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CHEFS CHRIS TORGIS AND JOEL GRAY OF BRUCE WINE BAR CROWNED CHAMPIONS FOR SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR AT OCEAN WISE SEAFOOD® CHOWDER CHOWDOWN

Toronto, ON – Spoons were out, ladles were full of chowder and beer was flowing at the Fermenting Cellar in The Distillery District last night, as 14 notable chefs from local Ocean Wise seafood partner restaurants brought their best recipe to the table at the annual Ocean Wise Seafood Chowder Chowdown. Each November during Ocean Wise Seafood Month, this event brings together some of the region’s top stars and sustainability champions. During one heated evening, they battle it out for the enviable title of Ocean Wise Chowder Chowdown Champion.

For the second year in a row, a judging panel of food-savvy media, chefs and industry leaders selected Chefs Chris Torgis and Joel Gray as the 2017 Ocean Wise Seafood Chowder Chowdown Champions. The Thornbury-based restaurant presented chowder lovers with their patriotic Canada 150 Coast to Coast Chowder . It featured a mélange of sustainable seafood, including Ontario farmed Pacific shrimp, Gulf of St. Lawrence crab, Lake Huron smoked whitefish and wild Pacific ikura, complemented by local corn velouté, wild leek pesto and pickled roots and left the judges wanting more. The crowd of several hundred had their say too, and voted Scout Canning as the People’s Choice Award winner, selected for their Scout’s Scullery Soup, made with clams, mussels and haddock.

“This event is a celebration of the amazing culinary scene Ontario has to offer and the people who have helped it grow, including food lovers, industry leaders and chef partners,” said Ann-Marie Copping, Ocean Wise seafood program manager. “The energy in the room was palpable, as guests buzzed about their favourite chowders and cast their votes for the top prizes. Everyone there is united in their support of sustainable seafood, helping to ensure our oceans are healthy and flourishing for generations to come.”

There were breweries from across the province pouring everything from pineapple IPA to refreshing lagers and wheat beers. Guests could also take their pick from other delicious beverages including a gin smash from Georgian Bay Spirit Co. and the perfect, sustainable caesar from Walter Caesar and Dillon’s vodka. Patrick McMurray, better know as Shucker Paddy of The Ceili Cottage, was also back to host his popular oyster bar.

The 14 chowders featured an impressive array of seafood, from caviar to to lobster. A list of participating chefs and beverage partners can be found [here](#).

This year’s panel of distinguished judges was:

- Brad Long, Owner and Executive Chef, Café Belong



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- Martin Koupprie, Executive Chef
- Kristin Donovan, Co-Owner, Hooked Inc.
- Joseph Chiaravalloti, Sustainability Specialist, Seacore Seafood Inc.
- Rita DeMontis, National Food Editor, Sun Media

The Ocean Wise seafood program began as a grassroots movement in Vancouver in 2005 and is now Canada's most recognizable sustainable seafood program. What started as an initiative involving 16 chefs has expanded to include more than 700 partners with locations from Victoria to St. John's.

This year's Ocean Wise Seafood Chowder Chowdown in Toronto was made possible with the support of Seacore Seafood Inc. and Distillery Events, with chef aprons donated by Chef Works.

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Editor's Note: Photos from Chowder Chowdown are available on request.

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