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THE HEAT IS ON: THREE CULINARY COLLECTIVE PRODUCTS CHOSEN AS FINALISTS IN INTERNATIONAL SPECIALTY FOODS COMPETITION

Kañiwa grain from Peru, extra virgin olive oil and organic honey from Spain earn high marks

SEATTLE, WA, May 3, 2011 --- Culinary Collective is proud to announce that three of its heritage food products have qualified as Silver Finalists for 2011 sofi™ (Specialty Outstanding Food Innovation) Awards from the National Association for the Specialty Food Trade ([NASFT](#)). The products are **Zócalo Kañiwa Grain** in the Outstanding Pasta, Rice or Grain category, **Puremiel Organic Honey, Lavender** from Spain for Outstanding Jam, Preserve, Honey or Nut Butter, and **Castillo de Canena Family Reserve Arbequina Extra Virgin Olive Oil** from Spain for Outstanding Oil.

The sofi Awards are the highest honor in the specialty food industry. They recognize the outstanding foods and beverages of the year that demonstrate top quality, taste and overall appeal.

The NASFT reports that the products from Culinary Collective were selected from a record 1,657 entries across 31 categories. A panel of nine judges from Whole Foods Market, Straub's, Canyon Market, and Passion Food Hospitality spent three days at the NASFT headquarters in New York tasting and evaluating all entries.

Gold Winners for each award category will be determined in a special judging at the Summer Fancy Food Show in Washington, D.C. on Sunday, July 10 and Monday, July 11. Gold winners will be announced July 11 at a red-carpet ceremony hosted by noted chef Cat Cora. See the entire list of nominees [here](#).

About the Nominees from Culinary Collective:

Zócalo Kañiwa Grain: Outstanding Pasta, Rice or Grain

Kañiwa (pronounced ka-nyí-wa) is a remarkably nutritious grain of the high Andes that has been described as helping to "sustain untold generations of Indians" in one of the world's most difficult agricultural regions. Similar to quinoa, it is grown in the Andes extreme highland environment where wheat, rye and corn grow unreliably or not at all. It is considered more resistant than any other grain crop to a combination of frost (the region where it is found frost occurs up to nine months of the year), drought, salt, and pests. Kañiwa Grain is a

protein powerhouse, providing a fully balanced meal when paired with vegetables. It has a wonderful crunchy texture and a satisfying earthy flavor that works well as a base for fish, in stir fries and soups, and even served cold in salads.

Puremiel Organic Honey, Lavender: Outstanding Jam, Preserve, Honey or Nut Butter Five generations of beekeeping knowledge are embodied in Puremiel raw honeys, which are produced using organic methods, with no artificial additives or pasteurization. Puremiel's happy bees run free in the Grazalema & Alcornocales natural parks of the Cadiz region of Spain. Lavender Honey, collected from the lavender hills of southern Spain, is one of five unique Puremiel flavors imported and distributed by Culinary Collective. Clear in color, with an intense sweetness and persistent floral aroma, the lavender honey is rich in essential oils, giving it therapeutic qualities.

Castillo de Canena Family Reserve Arbequina Extra Virgin Olive Oil: Outstanding Oil Producers of one of the "three best extra virgin olive oils in the world" at the 2010 Los Angeles International Extra Virgin Olive Oil competition, the Castillo de Canena estate has been producing exceptional oils in the Guadalquivir Valley of Andalusia in the south of Spain since 1780. The Family Reserve oils are produced from olives that have been harvested early, a process that requires twice the amount of olives and renders an oil of exceptional quality, taste, and aroma. The arbequina oil has a sweet almond and green apple flavor.

About Culinary Collective

Based in Seattle, Washington, [Culinary Collective](#) is an import and distribution company specializing in gourmet cultural foods that embody and promote native cultures and traditions. The company works with small family and community companies that take pride in producing all-natural foods using methods and recipes passed down through the generations. Under its [Matiz España](#) label, Culinary Collective imports and distributes an extensive line of traditional Spanish products, such as olive oil, vinegar, vegetables, rice, nuts, olives, crackers, spices, chocolate and tinned seafood. Under its [Zócalo Gourmet](#) brand, the Collective supports small-scale producers of all-natural cultural foods in Latin America by bringing quality products such as grains, flours, beans and chili pastes direct from the producers to US and Canadian retailers and consumers. Culinary Collective is proud to be a [Certified B Corporation](#).

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