

# AIANTA

American Indian Alaska Native  
Tourism Association

*Introducing America's First Nations to the World*

**PRESS PASSES AVAILABLE**

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## **Native American Culinary Visionaries Debut Foodways Session at 15<sup>th</sup> Annual American Indian Tourism Conference**

*American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association Welcomes Smithsonian's  
National Museum of the American Indian, Cherokee Nation Entertainment and the  
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center to Tulsa September 24*

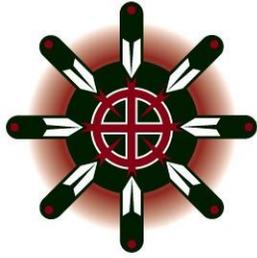
**Albuquerque, New Mexico (September 5, 2013)** - The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) debuts its first Culinary Cultural Trends session at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual American Indian Tourism Conference (AITC) at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Tulsa, September 22 - 26.

AITC Host Cherokee Nation and Executive Chef Don McClellan will welcome AITC participants at the Tribal Welcome Ceremony and Host Reception on Monday, September 23.

"The Cherokee Nation is honored to host this unique inter-tribal gathering at the Hard Rock, our flagship enterprise," said Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Bill John Baker. "At Cherokee Nation Entertainment and Cultural Tourism, we put serious thought into what a fulfilling experience for our guests looks like, and that includes special attention to foods, menus, design and ambiance. Whether it is traditional food of the Cherokee people, a fine dining experience, or just good fun, we strategically prepare for what audiences need."

**Culinary Speakers:**

- **Duane Blue Spruce**, Facilities Planning Coordinator at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). Currently based at NMAI's George Gustav Heye Center in New York City. Duane is Laguna and San Juan Pueblo heritage.



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- **Don McClellan**, Executive Chef at Cherokee Nation Entertainment. Currently oversees food service venues at six casinos and contributes to staff development at two other casinos within the company. Don is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation.
- **Travis Suazo**, Executive Director of the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque, which owns the Pueblo Harvest Café. Travis is Acoma, Laguna and Taos Pueblo heritage.

There are more than 566 Federally-recognized American Indian tribes in the U.S.; each with its unique foods and culinary traditions. From farming, gathering, food preparation, restaurants and food service; we are seeing a movement in the Native foods industry. At the session, panelists will share information, resources and ideas for marketing and using Native foods to build tribal tourism. Each panelist will share the history of their restaurants and the choices they have made in culinary presentations, giving participants ideas on how to use Native foods to bring in tourism dollars.

The annual AITC strives to provide attendees with a quality educational forum to help you with your travel and tourism initiatives. Other sessions this year include tour packaging, attracting tour operators, creating itineraries, positioning your tribe for the international tour market, protecting intellectual and cultural property, working with state and federal agencies, and more.

September 22-26

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

### **About AIANTA**

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of Native American tribes and tribal businesses that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of member tribes from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and



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sustain American Indian and Alaska Native tourism that honors and preserves tribal traditions and values.

The purpose of AIANTA is to provide our constituents with the voice and tools needed to advance tourism while helping tribes, tribal organizations and tribal members create infrastructure and capacity through technical assistance, training and educational resources. AIANTA serves as the liaison between Indian Country, governmental and private entities for the development, growth, and sustenance of Indian Country tourism. By developing and implementing programs and providing economic development opportunities, AIANTA helps tribes build for their future while sustaining and strengthening their cultural legacy.

To learn more, please visit [www.aianta.org](http://www.aianta.org). For current updates, like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@OfficialAIANTA](#)).

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