

# ***News Release***

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## **JUDGES PRIMED FOR ROYAL KONA MAI TAI FESTIVAL**

(Kailua-Kona, Hawaii) The Third Annual Don the Beachcomber's Mai Tai Festival at the Royal Kona Resort on Hawaii's Big Island is ready to launch August 13. Competition for the title as the "World's Best Mai Tai" and \$10,000 first prize for the winning recipe has been heating up through preliminary tastings that have been pared down from over 100 bartender applicants to the 25 remaining to mix it up during the Festival.

The highly anticipated contests will be true tests for the judges, as well. This year's judges are celebrity super chef Sam Choy, Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Mick Fleetwood, mixologist Manny Hinojosa, Publisher of Hawaii Beverage Guide Chris Teves, and Mai Tai historian and rum expert Beach Bum Berry. The festival sponsors are Hawaiian Hotels & Resorts and Better Brands.

In addition to their judging duties at the Festival, both Choy and Fleetwood will be promoting and opening new restaurants in Hawaii later this year. Choy will bring his unique Hawaiian Heritage Cuisine to Sam Choy's Kai Lanai restaurant, which will be located overlooking the Pacific Ocean, above the Keauhou Shopping Center in Kailua-Kona on the Big Island. His menu will feature locally grown meats and fresh seafood, plus fruits, vegetables, and spices from Hawaii. His "Short Bait" bar is designed like a boat cockpit, complete with captain's chairs. Choy's designer meals will be reasonably priced and served during breakfast, lunch and dinner in the 200-seat restaurant.

Fleetwood is introducing Fleetwood's on Front Street and Fleetwood's Wine Cellar in Lahaina on Maui. Open for lunch and dinner, the multi-story, 10,000-plus square-foot venue will be a unique combination restaurant, pub, art gallery, wine cellar, and entertainment venue that will cater to locals and visitors, alike. The affordable menu for the entire family will feature

everything from finger foods to Hawaiian Fusion dishes to spaghetti, hamburgers, steaks, seafood, and lamb to Fleetwood's signature creations such as Mick's Shepard Pie, Mac and Cheese, and "Drum Sets," which are flaming, chocolate-filled deserts. There will also be wine tastings and live music, including occasional performances by Fleetwood himself and surprise musicians dropping in.

In addition to the Mai Tai "Mix-Off" competition at the Royal Kona Resort, the day-long festival will feature the "World's Best BBQ" contest, Mai Tai Marketplace with locally-produced arts, crafts, clothing and foods, plus Beach Bum Berry's Mai Tai history seminar, a CD release and pool party with the world famous Hawaiian entertainer Henry Kaponu, and an evening concert by the Spin Doctors, a popular alternative rock band.

The day's events are free and open to the public. Script will be sold for food and beverage purchases.

Tickets for the Spin Doctors range from standing room only at \$35 for reserved seating at \$55. Seating is limited and intimate. Tickets for the Spin Doctors concert can be obtained at [www.groovetickets.com](http://www.groovetickets.com).

For additional information and hotel stay reservations, call toll-free 800-22-ALOHA (222-5642) or visit online at [www.royalkona.com](http://www.royalkona.com).

### **About Hawaiian Hotels & Resorts**

Hawaiian Hotels & Resorts, which owns and operates the Royal Lahaina Resort and the Royal Kona Resort, is a division of Pleasant Travel Service, a family-owned company headquartered in Newbury Park, CA. Pleasant Travel Service has helped over five millions guests create unforgettable vacation memories in Hawaii since 1959. For additional information, visit the Hawaiian Hotels & Resorts website at [www.hawaiihotels.com](http://www.hawaiihotels.com).

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