



The second annual Mad Mountain Mud Run made for a messy scene at Berkeley Park in Hendersonville on Saturday. Proceeds from the event go to the nonprofit children's museum Hands On!-A Child's Gallery. Go to [CITIZEN-TIMES.com](http://CITIZEN-TIMES.com) for a photo gallery. JOHN COUTLAKIS/  
[JCOUTLAKIS@CITIZEN-TIMES.COM](mailto:JCOUTLAKIS@CITIZEN-TIMES.COM)

**Woodfin cop is charged with DWI**

## Atlanta gets a taste of Asheville

Local chefs, businesses take center stage at annual food and wine festival

By Mackensy Lunsford  
[mlunsford@citizen-times.com](mailto:mlunsford@citizen-times.com)

ATLANTA — Asheville was very much on the palates and minds of foodies thronging one of the premier culinary festivals in the Southeast this weekend.

Curate, French Broad Chocolate Lounge, The Junction, Sunburst Trout Farms and Troy & Sons Moonshine represented the city and Western North Carolina at the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival.

The festival, in its third year, emphasized Southern food. Barbecue, moonshine, pimento

cheese and other regional staples were prominently featured in the festival's tasting area.

Jael and Dan Rattigan, owners of the French Broad Chocolate Lounge, have attended the festival each year. This weekend, they spent all three days in the Tasting Tent, representing Asheville with a number of craft chocolates. They made a strawberry-mint julep truffle especially for the festival. The mint was grown by Vance Elementary students, and the strawberries were from Flying Cloud Farm.

Nearby, Troy & Sons served a cocktail made with the distill-

ery's Oak Reserve Whiskey, mango and lime juice and agave syrup. Distiller Troy Ball and her moonshine were featured Friday in a dinner called "Powerful and Delicious: A Celebration of the South's Culinary Superstars." Curate chef Katie Button was also featured at the event.

Button hosted a panel — with Matt and Ted Lee and other well-known chefs — that centered on expanding culinary knowledge through international travel. She demonstrated how to make a special dessert out of potato starch paper — cautioning that humidity ruins the treat. "At elBulli, we made this in a climate-controlled



Katie Button, Rachel Freihoff-Lewin and Felix Meana from Curate attended the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival. MACKENSY LUNSFORD/ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES

Asheville Scene food writer Mackensy Lunsford is blogging from the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival. Follow her Eat Scene blog on [www.AshevilleScene.com](http://www.AshevilleScene.com), or on Twitter @EatScene.

See TASTE, Page B3



# TASTE: Trout caviar from the mountains stands out

Continued from Page B1

closet," she said, referring to the famed restaurant, now closed, in Spain where she trained under Ferran Adria.

This is Button's second year presenting at the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival.

## Curate gets attention

Rachel Freihoff-Lewin, an Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College graduate who works as a sauté cook at Curate, is new to the festival circuit.

Curate is getting plenty of national attention. Button is on the cover of Food Arts magazine this month, which Freihoff-Lewin described as the "Sports Illustrated of food."

Freihoff-Lewin, 22, moved from Maine to Asheville to study international social work at Warren Wilson, but soon transferred to A-B Tech's award-winning culinary program.

"Warren Wilson is a work college, which means we're required to hold jobs on campus," she said. "I got a job in a bakery under one of the dorms and I would go hide out in there. That's when I figured out I could go another route and do something working with my hands."

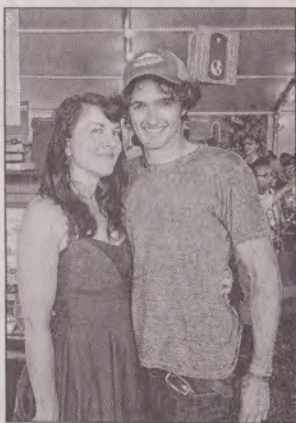
The festival certainly had her using her hands. On Friday, the crew from Curate served samples of an almond-based "white gazpacho" to an estimated 500 people. For the most part, everything went without a hitch, Freihoff-Lewin said.

"The only unknown was this uncomfortable hour (during setup) when we didn't know where our coolers of food were — and nobody could find them," she said. "So that was a brief moment of panic — like, are we going to be able to serve anything?"

Surprises like these are part of the everyday life of a cook, Freihoff-Lewin said. "Anything can happen. You can get slammed, you can be super-slow. I think working this (festival) is easier than working in the kitchen."

The festival is helping get the word out about Asheville on a bigger food stage.

Sally Eason of Sunburst Trout Farms hosted a tasting event with a caviar focus at the Loews Atlanta Hotel, where most of the cooking demonstra-



Jael and Dan Rattigan in front of their French Broad Chocolate Lounge booth at the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival. MACKENSY

LUNSFORD/ASHEVILLE  
CITIZEN-TIMES

tions and panel discussions took place. Eason's farm raises trout and also markets trout roe, a product known by many national chefs. But to many at the tasting, trout caviar — from the mountains, no less — was an oddity.

"Everyone in there thought it was weird, I think," Eason said. "Except for the chefs who had used it before. The chefs in New York probably know more about it than (chefs) in Atlanta. But the way it was received was phenomenal."

## Lifts city's image

Eason thinks these sorts of events, featuring products and chefs from the Asheville area, can do nothing but boost the city's image as a culinary destination.

"Seeing Katie here, she has rock-starred it to where she is — and she should," Eason said following a panel in which Button had just participated with other well-known chefs.

"She's so incredibly talented. She's brought a lot of clout to Asheville. And my dear friend John Flear will open a restaurant in Asheville, and that will also bring a lot of attention to Asheville."

Flear, the executive chef of Eason's Cashiers restaurant, Canyon Kitchen, will open a restaurant on Asheville's Pack Square this year.

Hugh Acheson, owner of Empire State South and a featured judge on the Food Network television show, Top Chef, said he already knew of Flear's plans, even though the still-unnamed restaurant is not scheduled to open until fall.

Asheville is no longer a secret.

"Every week there's some fabulous new place opening up — and aren't we lucky," Eason said.