

Learn about the harvest at Lava Cap Winery

Lava Cap Winery is partnering with Rick Kushman of the Sacramento Bee to offer a series of classes on wine.

Kushman is an award winning journalist who's been nationally syndicated and a weekly commentator on food and wine on Sacramento's KFBK NewsTalk AM-1530. His popularity as a speaker comes in big part because he makes wine fun, which is surprisingly rare among wine educators and somewhat ironic since people drink wine to have fun.

In Harvest 101 Kushman will focus on the process of harvesting wine grapes. He will begin the class in the vineyard and then move to the crush pad, where the grapes are harvested. Kushman will discuss how the winemaker improves the wine quality through particular harvesting techniques. The class will finish in the winery's barrel room with wine tastings.

Lava Cap's popular red and white wines will be featured and sampled, including new releases.

The class will last 90 minutes and begins at 1pm on Sept. 18th at Lava Cap Winery near Placerville. Contact Lava Cap Winery for tickets and information (530) 621.0175 or www.lavacap.com.

Sierra Foothills wineries to pour at Blackhawk event

California's vast Sierra Foothills American Viticultural Area, spanning 2.6 million acres along the western foothills of the

Sierra Nevada, encompasses an array of elevations, microclimates and soil types ideal for grape growing.

On Sept. 19 from 3-6pm at the Blackhawk Country Club in Danville, wine lovers can experience the richness and diversity of this legendary, high-elevation wine region at a tasting called “Moving Mountains: the Sierra Foothills Wine Experience.”

More than 40 wineries from Calaveras, Amador and El Dorado counties will pour their finest wines – from great-old vine Zinfandels to varietals and blends crafted from classic French, Italian and Spanish varieties – paired with Mediterranean-style finger foods and live flamenco guitar music.

One of many harvest-season events in September as part of California Wine Month, the “Moving Mountains” tasting benefits the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano counties, which will receive 100 percent of the proceeds from an on-site silent auction.

The “Moving Mountains” tasting is the inaugural event of the newly formed Sierra Foothills Wine Alliance, comprised of the winery associations of Amador, Calaveras and El Dorado counties, which represent the vast majority of Sierra Foothills wineries. It provides a rare opportunity for wine lovers, in one place and on one day, to explore the Sierra Foothills AVA, which was formally established in 1987, but dates to the early days of the Gold Rush, when grapevines were first introduced by European immigrant fortune-seekers.

Tickets for the “Moving Mountains” tasting are \$35 in advance at or \$50 at the door. More information is available [here](#).

Harrahs-Harveys to host wine-food fest

The Lake Tahoe Food and Wine Festival arrives at Harrah's and Harveys Lake Tahoe Sept. 30 and lasts through Oct. 3.

Events include lots of food and wine, plus discussions, presentations and demonstrations by celebrated food and wine experts including: Gary Vaynerchuk, author and host of the video blog Wine Library TV; Elizabeth Falkner, master chef and owner of Citizen Cake patisserie and Orson restaurant in San Francisco; Anthony Bourdain, chef, raconteur, author of bestsellers including No Reservations and Medium Raw, and host of the popular travel and food series, Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations; and Chef Martin Yan, celebrated host of more than 3,000 cooking shows including the Yan Can Cook and author of over 30 cookbooks.

Of course, food and wine are the biggest stars and a spectacular "Epicurean Expo," featuring dishes from Harrah's best restaurants across the country and the finest wines of Napa Valley and beyond, highlights the weekend.

The Lake Tahoe Food and Wine Festival kicks into high gear on Friday night with an "Asian Delights Dinner" at Gi Fu Loh restaurant at Harrah's. Gi Fu Loh's Master Chef Hung Wong and Master Chef Martin Yan will join forces to present an authentic, Cantonese-style five course dinner, presenting Asian specialties in an intimate setting.

At 7:30, the festival moves to the legendary South Shore Room at Harrah's where Chef Elizabeth Falkner brings her high-energy presentation to the stage, featuring the unstoppable creativity that have made her one of the most recognizable faces of the Bay Area culinary scene.

Next door at 19 Kitchen, Gary Vaynerchuk hosts a Wine Pairing

Dinner. Vaynerchuk matches-up some of his favorite vintages with an exquisite, multi-course meal prepared by the Harrah's culinary team.

On Oct. 2, events get under way with "Beyond the Fork Epicurean Expo: An Affair for the Senses" at Harrah's Special Events Center. Stroll through the Epicurean Expo and enjoy the multifarious tastes of Harrah's best restaurants from around the country, plus local favorites and samplings from the best wineries in Napa Valley and beyond. There's plenty of entertainment and exhibitions, too, featuring Chef Martin Yan's popular Yan Can Cook demonstration, among others. Chef Falkner will be there and the Expo marks the official West Coast launch of the "Harrah's Seven Stars Cookbook." A full afternoon of culinary delights.

