Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada supports the launch of a new Indigenous culinary tourism strategy

November 13, 2019, (Kelowna, Syilx Territory, BC) – The launch of the Indigenous Culinary of Associated Nations (ICAN) along with a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) will result in a deeper understanding of the power of Indigenous food and a broader connection with Indigenous culture, offering visitors an enriched culinary tourism experience.

Launched with a vision for a world where Indigenous food is not a dish served for one but a cultural feast and celebration of Nations, ICAN is dedicated to sharing Canada’s diverse Indigenous food, culinary and cultural experiences with the world. The MOU between ITAC and ICAN will become a strategic framework to support, develop and market Canada’s diverse Indigenous culinary experiences, and in turn, foster the growth of Indigenous culinary tourism on a national level.

“Food is a powerful way to connect people with place, and it also plays an integral role in tourism,” says Keith Henry, president & CEO of ITAC. “Providing a countrywide platform for communities and regions to develop and share Indigenous culinary experiences will result in greater awareness and appreciation for Canada’s talented Indigenous chefs and offer international visitors more reasons to explore our Indigenous communities and heritage.”

ICAN Co-chair Bill Alexander – executive chef at Calgary’s Grey Eagle Resort & Casino and a consulting chef for WestJet Airlines – has worked closely with ITAC to build the nationwide Indigenous culinary strategy, focusing on collaborations with important industry partners via three key pillars: connection, sharing and influencing.

“The talent and creativity of Indigenous chefs across the country inspire me daily,” says Alexander. “Working with ITAC, together we will help foster the entrepreneurial spirit of Indigenous people to create more genuine Indigenous culinary offerings and connect visitors with the types of culinary tourism experiences they will not find in any other country in the world.”

About the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada

The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) is the lead organization tasked with growing the Indigenous tourism industry across the country. Inspired by a vision for a thriving Indigenous tourism economy sharing authentic, memorable and enriching experiences, ITAC develops relationships with groups and regions with similar mandates. By uniting the Indigenous tourism industry in Canada, ITAC works to enable collective support, product development, promotion and marketing of authentic Indigenous cultural tourism businesses in a respectful protocol. With Indigenous tourism outpacing Canadian tourism activity overall and international demand for Indigenous experiences at an all-time high, ITAC recently updated its five-year plan.

To view packages and experiences available visit www.IndigenousCanada.travel
For more information on ITAC visit www.IndigenousTourism.ca.

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Indigenous Culinary of Associated Nations

Our Mission
Connect, influence, and share community through genuine Indigenous food experiences.

Our Vision
A world where Indigenous food is not a dish served for one but a cultural feast and a celebration of Nations.

Our Purpose
Share the unique Indigenous food and culinary experiences from the regions of Canada with the rest of the world.

Indigenous Culinary of Associated Nations’ (ICAN) will do this by connecting individual communities and regions and harnessing the entrepreneurial spirit of the Indigenous people to build genuine Indigenous culinary experiences.

Increased visibility and availability of these culinary experiences will lead to a greater connection and understanding through Indigenous tourism, culture, and the power of food.

ICAN will achieve their goals by collaborating with key industry partners via three key pillars:

1. Connect
   - Communications and outreach
   - Select industry conferences
   - Taste of the Nation events
   - Digital marketplace

2. Share
   - Indigenous community teachings and history passed down through generations
   - Resources designed to help entrepreneurs build genuine Indigenous culinary experiences
   - Educational resources for schools and influencers (programs, webinars, resources, materials and media)

3. Influence
   - Leadership established through experience, referrals, and increased visibility
   - Chef appearances, competitions, training and mentoring
   - Effective Indigenous culinary story sharing via key opinion and industry leaders through traditional and social media
The ICAN Logo

**Indigenous Moon and Sun**
Everything in our culture has a living spirit. The Indigenous moon and sun represent Grandmother Moon and Grandfather Sun who watch over their daughter Mother Earth. The ICAN logo is a circular form representing the earth, though the circle is not enclosed by borders to represent the openness and ever-changing awareness of Indigenous cuisine.

**The Flowers and Plants**
At first glance, the flowers and plants represent plant life and their relationship to Mother Nature. Going deeper, they also symbolize the medicinal aspects of Indigenous food and culture and how food is not only nourishment but also medicine. Further, 13 flowers and plants are strategically included in the logo to represent the 13 moons of Indigenous culture and the original Turtle Island.

**Three Sisters Silhouettes**
The three sisters symbolize the Indigenous food elements of big sister corn, medium sister beans, and baby sister squash. They represent Indigenous food, the sacred stories of Indigenous culture, and how they are passed down from generation to generation with the same importance. The three sisters are a symbol of the strong matriarchal leadership and influence that has helped guide Indigenous culinary in Indigenous communities. The silhouettes show the community aspect of Indigenous culture and how food brings people together.

**Text**
The words Indigenous and Culinary are capitalized as they are the base for ICAN's purpose and are both equally important. The green text was chosen to represent the land - where all of Indigenous food culinary inspiration comes from.

The first letters of Associated & Nations are capitalized as they are who ICAN represents. It also signifies their importance while adding some contrast to our Indigenous culinary text.

The ICAN Board is happy to share this logo with the world. They love the elements that speak to who they are as Indigenous people as well as chefs. They love how the logo ties in past heritage and the shape of the future through food. The board believes this is a logo that speaks to who Indigenous people are without using anything that can be deemed offensive or exclusive of individual nations. This is the reason they went with the subtleties of food rather than specific animals that could have different meanings for different nations.