

5th Annual Napa Truffle Festival

World-Class Cuisine Meets Cutting-Edge Truffle Science, January 16-19

Dig truffles?

Join in the fun, science and culinary adventure of a lifetime in pursuit of the rare and delectable black truffle – specifically the winter Périgord truffle: *Tuber melanosporum* (aka black diamond) – which will be discussed, examined, probed, prepared, demonstrated and finally, paired with wines and feasted upon for breakfast, lunch and dinner at the fifth annual Napa Truffle Festival!

— Friday, January 16 —

Scientific Grower Truffle Cultivation Seminar

Truffle orchards are highly profitable, and are an excellent and viable way to diversify land usage. The demand for European black truffles, the most sought after truffles in the world (aka “the diamond of the kitchen”), far exceeds supply. Current black truffle production is almost exclusively in Europe, but now these truffles can be cultivated in select areas around the world. North America, especially regions like Napa and Sonoma, offer particularly suitable climates/soil.

Designed for potential truffle growers, this in-depth seminar provides a detailed technical overview of the science and methodology involved in truffle cultivation. Presented by American Truffle Company’s

Chief Scientist Dr. Paul Thomas and Managing Director Robert Chang, you will learn about the myriad of scientific factors involved in successfully growing truffles.

The Science of Canine Truffle Scent Location and Practical Implementation – *A portion of the seminar will include truffle dog training discussions and demos, led by Alana McGee, ATC’s Master Dog Trainer. Includes buffet lunch on Friday and Saturday truffle orchard tour/dog training demo at Sinskey Vineyards.*

— Saturday, January 17 —

All About Truffles

For the curious and the hungry, and anyone who loves truffles (the fungi kind)

Come learn all about truffles – the cuisine, the sex and the science! In this exciting, comprehensive primer about all things truffle, you will get tips on cooking with truffles from our Michelin-star host chef Ken Frank of La Toque who will share how to handle fresh truffles in the kitchen, as well as common myths and misconceptions about the various truffle species and “products.” You’ll also get a glimpse into the science of truffles (including “sex and truffles”!) with world-renowned truffle scientist Dr. Paul Thomas and truffle expert Robert Chang; plus why science plays a key role in how truffles are grown and harvested.

History of Truffle hunting: Pigs, Dogs, Robots and Common Misconceptions

To round up the truffle day, Master Dog Trainer Alana McGee will guide you through the fascinating and fun world of training dogs to harvest truffles, complete with a demonstration at a real truffle orchard, located at Robert Sinskey Vineyards.

Includes: continental breakfast, All About Truffles seminar, truffle orchard tour and dog training demonstration. Winery Truffle Lunch at Peju Province is optional.

Winery Truffle Lunch, Peju Province Winery

Cooking Demo and Truffle Lunch & Wine Pairing Lunch will be prepared by Michelin star guest chef Tony Esnault of Church & State, Los Angeles

Truffles & Wine Dinner, La Toque

At the heart of the Festival is the Saturday night Truffles & Wine Dinner, hosted by Michelin-star Chef Ken Frank of La Toque and featuring a multicourse truffle menu – each course prepared by a Master Chef and perfectly paired with wines. Joining Chef Ken this year is a star chef lineup, including Riccardo Agostini of Ristoranti il Piastrino, Italy; Roberto Donna of Al Dente Ristorante, DC; and Tony Esnault of Church & State, Los Angeles.

— Sunday, January 18 —

Festival-goers will rise and shine for an early morning wild mushroom forage led by renowned mycophagist David Campbell: “We’ll see what we find and find what we see! With a little luck, perhaps we’ll find Porcini, Hedgehogs, Chanterelles, or Candy Caps...” accompanied by Dr. Paul Thomas and local mycologist Stephanie Jarvis.

Winery Truffle Lunch**St. Supéry Estate
Vineyards & Winery**

Winery Tour/Tasting, Cooking Demo and Truffle Lunch & Wine Pairing
Cooking Demo with Master Chef Roberto Donna of Al Dente Ristorante, who will also prepare the truffle lunch menu.

— Monday, January 19 —

**NAPA TRUFFLE FESTIVAL
MARKETPLACE – FREE**

Oxbow Public Market, 10am-2pm

The lively and popular Festival Marketplace at Oxbow Public Market showcases the local wines, artisanal vendors and specialty food products of the Napa Valley. No charge for admission – everyone is welcome! Come see cooking demos, shop for truffle accoutrements and sample a diverse assortment of dishes prepared by the Marketplace chefs – from truffled pizza, beef Wellington, quiche, bread pudding and aioli fries, to truffle-infused martinis, oysters, cheese and oils; with business as usual for café, tea, spices, fresh produce, fine chocolate, ice cream, pastries, home accessories and more. Plus, taste wines and sign up for a chance to win a real black diamond (truffle, that is)!

For tickets and information:
www.napatrufflefestival.com.

The Scent of Truffles

Unlike mushrooms that grow above ground, truffles rely entirely on animals to eat them as a means of spore dispersal. And how do they do that exactly? Well, by smelling good, of course! As truffles mature they develop aromas that signal to the surrounding wildlife that there is something tasty hidden under the soil.

Dogs Lead the Hunt


To many growers, the real fun of growing truffles begins with the harvest. Equipped only with trusty truffle hunting dogs, harvesting truffles is a hands-on endeavor (no mechanical harvesting devices are used). Almost any dog can be trained to truffle hunt, but here in the burgeoning American truffle cultivation world, foraging dogs are commonly German Shepherds, Labradors, Golden Retrievers, Belgian Malinois and other hunting breeds. In Italy though, site of some of the most famed and prodigious truffle and wild mushroom growing areas, the official Italian hunting dogs are Lagotto Romagnolos, or “lake dog from Romagna.”

These dogs who hunt for “black gold” are worth their weight in gold, fetching prices as high as \$13,000. While commonly trained to hunt for the most desirable truffles on an inoculated farm – the black Perigord (*Tuber melanosporum*), the white or Alba (*Tuber magnatum pico*), the summer Burgundy (*Tuber aestivum/uncinatum*), and the Bianchetto (*Tuber albidum pico*) – they can also be taught to hunt for mushrooms.

Along with dogs, female pigs have traditionally been used in truffle hunts in Europe, primarily because they’re attracted to the male pig pheromones similar to those found in certain types of truffles. What’s the difference between the two hunters? The most significant advantage to using dogs – as well as having the companionship of your friendly canine companion on the hunt – is that while they are excellent truffle hunters, they don’t eat them as do pigs. Another practical consideration is transport: a pooch, unlike a pig, is generally eager to jump into your car’s backseat.

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