Also on Saturday afternoon is a special Wine Tasting with Gary Vaynerchuk at Friday's Station Steak & Seafood Grill, located on the 18th floor of Harrah's.

On Saturday night, Harrah's South Shore Room will host a special evening with Anthony Bourdain. A hugely insightful and entertaining author, chef, restaurateur, storyteller and TV star, Bourdain is best known for his many books and, especially, his hit show on the Travel Channel, Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations. His latest book, Medium Raw: A Bloody Valentine to the World of Food and the People Who Cook, is a major success and currently on the New York Times Bestseller list.

On Oct. 3, a Farewell Brunch at Harveys 19 Kitchen will feature a variety of dishes from the "Harrah's Seven Stars Cookbook," prepared by Harrah's chefs. Editor of the new Harrah's cookbook, John Schlimm, will help host the event and autograph copies of the book. Schlimm is also author of the hugely popular Ultimate Beer Lover's Cookbook.

Additional events during the "Lake Tahoe Food and Wine

Festival” include a special Saturday night Lafite Rothschild Winemaker’s Dinner at 19 Kitchen and a unique, one-day Tahoe Tech Talk Conference, featuring Gary Vaynerchuk and a panel of the top innovators in the world of the internet and social media.

For more information and to register for this special conference, go to: <http://tahoetechtalkconf.com>.

Food Fest benefits LTUSD students

Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation’s Food Fest netted \$23,000 in 2009 and is looking to exceed that mark at the Oct. 15 fundraiser.

The event is from 6:30-10pm at Harveys in Stateline.

Tickets are \$35 in advance, \$40 at the door.

Email lake.tahoe.educational.foundation@gmail.com for more information.

NewLife Nutrition offers sensible ideas for healthy

lifestyles

NewLife Nutrition is the Tahoe-Reno area's newest solution to living a healthy lifestyle. The business is all about helping residents of all shapes and sizes improve overall health via tasty food and simple lifestyle changes.

Amber Wilson, a registered dietitian, observes that many diet and weight loss programs are a quick fix that causes unwanted relapses after weeks or months, and recommends the long-term solution to living healthier comes through simple changes in lifestyle.

"I've noticed too many individuals whose expectations were not met after trying a nutrition or weight-loss program due to the quick-fix nature that many programs live by," Wilson said in a press release. "Also, many programs completely restrict foods that can and should be included in one's diet to prevent over indulging, or that may even have positive health benefits in moderation such as wine and chocolate."



Amber Wilson
recently
opened NewLife
Nutrition in
Tahoe.

NewLife Nutrition's opening is timely with September representing National Whole Grains Month. Throughout September, Wilson will post a new recipe on her blog each Monday, Wednesday and Friday that focuses on using a whole

grain. People are encouraged to submit recipe ideas and interests to Wilson at a.wilson@new-life-nutrition.com.

“I’m passionate about healthy living, and want to show people that eating well can be fun and simple,” Wilson says. “Much of our society connects healthy eating to meals that lack taste and require too much prep time. I hope my recipe ideas will encourage people to eat better and become creative in the kitchen.”

NewLife Nutrition has two additional business divisions – NewBaby Nutrition and NewlyWed Nutrition – which offer specific programs and services to assist pregnant women, children, and engaged or married couples create healthy and nutritious living habits for optimal health.

Wilson’s consulting approach is tailored to the convenience of her clients. Home, phone and web consultations are available. For more information, [click here](#).

Kirkwood’s annual chili cookoff Labor Day weekend

Great weather, live music and award-winning chili have become traditional fare at Kirkwood Mountain Resort’s annual Thin Air Chili Cookoff, part of a full lineup of family-friendly events scheduled to take place Labor Day weekend.

Originally intended as a summer sendoff party for Kirkwood homeowners and Lake Tahoe locals, the event has grown to attract chili aficionados from across Northern California and Nevada with a cash prize and bragging rights on the line for the winning recipe.

In addition to a variety of expertly crafted chili recipes to sample, event attendees can taste the latest offerings from regional wineries and breweries while grooving to the music of Mick Martin & the Blues Rockers as they perform on the Village Plaza throughout the afternoon. The action gets underway Sept. 4 from noon-5pm with a \$20 admission fee covering chili and beer/wine tasting.

Thin Air Chili Cookoff veterans have learned to work up a healthy appetite by participating in the annual 5K and 10K runs hosted by the Tahoe Mountain Milers and Sage Brush Stompers. This year's races will mark the event's 30-year milestone and are scheduled to get under way on Sept. 4 at 9am with half mile and 1 mile fun-runs.

