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NEIL PERRY'S PAVLOVA COMPETITION KICKS OFF AUSTRALIA DAY IN ASPEN/SNOWMASS

Celebrity Chef launches celebrations as Viceroy Snowmass chef takes the cake.



The winning Pavlova by Ashley Jenkin of Snowmass Viceroy. Photo: Jeremy Swanson.

Aspen/Snowmass, Jan 25, 2014 – Tomorrow Aspen/Snowmass will host its' first official Australia Day celebrations with a Vegemite eating competition, BBQs featuring hamburgers with beetroot, Triple J's Hot 100 and skiing kangaroos. But today it was pavlovas at 20 paces as top chefs vied for the honour of baking the winning traditional Australian dessert.

Chefs from top restaurants including the Caribou Club, The Little Nell, Viceroy Snowmass, Victoria's Espresso and Gourmet Girl on the Go gathered on the rooftop of the Residences at The Little Nell to present their versions of a "Pav" to Australia's restaurant king and celebrity chef.

Baking at 2000m (with some chefs not having sighted a pavlova previously) was no mean feat, with the line up including an Australian, Canadian, South African, Israeli and American.

The offerings were creative, including a chocolate confection and one featuring bananas flambéed in Bundaberg Rum, but the winner was thanks to a family recipe that was learnt by a contestant's mom – in Hawaii.

Ashley Jenkin of Snowmass Viceroy is a veteran of baking around thirty pavlovas and seen her mom make pavlova for as long as she can remember. "We would have pavlova instead of birthday cake. My mom is a really, really good cook and we would so look forward to to it, she's been baking them forever".

Her winning pavlova was a multi coloured extravaganza featuring raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, pineapple, star fruit, papaya, kiwi fruits and passion fruit. Her secret ingredient? "Cream cheese in the whipped cream, I think that's maybe a little unique." Jenkin also had some insider tips – the Regional Vice President & General Manager at Viceroy Snowmass, Hugh Templeman, just happens to be an Australian, with a soft spot for Jenkins' pavlova.

The second place winner, who skyped her mom in Cape Town for the recipe, was ecstatic with her win. Megan Rainnie of Gourmet Girl on the Go said, "I am a little business and it is wonderful to be alongside these top restaurants. I just love being a part of the community and this has been a great local event."

Australia Day officially commences when the lifts open at Aspen Mountain an hour early at 8am for Australian passport holders.

For high res images: <https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/48772793/AustraliaRLN.zip>
For information visit www.aspensnowmass.com.

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Aspen Skiing Company operates the four mountains in the Aspen/Snowmass area - Snowmass, Aspen Mountain, Aspen Highlands and Buttermilk - as well as the award-winning Ski & Snowboard Schools of Aspen/Snowmass. For more information on Aspen Skiing Company, please call 800-525-6200 or 970-925-1220, or visit the company's website at www.aspensnowmass.com.