

## A Northwest Tradition

Each year, during the last weekend in July, the world of Pinot Noir is welcomed to the charming wine country community of McMinnville, Oregon, just outside of Portland. Sixty plus Pinot producers from Australia to Argentina, Burgundy to Napa, join our local winemakers and chefs at the International Pinot Noir Celebration (IPNC). This three-day rendezvous, held on the serene campus of Linfield College, explores the grape through seminars, tastings, vineyard tours, and, of course, dining.

While the wines are of international origin, meals are lavish in Northwest cuisine. More than 50 renowned Northwest chefs prepare elaborate feasts for thousands of attendees, featuring regional ingredients and cultural culinary traditions. No dining experience captures the essence of Northwest cuisine more than the salmon bake in which whole sides of wild Northwest salmon are fastened to tall alder wood stakes that lean in toward a 60-foot-long open fire. The fish slowly roast for about an hour, as has been done for centuries by Northwest Native American tribes.

This year's salmon bake held particular significance because Chef Jason Stoller Smith, a long-time IPNC participating chef, ventured to Washington, D.C. about a month ago to recreate the salmon bake on the White House lawn for the annual congressional picnic (see [Oregon chef treats Obama to backyard cookout](#)). For the IPNC salmon bake, held last Saturday night, the Depoe Bay Chamber Of Commerce stoked the fire, as they've done for the past 20 years.

To accompany the salmon, chefs, including Stoller Smith and Farm to Fork chef Paul Bachand, prepared numerous salads and sides using local farmers' produce, and the chef-butchers of Laurelhurst Market grilled 400 pounds of bone-in pork loin served with aioli and piperade.

Following dinner, the soiree continues with winemakers eagerly filling every empty glass with their current vintage, live music and dancing, and revelry into the night. The Salmon Bake at IPNC is truly one of the Pacific Northwest's most quintessential meals.

It's not too early to think about purchasing tickets to IPNC's 25th Anniversary Celebration in July 2011. Take advantage of a special early bird price by visiting [ipnc.org](http://ipnc.org).