



RELEASE

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**BAYOU STATE'S MULTI-CULTURAL FOODS IMMIGRATE TO PENNSYLVANIA
FOR WPSU-TV'S 16TH ANNUAL CONNOISSEUR'S DINNER**

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. (Jan 11, 2008) – PBS Chef John Folse, host of "A Taste of Louisiana with Chef John Folse & Company: Our Food Heritage," brings the secrets of Cajun and Creole cooking to the 16th Annual Connoisseur's Dinner and Auction. This benefit for WPSU-TV will begin at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 2 at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College. Tickets are \$180 per person, \$68 of which is a tax-deductible gift to WPSU. Reservations for the event can be made by calling 814-863-6635, or e-mailing conndinner@psu.edu. For more information about Folse, the menu and reservations, visit wpsu.org/conndinner. The deadline for reservations is January 25.

Named "Louisiana's Culinary Ambassador to the World" by the Louisiana Legislature, Folse has introduced his indigenous cuisine worldwide. In 1999, Folse showcased "a taste of New Orleans" to central Pennsylvania at the 7th Annual Connoisseur's Dinner. A Mardi Gras theme will resonate again as Chef Folse shares his culinary talents and expertise with guests of this year's dinner.

The Connoisseur's Dinner will feature both a silent and live auction. The auction will include a collection of Penn State sports memorabilia and sporting event opportunities including Coach Joe Paterno's football shoes worn this past season and at the Alamo Bowl, a collector's watch from the 1991 Kickoff Classic with Georgia Tech, 2008 homecoming weekend extravaganza with Alumni Association skybox seating for two, lunch for six with Lady Lions Basketball Coach Coquese Washington, and more. Excursions include Caribbean escapes, New York City, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Chesapeake sailing. Last year's auction raised more than \$42,000 for WPSU-TV.

Folse's cooking style is unique because he uses ingredients that are local to Louisiana. "We are probably best known for the use of wild fruit such as persimmons, muscadines, and wild quince. We grow most of our own ingredients in our gardens and even whip our butter at home," Chef Folse said. "Louisiana food is best defined as the marriage of the ingredients, flavor and technique of Cajun and Creole country, with a classical plate presentation."

In order to create an authentic meal for the Connoisseur's Dinner, Folse will be bringing many fresh ingredients with him from Louisiana to central Pennsylvania. Also making the trip from Louisiana to State College will be several of Folse's chefs who will work together with the chefs from the Nittany Lion Inn. Folse's Louisiana team will include the following chefs, Daniel Thompson, Jay Kimball, and Frederick Huertin. The Folse entourage will join Nittany Lion Inn Executive Chef Tom Schilling and Sous Chef Andrew Monk in the kitchen—a collaboration that is sure to provide an exceptional dining experience.

Chef Folse and the sommelier, Dr. Robert Richards, will introduce each course and its accompanying wine selection. Appetizers include individual shrimp remoulades, duck confit on crouton, and a Bittersweet Plantation dairy cheese and chutney station. Created in true New Orleans fashion, the entrées include oyster and fleur-de-lis bisque with french-fried oyster crouton, deconstructed speckled trout and crawfish po'boy, and spinach madeline stuffed roulade of pheasant with mirliton cake and chanterelle demi. A white chocolate bread pudding dessert will culminate the evening's five-course dinner.

The event is underwritten, in part, by Centre Medical and Surgical Associates, P.C., with additional funding provided by The DeGrosso Family and Bobby Rahal Lexus of Lewistown and Best Event will provide décor for the evening and floral arrangements will be provided by Avant Garden. The auction committee is co-chaired by Connie DiNunzio and Traci Capperella. The dinner committee is chaired by Jane Zimmerman.

About WPSU-TV

WPSU serves central Pennsylvania with programming, educational services and community outreach. This public media service produces, acquires and distributes programs that address local interests and reflect the diverse cultural, political, geographic and demographic characteristics of an audience within central Pennsylvania.

About Chef John Folse

Chef John Folse learned early that the secrets of Cajun cooking lay in the unique ingredients of Louisiana's swamp floor pantry. Folse seasoned these raw ingredients with his passion for Louisiana culture and cuisine, and from his cast iron pots emerged Chef John Folse & Company. Since 1990, Folse has collaborated with public television to provide eleven cooking series. Currently airing on PBS and WPSU-TV, "A Taste of Louisiana with Chef John Folse & Company: Our Food Heritage" uncovers the history behind the bayou state's signature Cajun and Creole dishes and is the companion to Folse's best-selling cookbook, "The Encyclopedia of Cajun & Creole Cuisine." Most recently Folse published "After the Hunt," Louisiana's authoritative collection of wild game and game fish cookery. Folse has produced seven cookbooks in his Cajun and Creole series. For more information about Chef John Folse, visit www.jfolse.com.

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