



**Chef Dave “D.K.” Kodma Wins the Maui Onion Recipe Contest
at the 22nd Annual Maui Onion Festival**

KĀ’ANAPALI, Maui – With the winning dish, *Maui Onion, Kekaha Shrimp & Lobster Cake with Swiss Chard, Hamakua Ali’i Mushrooms & Lobster Uni Sauce*, Chef Dave “D.K.” Kodama took top honors in the Maui Onion Recipe Contest at the 22nd Annual Maui Onion Festival hosted by Whalers Village Fine Shops & Restaurants. Other top winners included Wayne Finlinson, 34, of St. George, Utah (adult) and Dante Gramuglia, 10 and a 5th grader at Princess Nahienaena Elementary School (keiki) who won their respective divisions in the Raw Maui Onion Eating Contests, Chef Kevin Boyle of ‘Umalu of The Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa who took first place in the Maui Onion Challenge, a two-week appetizer challenge amongst eight restaurants in Kā’anapali Beach Resort and the farmers belonging to the Maui Onion Growers Association who had the longest line throughout the day for their tempura-style Maui Kula Onion rings.

The 2012 Maui Onion Festival is confirmed to take place on Saturday, May 5, 2012 and the Maui Onion Beer Pairing Dinner will be held at Hula Grill Kā’anapali on Friday, May 4.

Held annually in honor of the Maui Kula Onion, Maui’s most famous agricultural export, Whalers Village hosted its signature event and, once again, brought Maui’s upcountry, agricultural heritage to Kā’anapali. “It was an amazing event. Attendance was up and the retail shops, restaurants and festival vendors were busier than ever.” said Lisa Donlon, marketing manager, Whalers Village Fine Shops & Restaurants.

The Maui Onion Recipe Contest chefs included James McDonald of Pacific’O and i’o Restaurants; Chef Roy Yamaguchi of Roy’s Restaurants; Chef Brian Etheredge of Capische; Chef Eric Arbogast of Cuarto; and Chef David Paul Johnson of David Paul’s Island Grill. Visiting emcees Manolo Morales of KHON 2 and Cutty Cutler led all of the center stage and beachfront lawn stage activities, and this year’s Maui Onion Recipe Contest judges included Chris Speere, coordinator, Maui Culinary Academy, Carla Tracy, dining/food editor, *Maui News*, Shannon Wianecki, assistant editor & dining/food writer, *Maui No Ka Oi* magazine, and Mike Horn, co-host, CRN’s *What’s Cooking* radio show.

Participating Maui Onion Challenge restaurants included CJ's Deli & Diner at the Fairway Shops, Black Rock Steak & Seafood at Sheraton Maui, Tiki Terrace Restaurant at Kā'anapali Beach Hotel, Cane & Taro, Pūlehu at The Westin Kā'anapali Ocean Resort Villas, Tropica Restaurant & Bar at The Westin Maui Resort & Spa, and Royal Lāhainā Resort's Ocean Terrace. The general public was encouraged to dine at participating Ka'anapali restaurants to taste and score the featured appetizers. Consumers were eligible to win a trip for two between Maui and any non-stop destination serviced by Alaska Airlines.

About Chef Dave "D.K." Kodma: Dave Kodama now owns and operates seven restaurants on three islands, including four Sansei Seafood Restaurant & Sushi Bars, d.k. Steak House, VINO Italian Tapas & Wine Bar and Hiroshi Eurasion Tapas. D.K. and his team have garnered a plethora of awards, rave reviews and acknowledgements including highest food ratings in *Zagat Hawaii* Restaurant Surveys, inclusion as one of *Bon Appetit's* "Favorite Asian Restaurants" and one of "America's Best Sushi Bars" in *Travel + Leisure*.

About the Maui Kula Onion: A golden-pale globe with mild, crunchy flesh, the Maui Kula Onion embodies premium quality, belongs to the sweetest onions in the world, and is grown on about 150 acres in cool, fertile Kula. Its name is trademarked to safeguard authenticity.

About Whalers Village Fine Shops & Restaurants: Recognized as Maui's premier oceanfront shopping destination, Whalers Village Fine Shops & Restaurants is part of the master-planned, award-winning Kā'anapali Beach Resort and hugs the famed three-mile long strip of Kā'anapali Beach. Set on 8.5 tropical acres, diverse, carefree, and sophisticated at once, the three-level open-air village comprises 111,857 square feet of retail space with a vibrant variety of shops and restaurants and offers a world-renowned whaling museum, cultural crafts and entertainment, and dynamic annual celebrations. Open daily from 9:30 a.m. until 10 p.m., it's the place to shop, dine, and play. Visit www.whalersvillage.com for more information.

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