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NATIONALLY-ACCLAIMED CHEF KENT RATHBUN ATTENDING CRESTED BUTTE LAND TRUST WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL IN JULY

Texas culinary favorite paired with *Food Network*
pastry chef Keegan Gerhard for benefit event

CRESTED BUTTE, COLO. – The [Crested Butte Land Trust Wine & Food Festival](#) today officially announced the roster of award-winning chefs for four intimate [Chef Dinners](#), scheduled during the second annual event, July 23 – 26. Headlining these fundraising dinners are “[Iron Chef America](#)” winner and Texas award-winning chef, [Kent Rathbun](#) of Jasper’s, Abacus and the newly opened namesake, Rathbun’s Blue Plate Kitchen, and nationally-heralded top 10 pastry chef and *Food Network Challenge* host and chef, [Keegan Gerhard](#) of [d bar desserts](#), Denver.

“Doing high quality culinary events that benefit great causes are of vital importance to me,” Rathbun said. “When asked to attend this event in Crested Butte and cook to benefit the [Land Trust](#), I was quick to jump on the opportunity. There is a reason that Texans have made Crested Butte a regular travel destination, and now I get to be part of preserving the beautiful open spaces in this wonderful mountain town.”

Chef Rathbun will be preparing a four-course dinner for a dozen guests in a private home in Crested Butte. Gerhard will present guests with a bevy of his innovative and seasonally-inspired desserts, the ultimate finale to the dishes created by Rathbun. All courses are paired with wines as selected by [Jay Fletcher](#), master sommelier from Southern Wine & Spirits. Tickets are \$500 each with \$250 going directly to the efforts of the Crested Butte Land Trust.

“These chefs have graciously donated time away from their kitchens to join us in extending the mission of preserving open space in our valley,” said Jeff Hermanson, president of the Crested Butte Land Trust. “We appreciate their commitment to our cause, and realize that their decision to attend our Festival – considering the number of requests that chefs often receive – lends great credibility to our superior food and wine programming.”

By creating an astounding culinary legacy in Texas, Rathbun has thrived in the national scene. He has cooked at the James Beard House in New York on several occasions and has repeatedly appeared on a number of TV shows, including NBC’s “[Today Show](#)” and most recently on Food Network’s hit series “[Iron Chef America](#)” where he and his brother Kevin defeated Bobby Flay. Rathbun was honored to be one of the featured chefs for the Bush 2001 Inaugural Ball and has participated in the Pre-SuperBowl Event, “Taste of the NFL” for the past five years.

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The entire Chef Dinner schedule is as follows:

Thursday, July 23, 7 p.m.: Chef **Mat Smith** of Lil's (Crested Butte) and [Chef Troy Guard](#) of TAG (Denver)

Friday, July 24, 7 p.m.: [Chef Kent Rathbun](#) of Abacus (Dallas), Jasper's (Plano, Austin, Houston) and Rathbun's Blue Plate Kitchen (Dallas) and Chef **Keegan Gerhard** of D Bar Desserts (Denver)

Saturday, July 25, 7 p.m.: Chef **Kate Ladoulis** of django's (Crested Butte) and [Chef Frank Bonanno](#) of Mizuna (Denver)

Saturday, July 25, 7:30 p.m.: Chef **David Wooding** of Maxwells (Crested Butte) and [Chef Tyler Wiard](#) of Elway's Cherry Creek (Denver)

Tickets for all festival activities, including the four chef dinners may be purchased at www.crestedbuttewine.com or in person at the Crested Butte Land Trust office (308 Third Avenue, Crested Butte). Telephone orders are accepted at 303-809-0404.

The Festival has partnered with the Crested Butte Mountain Resort to provide room and ticket packages. Room rates start at \$143 per night. Guests may go online to <http://crestebuttewine.com/lodging.htm> or by calling 888-280-5724 to reserve their package.

The Crested Butte Land Trust Wine & Food Festival is produced by Colorado Mountain Events, LLC. Its exclusive beneficiary is the Crested Butte Land Trust, whose mission is to protect open space and wildlife habitat, preserve the valley's ranching heritage, and provide access via trails.

About the Crested Butte Land Trust

The [Crested Butte Land Trust](#) (CBLT) strives to keep the Gunnison Valley unique, as too many of Colorado's ski area valleys have lost their ranches, vistas and wildlife habitat. CBLT believes open space has the unique ability to benefit everyone, and provides an economic value for the community which is far reaching and long lasting. The more than 4,000 acres CBLT has preserved protect crucial wetlands, wildlife habitats, unrivaled views, recreational opportunities and the valley's ranching heritage.

About Crested Butte, Colorado

Crested Butte was named one of *Outside Magazine's* "Best Towns in 2008," *Sunset's* "Top Dream Towns," and *Travel + Leisure's* "One of America's Best Ski Towns." Known as one of Colorado's "true" ski towns, its charming ambiance and friendly people go hand in hand with the indescribable beauty of the area and the myriad of summer activities. Crested Butte has long been one of Colorado's best-kept secrets.

About Colorado Mountain Events, LLC

Colorado Mountain Events, LLC is a Denver-based event production company whose goal is to create a premier summer event focused around wine and food in Colorado's best mountain destination: Crested Butte. The Festival has a series of objectives:

- Creating a signature food and wine event to entice the local community to attend the series of events
- Create a local sense of pride, and provide positive economic impact
- Raising awareness of Crested Butte as a distinctive Colorado tourism destination
- Raising funds for and marketing the works of the Crested Butte Land Trust
- Enhancing business for current food and beverage operators in Crested Butte and establishing the town as a formidable location for new businesses.

The Festival's main phone number for the general public is 303-809-0404.

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