



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 16, 2017**

## **CHEF MATTHIAS FONG OF RIVER CAFÉ CROWNED 2017 CHAMPION AT OCEAN WISE SEAFOOD CHOWDER CHOWDOWN**

**Calgary, AB** – Spoons were out, ladles were full of chowder and beer was flowing at Hotel Arts in Calgary last night, as 11 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.

A judging panel of food-savvies selected Chef Matthias Fong and team as the 2017 Ocean Wise Seafood Chowder Chowdown Champions. They presented chowder lovers with their twist on a classic chowder, serving a chilled Manhattan clam chowder. It featured bacon sabayon, clam nectar gelée and tomato jam that left the judges wanting more. The award for Best Beer Pairing went to Chef Peter Paiva at host restaurant Raw Bar at the Hotel Arts for their Tom Yum Chowder, which was paired with The Grizzly Paw’s Sou’wester New England IPA.

The crowd of several hundred had their say too, and voted Deane House as the People’s Choice Award winner, selected for Chef Jamie Harling’s Clam and Merguez Chowder, a perfectly creamy dish topped with sourdough crostini.

“This event is a celebration of the amazing culinary scene Alberta 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 oyster stout to spicy winter ale. Guests could also quench their thirst with the perfect, sustainable caesar from Ocean Wise seafood partner Walter Caesar.

The 11 chowders featured an impressive array of seafood, from octopus to clams. A list of participating chefs and beverage partners can be found [here](#). Each chef and judge donned sleek new aprons courtesy of Chef Works.

This year’s panel of distinguished judges was:

- Diana Ng, Writer, Eatnorth.ca



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- John Gilchrist, Restaurant critic and food writer
- Chef Michael Allemeier, instructor at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology and Master Chef

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.

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

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