industry, which is inclusive of Foodservice and Tourism-Related industries, is one of the fastest growing industries in Canada and in Ontario. Over the past 3 years this industry has suffered dramatic shifts in its economic performance based on global

intercepts such as September 11, 2001, SARS and BSE. This symposium offers us all the opportunity to work together on something very positive.” John Walker, Dean of the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism and the CIACA.

The Opening night celebration will take place on March 6th and will showcase culinary tourism activities throughout the regions of Ontario. This event, sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation, guarantees to “Stir up Your Senses”. Monday, March 7th will consist of a full day of programs, networking and panel discussions. Participants will enjoy the “Ontario Grown” dinner which will be prepared by Chef John Higgins who will lead a team of chefs and student chefs.

The Symposium has been designed to include panel discussions and hands-on, interaction learning sessions. Attendees will have plenty of opportunities to network as well as participate in a series of open dialogues called, “Looking for Answers.” This will be facilitated by Anita Stewart and will be a chance for delegates to ask for help or comment on specific business issues or experiences they have associated with culinary tourism.

For a list of speakers, exciting program highlights and registration forms for the Culinary-Tourism Symposium '04 please visit www.culinarytourism.ca or contact Cynthia D'Alo to register at Tel: 416-593-7744.

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Contacts for Media

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