

March 6, 2019

RESTAURANT CHALLENGE IN SUPPORT OF BE COOL FOR AUTISM ON APRIL 2

Boca Tapas Bar is serving up friendly competition for other restaurants to follow suit and get involved

ST. JOHN'S, NL – Boca Tapas Bar is the first restaurant in St. John's to commit to *Be Cool for Autism* in support of Autism Society, Newfoundland & Labrador (ASNL). On Tuesday, April 2, 2019, Boca will donate \$1.00 from every tapa sold that day and match contributions of funds raised by their staff.

"Everyone is touched by autism in one way or another," says Derek Locke, Owner of Boca Tapas Bar. "We're happy to start a little friendly competition among other restaurants across our province to participate in their own way and support the work of the Autism Society on World Autism Awareness Day."

In the past, World Autism Awareness Day events have been primarily held in schools across the province. ASNL is thrilled that Boca Tapas Bar is challenging other restaurants to get involved and hopeful that more folks from the food and beverage industry will take part.

"Our staff will be wearing their sunglasses and we hope our guests arrive doing the same," says Locke. "It's a simple yet impactful way to raise awareness, have some fun, and let our autism community know that we are here for them."

Be Cool for Autism is a provincial event to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day. Individuals are asked to wear their sunglasses, make a donation to ASNL and share their best selfie or group photo on social media by using the hashtag #BeCoolforAutism to promote that "it's cool to be accepting of everyone". Supporters can download resources and learn more at www.autism.nf.net.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong, developmental disability that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people, and how they experience the world around them. People with autism see, hear and feel the world differently than other people. Differences may be seen in social communication, social interaction, repetitive behavior and routines, and sensory sensitivity.

ASNL is a provincial charitable organization dedicated to fostering the development of individual, lifelong, and community-based supports and services for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), their families, and caregivers. ASNL operates four regional offices around the island in St. John's, Clarenville, Grand Falls-Windsor and Corner Brook.

- 30 -

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