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David Wong, who fosters Canadian culinary talent as a chef instructor at The International Culinary School at the Art Institute of Vancouver, is to represent Canada in one of the world's most prestigious culinary competitions.

The Bocuse d'Or, founded by legendary French chef Paul Bocuse, is a biannual event held in Lyon, France, drawing top chefs from 24 competing countries. In a highly charged atmosphere in front of two thousand journalists and six thousand spectators, the chefs and their apprentices compete for cash prizes and gold, silver and bronze trophies.

BC local David is already a gold-medal winner of seven influential international competitions, including the 2005 Salon Culinaire Mondial in Basel, Switzerland, as a member of Team Canada. "We're feeling very confident about our efforts going into this," he said. "I think that with all the support we have around us, we have a good shot."

In accordance with the competition's focus on fostering tomorrow's top chefs, each country must send an apprentice who is 22 years of age or younger. Assisting David is Grace Pineda, who is currently completing her apprenticeship at the Fairmont Waterfront Hotel in Vancouver.

The team has been engaged in an intense training schedule for the past 2 years, culminating in weekly practice sessions at The International Culinary School and he has reached the stage where it is "arguably the best food I've ever made". Students of the school have been on hand to help the team practice and are picking up valuable knowledge along the way. Culinary student Adam Goldner said, "You can pick up everything from the way he works in the kitchen to the way he seasons the food. We're volunteering here and we wouldn't give it up for a second."

The Bocuse d'Or competition begins on **January 28, 2009** and we wish David and the Canadian team the very best in their campaign.