

Caterer creates a taste of B.C. for Beijing

Vancouver's Culinary Capers cooks up signature dishes and college credits at British Columbia Canada Pavilion

By SHARI BURNETT

Winning the job to host the world as the official caterer for the **British Columbia Canada Pavilion** in Beijing is a true win-win for Vancouver-based **Culinary Capers Catering**. Not only is it a chance to share the best of home-grown British Columbia ingredients and cuisine from May through September with officials, athletes and business owners who visit the Pavilion, the company will be sharing the spotlight and their knowledge with a team of culinary arts students and teachers from **Vancouver Community College** who will be part of the Pavilion catering team.

Culinary Capers is flying 24 VCC students and six staff to Beijing and providing accommodation, and the students will be an active part of the Pavilion's kitchen and serving staff while earning credits for their school program.

"These students are growing their skills in a highly important and unusual environment in the Pavilion, and Culinary Capers is helping to grow our cooking and catering field," said **Debra Lykkemark**, president of Culinary Capers. "This is a great example of how B.C. Canada Pavilion and the Province are working to create legacies for B.C."



Culinary Capers' president Debra Lykkemark and chef Jonathan Chovancek are gearing up to showcase B.C. cuisine at B.C. Canada Pavilion in Beijing before and during the Summer Games.

"Working in a kitchen in another country – especially in these unique and extraordinary conditions – is going to be one of the

most challenging and rewarding experiences for our students," said **J.C. Felicella**, VCC's department head of culinary arts. "Much

like any co-op program, a passing mark will be based on the students' abilities to learn and perform all the necessary tasks to make the Pavilion kitchen and special events the very best they can be."

The students will work under Chef de Cuisine, **Jonathan Chovancek**, who has been charged with showcasing the best of B.C. food, beer and wine for the many business delegations and special events at the Pavilion. Chovancek has created two signature B.C. Canada Pavilion recipes that are being shared at home and abroad. The bulk of the ingredients for the hors d'oeuvre will be shipped to Beijing, to showcase home-grown produce like sable fish caught off northern Vancouver Island, Chilliwack thistle honey, Vancouver Island chanterelle mushrooms, Quebec maple sugar, organic Alberta pork, Okanagan wine and Whistler Brewing beer.

"Food can make or break an event, so we're honoured to be chosen to cater for the hundreds of guests to the Pavilion. We're really out to wow them and leave a lasting impression of our cuisine and B.C. produce," said Lykkemark. "It's always been part of our practice to use local produce whenever possible, but to showcase our delicious, high-quality foods to the world is very exciting."

Culinary Capers won't be the only company looking to do a little food business in Beijing. A portion of the Pavilion's business program is dedicated to agri-food, where provinces will have the opportunity to speak with high-level Beijing executives about why we are the best place to invest and do business.

B.C. Canada Pavilion is managed by the B.C. Secretariat in the provincial **Ministry of Economic Development**. More information on British Columbia Canada Pavilion is available at www.bccanadapavilion.ca.

For more information, visit www.culinarycapers.com. 