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Every Blogger's Dream: To Be 'Wok Star' at Panda **Express**



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representing the holiday.

Panda Express kicked off the 2011 Chinese New Year holiday by opening up its test kitchen for the first time ever to media, looking for the biggest "Wok Star" among Southern California bloggers. Catherine Chaplin, writer of

www.gastronomyblog.com, and Nha-Quyen Gln, writer of www.kitchenrunway.com, won the "Wok Star" challenge with their "Spicy Jackfruit Chicken" dish and received a \$500 prize to which they donated to Cooking Matters Los Angeles and the Southern California Golden Retriever Rescue.

The event consisted of eight bloggers in teams of two "woking and rolling" in the Panda Express test kitchen to create the winning version of their take on the Firecracker Chicken Breast, Panda Express' signature Chinese New Year entrée. Bloggers received training by executive chef Andy Kao, who demonstrated how to use the wok and properly cut fresh vegetables for their dishes. Following the culinary crash course, participants were given 20 minutes to prepare their own version of Firecracker Chicken, with the goal of best

irresistibility Nestlé® Butterfinger® & Nestl Crunch® Candy Piece

"Panda Express was searching for a fun and festive way to help get the word out about Chinese New Year and raise awareness for the limited time availability of Firecracker Chicken Breast," says Glenn Lunde, senior vice president and chief marketing officer. "Woking' with the local blogging community was the ideal way to ring in the holiday, and benefit charity at the same time."

According to the Chinese lunar calendar, the first moon signals the beginning of Chinese New Year. The Year of the Rabbit New Year's celebration will begin on February 3 and end on February 18. Firecracker Chicken Breast will be available in participating Panda Express locations nationwide through March 1, and will be on the restaurant's catering menu for hosting Chinese New Year parties.

Firecracker Chicken Breast features strips of marinated chicken breast; crisp red, green, and yellow bell peppers; sliced onions; and red chili peppers all cooked in a wok with Panda's original zesty firecracker sauce. Panda Express will also be offering a coupon for a free single sized portion of Firecracker Chicken Breast to Facebook fans, for one day only on February 3, the first day of the 15day-long holiday celebration.

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