

## **Blenz makes a splash at this year's Vancouver Fringe Festival**

Blenz will be presenting the First Annual Vancouver International Free Pour Latte Art Competition starting with preliminary rounds on Saturday afternoon, September 6<sup>th</sup>, at the 2009 Vancouver Fringe Festival.

**September 5, 2008 – Vancouver BC** Blenz is participating in the 2009 Vancouver Fringe Festival as a Signature Sponsor, and have set up a temporary storefront at the Grolsch Fringe Bar and Coffeehouse, where they are offering Fringe-goers beautifully handcrafted coffee, tea, and chocolate-based beverages.

Blenz is taking this opportunity to invite the public to experience a little taste of coffee culture at Vancouver's First Annual International Free Pour Latte Art competition.

The preliminary round will take place Saturday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, starting at noon. Many local coffeehouses are represented, including Caffè Artigiano, Caffè Crema, JJ Bean, Wicked Café, Cito Espresso, and Blenz stores.

The emcee for this event is Blenz' own Layla Osberg, two-time international champion free pour latte artist.

The panel of judges includes some of Vancouver's most respected members of the coffee community. John Sanders, owner of Origins Organic Coffee and Hines Public Market Coffee, is a longstanding technical committee member of the World Barista Championship, Specialty Coffee Association of America, and the US Barista Championship. Arthur Wynne of Wicked Café is a certified World Barista Championship judge. Wayne Wright is co-owner of Bravo Coffee Group.

Scores for competitors will be based on four weighted categories totaling 50 points, to score the baristas' latte art; the categories are Colour Definition, the infusion of the pure white milk foam into the rich espresso crema, worth 15 points, Symmetry of the latte art in the cup, worth 15 points, Esthetics or overall beauty of the free pour latte art, worth 10 points, and Creativity, something different than the traditional free pour rosettas, worth 10 points.

Twenty one competitors will be vying for the top eight spots. Those scoring in the top eight will be invited to compete in the finals, held September 26<sup>th</sup> at Library Square in downtown Vancouver. First prize is an all expense paid trip to Tokyo to attend the World Specialty Coffee Conference and Exhibition in October. Top performers will also be asked to Team BC, a group of coffee professionals sponsored by Blenz who will compete in coffee competitions on a global stage.

Make the Grolsch Fringe Bar and Coffeehouse at the Vancouver Fringe Festival on Granville Island a destination on Saturday afternoon, and watch Vancouver's finest baristas as they pour their hearts into their work.

### **About Blenz The Canadian Coffee Company Ltd™**

Blenz The Canadian Coffee Company Ltd is a premium retailer of handcrafted coffee, tea and other innovative and delicious specialty beverages. All of Blenz' beverages are made in-store from only the highest quality ingredients available. Blenz' commitment to serving a great cup of coffee, providing an excellent customer experience, and providing world-class staff training, has fueled Blenz' growth from its inception. Blenz operates a network of over 85 franchise locations in British Columbia, Japan, China, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and the Philippines.

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For information about Blenz The Canadian Coffee Company Ltd., contact:

Mr George Moen  
President  
Blenz Coffee Ltd.  
Telephone: (604) 682-2995  
press@blenz.com