The 10K trail climbs nearly 1,500 feet and is widely recognized as one of Northern California and Nevada's most challenging high alpine races, attracting elite caliber athletes and recreational runners alike. The 5K course meanders through the wetlands of the preserved 220-acre Kirkwood meadow.

Preregistration is \$35 and available online at www.race360.com; otherwise, the entry fee is \$40 the day of the event with all proceeds from registration fees benefiting the Kirkwood Volunteer Fire Department. Registration on race day will be open from 8:15am to 9am. Further information can be found by visiting www.tahoemilers.org or by calling (775) 588.2864.

Menus set for Lake Tahoe

Restaurant Week

Forget planning a Labor Day menu. Escape to Lake Tahoe, for the inaugural Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week.



Take a hearty hike along the Tahoe Rim Trail, mountain bike the famed Flume Trail or spend the day kayaking Lake Tahoe's picturesque waters, then head to one of the 30 restaurants offering three-course prix-fixe menus as part of the seven-day celebration, Sept. 5-12. Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week attendees also save on lodging, up to 35 percent off, by booking at participating properties.

There are no passes, tickets or coupons needed to take part in Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week. Instead, guests visit their favorite Lake Tahoe eatery, historic bistro or charming resort, all of which are offering menus for \$20, \$30 or \$40 per person (tax and gratuity not included). Reservations, however, are recommended.

On the South Shore, 19 Kitchen & Bar has lobster corn chowder and beef medallions fromage, with Fresh Ketch providing a stuffed halibut with shrimp, lobster, scallops, Brie, dill and lemon beurre blanc. For authentic Mexican, Latin Soul has lamb steak with goat cheese crust and caramel flan with seasonal berries. Don't miss the maple leaf duck breast at Edgewood Restaurant. It's served up with an apple ginger sauce and sweet potato gnocchi, and can be paired with a 2006 BR Cohn, Silver Label, Cabernet.

North Lake Tahoe restaurants: Cottonwood Restaurant is offering a pine nut crusted Asian Basa with a tomato and dill beurre blanc and roasted autumn vegetables. River Grill has green chard raviolis with Sonoma goat cheese and portabella mushrooms, while Six Peaks Grille is providing a pan seared

Bristol Bay salmon (with \$2 of every \$30 three-course dinner going to the Tahoe Forest Cancer Center). Right on the lake, Lone Eagle Grille has a mesquite grilled New York steak over watercress and red cabbage salad.

To learn more about Lake Tahoe Restaurant Week, a list of participating dining establishments and their downloadable prix-fixe menus, lodging discounts and how to take part, visit the website or call (530) 583.2138.

In search of deals at farmers' markets

By Niesha Lofing, Sacramento Bee

Shoppers by the thousands heed the siren call of farm-fresh foods at a staggering 50 farmers markets dotting the region.

Many of these stomping grounds of sustainability have been initiating locals into healthy, locally grown food long before the word “locavore” was coined. They offer culinary inspiration in packages as tiny and wholesome as a blackberry and connect buyers eye to eye with the people growing their food.

Whatever the motivation for hitting the farmers market, underlying it all is one act: shopping. And these days, shopping is all about deals.



Farmers' markets are about freshness, not always a price break.

Photo/Kathryn Reed

Yet many farmers markets have evolved into hot spots for the urban upper crust. (Those monogrammed jute bags are the giveaway.) So The Bee's Food & Wine staff wondered: Can the average shopper find bargains at a farmers market?

Read the whole story

Young farmers bucking the trend of withering profession

By Gina Kim, Sacramento Bee

There are small moments that make farming worthwhile for 26-year-old Toby Hastings – detaching a ripe Sharlyn melon from the vine with just a slight tug, digging for potatoes and finding nests of them huddled together, snapping the stem of a perfect strawberry.

Hastings is in his third season of coaxing life from tidy rows in the middle of an organic walnut orchard in rural Winters. He is simultaneously bucking two trends: the aging of the nation's farmers and the increasingly difficult feat of finding land that can be farmed and starting a business.

Hastings' Free Spirit Farm was born in 2008 when he became the "farmer incubator" – a name borrowed from the term business incubator – of the Center for Land-Based Learning, a nonprofit organization that exposes youths to sustainable agriculture and nature restoration.

Read the whole story

Cooking class with Minden chef

Buona Sera Ristorante & Bar in Minden is having a cooking class with the chef on Aug. 30 from 5-7pm. This is a practical course for a group, followed by a tasting dinner with the chef.

Individual fee is \$25, plus materials and ingredients fee not to exceed \$22.

Bring your apron and knives.

Call (530) 632.9516 to signup.