

Cuisine?Art festival returning to Alton Mill this month

A creative recipe for a perfect weekend: Take one historic mill, combine with an enviable art culture, mix in gifted artists, passionate local chefs, food producers, and an array of exciting entertainment and merchants, and what do you get?

The fifth annual Cuisine?Art festival at the Alton Mill.

Alton Mill is on the banks of Shaw's Creek. This national award-winning heritage building is now an industrial-chic home to artists studios, galleries, a heritage museum, cafe, boutique shops and a unique event venue.

This spectacular summer weekend is designed to celebrate the Mill's fabulously diverse resident artists and their work, while sampling a range of amazing food and drink from local producers and chefs. It will be the chance to see and taste something thing brilliantly creative. It will also help to revitalize the Mill Pond and improve the water quality of Shaw's Creek and the Credit River systems.

Cuisine-Art 2013 will give the opportunity for the curious to roll up their sleeves and enjoy a sample workshop from resident artists, as well as experience a food or drink samples from the nutritional and healthy, to the indulgent naughty but nice, while wandering through art studios. Then take in the hourly live cook-offs, where chefs are given a black box of secret ingredients and compete against the clock. There is even a chance to get those burning culinary questions answered through the many cooking demo's offered.

It begins with a gourmet kick-off celebration July 19, with an array of artistic talent. Interact with the resident artists, then go into the Annex and spend the evening under the stars, enjoying great food, drink and music before the delightful outdoor theatre presentation begins.

The festival will continue Saturday and Sunday (July 20 and 21) from noon to 5 p.m.

Most foodies will know the co-hosts for the event; Theresa Albert, a family-oriented nutritionalist, avid food tweeter, blogger, pinner and TV personality, with appearances on CBC's Steven and Chris as well as CTV's Health News; and Ali Hassan, comedian, actor, self proclaimed kitchen ninja and regular comedic panelist on CBC TV's George Stroumboulopoulos Tonight.

There will be Sip and Savour Tastings Passes, and people carrying them will be able to spend the day tasting samples of fine wines, craft beers, regional premium ciders and gourmet delights throughout the Mill; exploring the open studios, shops and galleries as resident artists display their work and demonstrate their technique; take in the Chefs' Demos hourly in the Annex Courtyard Main Stage; attend the daily cook-offs, featuring a Black Box of locally sourced ingredients and chefs vying for the 'This Chef is Hot' award; and visiting the Good Things Market, where they'll find merchants offering great products for the home, kitchen and palette or palate.

Tastings Passes are \$30 each day (or \$20 in advance from altonmill.ca)

Friday and Saturday evenings will include music, cash bar and choices from the dinner options available, as well as performances of As You Like It by Humber River Shakespeare Co. The open air theatre performances are held at 7 p.m. both nights. Tickets are \$20 and available at humberrivershakespeare.ca

Each day and evening offers something a little different, be sure to keep checking the festival website at www.altonmill.ca for a full list of artists, events and participating chefs.

Cuisine-Art proceeds support the Alton Millpond Rehabilitation Fund, a tributary of the Credit River.