



Whalers Village announces date for 20th Annual Maui Onion Festival in 2009

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Kā'anapali, Maui – Whalers Village Fine Shops & Restaurants recently announced the date for the 2009 Maui Onion Festival will be Saturday, May 2.

“Starting with our 2009 event, the annual Maui Onion Festival will always be scheduled on the first Saturday in May,” said Lisa Donlon, Marketing Director for Whalers Village Fine Shops and Restaurants. “The change from summer to spring will be great. The weather is perfect and the resort will be less busy, giving us an opportunity to collaborate with the Kā'anapali Resort partners to create a Maui Onion Festival package, something that we've been thinking about for some time.”

A fun event for the entire family, nearly 10,000 visitors and residents attended the 2008 festival, enjoying the full schedule of activities on two stages and crispy, fried Maui Onion Rings. Maui farmers brought more than 1,000 pounds of the famous Maui Kula Onions to the event to sell. The light, tempura batter makes these onion rings a crowd favorite each year!



This year, five of Hawai'i's top chefs competed in the Maui Onion Recipe contest. Chef Russell Siu of 3660 On the Rise and Kaakako Kitchen took top honors with his Pan Seared Lacquered Salmon with Pickled Maui Kula Onions and Yuzu Butter Sauce.



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Daniel Onn, a 24-year old from Saratoga, California was the winner of the adult raw Maui Onion eating contest and wearing a Maui Onion lei, Sage Merchant, a 10-year old from Fremont, California emerged victorious in the Keiki division after eating ¼ pound of the famous sweet onion in 60 seconds. When asked what her strategy was, Merchant said “I just stuffed a bunch of them in my mouth. I love onions.”



From the sale of Maui Onion Festival t-shirts, Whalers Village will be donating \$6,228 to Habitat for Humanity.

Mahalo to 2008 festival sponsors Marriott Maui Ocean Club, The Ritz-Carlton Club, Hawaiian Airlines, Kona Brewing Company, Kā'anapali Beach Resort, Williams & Sonoma, Honolulu and Hawai'i magazines.

About Maui Onion Festival

First celebrated in 1990, Maui's famed crop, the Maui Kula Onion, remains at the center of a one-day extravaganza that brings thousands of kama'āina and visitors together around the cross-cultural themes of agriculture, joy and good food.

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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