



Inn at Laurel Point

For Immediate Release

Third-annual Great Gingerbread Showcase on now at Victoria's Inn at Laurel Point

Nov. 24, 2011, Victoria, BC – Things will be a bit spicier at Victoria's Inn at Laurel Point from now through Jan. 2, 2012 with entries for the 2011 Great Gingerbread Showcase now on public display.

The annual festive fundraising event sees local bakers (both amateur and professional) going head-to-head in creating (using 100 per cent edible ingredients) the city's most elaborate gingerbread houses – all in the name of raising funds for Habitat for Humanity Victoria and, of course, earning bragging rights. This year's event has a record 25 entries on display throughout the hotel, ranging from *T 'was the Night Before Christmas* by Ryan Townsend to *Monastery Brewery* by Crystal Duck of Spinnakers Gastro Brew Pub and *Poseidon's Playground* by Melanie Lonsdale.

And while a panel of expert judges (Jeff Bell from the *Times Colonist*, Grant McKenzie from *Monday Magazine*, Mary Griffin from *CHEK* and chef Heidi Fink) have already given kudos to some of this year's top delicious dwellings, members of the public have the ultimate power by picking the winner of the highest category, People's Choice, by exchanging a donation to Habitat for Humanity Victoria for a vote. Ballots and donation boxes are located at the hotel's front desk and third-floor display area (voting for the People's Choice award closes on Jan. 2, 2012).

"From stained-glass candy windows to marzipan awnings, year after year I'm blown away by the amateur and professional culinary talent that thrives in our city," said Ian Powell, general manager of Inn at Laurel Point. "And, best of all, all the funds raised from this event goes to an organization that does tremendous work in our community, making homeownership possible for local, hardworking families in need."

Last year's Great Gingerbread Showcase raised nearly \$5,000 for Habitat for Humanity Victoria – all funds went towards building new homes for low-income families living in the Victoria region.

"Every year gets better and better – the competition gets tougher and the amount of donations grow," said Yolanda Meijer, executive director of Habitat for Humanity Victoria. "You can say that the Great Gingerbread Showcase truly embodies what this season is all about: giving back to your community, offering a hand-up to those in need – and having a whole lot of fun."

Members of the public can drop by Inn at Laurel Point to check out this year's entries daily from now until Jan. 2, 2011, between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Last year's first-place winners were Spinnakers Gastro Brewpub (professional category and people's choice category); Gordon Head Middle School and Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre (tie, amateur category); and Muze Creative (corporate category).

Judge's Picks for the 2011 Great Gingerbread Showcase:

- **Children's Choice:** Canadian Home Builder's Association – Towering Achievement
- **Kick-off Kudos:** Wendy Okopski, Delta Victoria Ocean Pointe Resort – Welcome to Who-Ville
- **Professional:**
 - 1st – Melanie Lonsdale, Baker – Poseidon's Playground
 - 2nd – Crystal Duck, Spinnakers – Monastery Brewery
 - 3rd – Cailin Walsh, Oswego Hotel – Shades of Green

▪ **Amateur:**

- 1st – John Gower and Emily Grav – Fernwood Fantasy
- TIE 2nd - Louise Higgins and Ashley Cheung – Two Tarts Bake Shop
- TIE 2nd - Jude Marleau – Home Sweet Home
- 3rd - St Christopher’s Montessori School – Help me to do it Myself

To learn more about Inn at Laurel Point or Habitat for Humanity Victoria, visit www.laurelpoint.com or www.habitatvictoria.com.

About Inn at Laurel Point

Inn at Laurel Point is an elegant, Pacific Rim-inspired waterfront hotel located downtown on Victoria's Inner Harbour. It was the first carbon-neutral hotel in BC and, *Condé Nast Traveler* has rated the Inn as one of the top 25 hotels in Canada. For more information about Inn at Laurel Point, visit www.laurelpoint.com.

About Habitat for Humanity Victoria

Habitat for Humanity Victoria works in conjunction with Habitat organizations from around the globe to create a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. The organization believes in housing for all, human dignity, partnership, diversity and inclusiveness. The charity works to achieve these objectives by mobilizing volunteers and community partners to help build affordable homes for purchase by local hard-working, low-income families. For more information, visit www.habitatvictoria.com.

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Suggested Tweet: Be sure to check out the @HabitatVictoria Great Gingerbread Showcase @ILPVictoria from now to Jan 2. Vote for your favourite! #YYJ

Media Contacts:

Brian Cant, Tartan Group: 250-592-3838 or brian@tartangroup.ca

Deirdre Campbell, Tartan Group: 250-592-3838, 250-882-9199 (cell) or deirdre@tartangroup.ca

Avril Matthews, Inn at Laurel Point: 250-414-6731 or avril.matthews@laurelpoint.com

