

west of western
CULINARY FESTIVAL

Phoenix Art Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FIFTH ANNUAL WEST OF WESTERN CULINARY FESTIVAL
TO BE HELD MARCH 14 AND 15**

The Southwest's Premier Culinary Festival Showcases Independent Chefs in Picturesque Setting

PHOENIX (September 22, 2008) – The ambiance of a sophisticated garden party. The artistry of 60 renowned Arizona chefs. The flavors of 100 wines and spirits. West of Western, the Southwest's premier culinary arts festival, features chefs from top independent restaurants and delivers an avant-garde epicurean experience. Held at Phoenix Art Museum, this multi-sensory affair of signature dishes, stunning works of art, live musical performance and hands-on demonstrations celebrates its fifth anniversary on Saturday, March 14 and Sunday, March 15, 2009.

Designed as a weekend of fine food, education and entertainment, the highlight of West of Western is the Chefs' Invitational Grand Tasting, an unparalleled gathering of the Arizona's top executive chefs, chefs de cuisine and pastry chefs. Participants are selected for their excellence and innovation in the culinary arts and come ready to impress with trend-setting specialties. Set in Phoenix Art Museum's lush and tranquil Dorrance Sculpture Garden, chefs prepare entrees "al fresco" exposing the art of the kitchen to guests who sample incredible gourmet offerings.

"West of Western is a showcase of the great culinary artists that are responsible for the amazing haute cuisine this region is becoming known for," commented Scott Andrews, Director, West of West Culinary Festival. "West of Western focuses on quality, not quantity. We intentionally limit the number of participants because we want our guests to sample the best that Arizona has to offer in a setting that allows the chefs to engage with festival goers."

Inside Phoenix Art Museum the festivities continue. In the Museum's Great Hall at The Wine Table, connoisseurs and novices sample dozens of labels from around the world with the assistance of trained sommeliers and wine masters. Presentations by local and national food and wine experts, cooking demonstrations, live music and docent lead tours of Phoenix Art Museum complete the experience.

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West of Western 2009 – add one

“West of Western Culinary Festival is a terrific display of all Phoenix has to offer,” commented Jim Ballinger, The Sybil Harrington Director, Phoenix Art Museum. “The fifth anniversary of West of Western coincides with the opening of the Museum’s spring exhibition *In Contemporary Rhythm: The Art of Ernest L. Blumenschein* bringing together world-class art with amazing cuisine from Valley restaurants and resorts in one unique lifestyle event.”

Event Details

The West of Western Culinary Festival will be held March 14 and 15, 2009, at Phoenix Art Museum from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Advance tickets can be purchased on line at westofwestern.com. Prices are as follows:

\$75, Adult, one day pass including food and wine

\$67, Adult, one day pass, food only

\$22, Youth, children ages 9 thru 15, one day pass

Children under 9 admitted free with adult

General admission to Phoenix Art Museum is included in Festival tickets. West of Western will be held on the opening weekend of *In Contemporary Rhythm: The Art of Ernest L. Blumenschein*. This major retrospective, the most comprehensive to date, showcases more than 60 paintings and studies that demonstrate why Blumenschein is one of the most accomplished, successful, and innovative painters of the 20th century.

West of Western is presented in partnership with Phoenix Art Museum, Whole Foods, Community Food Connections and Slow Food Phoenix. Promotional support has been provided by Desert Living, Cox Communications, Arizona Republic, Latino Future, Barnes & Noble, Nestlé Waters and Bentley Projects.

West of Western is made possible through the generosity of the chefs of Arizona, the participation of many wineries and the dedication of volunteers. West of Western is produced by Cakewalk Projects. For more information visit westofwestern.com.

Phoenix Art Museum is the Southwest’s premier destination for world-class visual arts. Popular exhibitions featuring artists such as Rembrandt, Norman Rockwell, Annie Leibowitz and Monet are shown along side the Museum’s outstanding collection of more than 17,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, Western American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. A community epicenter for nearly fifty years, Phoenix Art Museum presents festivals, live performances, independent art films and educational programs that enlighten, entertain and stimulate. Visitors also enjoy PhxArtKids an interactive space for children, vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum’s landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, the lushly landscaped Sculpture Garden, dining at Arcadia Farms at Phoenix Art Museum, and shopping at The Museum Store.

To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit PhxArt.org, or call the 24-hour recorded information line at (602) 257-1222.

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