

## NEARSIDE

## Get a taste of Prince Edward County

Annual event next weekend offers samples of beer, wine, chefs' creations

BY LAURA ROBIN

If you're curious about all the buzz about the great new wines and delicious foods being produced in Prince Edward County, you can sample most of them at one stop next Saturday.

Picton, about a three-hour drive from Ottawa, will be the site of the seventh annual TASTE! celebration of regional cuisine. You pay \$15 admission to the town's Crystal Palace, then purchase 50-cent sampling tickets so you can try wines, chefs' creations, beer and locally grown products (samples cost from one to six tickets each).

"So for \$25 to \$30, you get to try the best of the county," says Rebecca LeHeup-Bucknell, executive director of Taste the County, the group that organizes the event. "TASTE! is my favourite time of year as we all come together to celebrate the bounty of the fall harvest in the region. The partnerships between the growers, producers, chefs, winemakers and brewmasters are inspiring."

Even though Prince Edward County is slightly closer to Toronto than Ottawa, many of the winemakers and other food and drink producers say that Ottawans are their best customers.

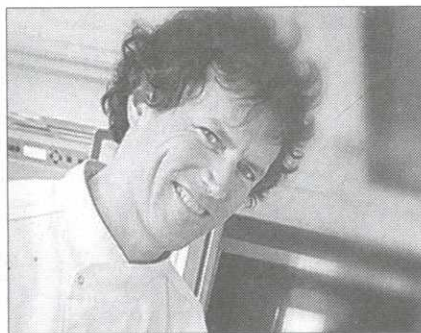
"I'd say that this summer, no kidding, 95 per cent of our tourists were from Ottawa," says Donna Sauvé, sales manager for the new Barley Days Brewery in Picton. "The people are really microbrewery beer drinkers ... they're very interested in local. It's fantastic."

Barley Days will be among nine wineries, breweries and cideries offering samples at the TASTE! event. Food samples will include new sheep- and goat's-milk cheeses from Fifth Town Artisan Cheese Company, fabulous lamb sausage and other handmade charcuterie from Michael and Karin Potter of Harvest restaurant, french fries from Toronto chef Jamie Kennedy (who owns a farm in the county, where he plans to open a tavern and restaurant), elk burgers from Graham Farms and limited-edition hotdogs from Buddha Dog (which specializes in serving "one with everything"). In all, there will be 42 booths, mainly offering food and drink samples, but some offering information on county attractions.

New this year will be a farmers' market, with all proceeds going to the Picton Food Bank.


The event will be accompanied by live jazz and goes from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 27. It's limited to those 19 years of age and older.

For tickets and more information, see [www.tastecelebration.ca](http://www.tastecelebration.ca) or call 1-866-845-6644.



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The area has attracted many big-name chefs, including Toronto's Jamie Kennedy, who owns a farm in the county.



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