



International Jeunes Chefs Rôtisseurs Competition Report

ISTANBUL, Turkey, September 2013

Report by Lois Gilbert, Bailli du Moscou
Member, Jeunes Chefs Rôtisseurs Comitee

Istanbul offers such a rich cultural and culinary experience for the young chefs, many of whom have never competed internationally, let alone traveled outside their home country. This year's competitors came from 20 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK and USA. Some competitors arrived with companions to assist in the translation of their menus from their native tongue to English. This was the first year in a long time that there were no female competitors.

The three days prior to the competition were filled with activities that will not soon be forgotten. To release some of the tension prior to the competition, the young chefs were taken on a surprise bus tour. Many were confused as to why the bus stopped in the huge parking lot of the Olympic Stadium. With an oasis tent at one end and brightly coloured barrels spread out over the lot, it became apparent when the bus door opened and a rally car decorated with Chaîne and MSA (sponsor) logos appeared. Each competitor and companion had the opportunity to co-drive this rally car with Turkey's national rally driver Volkan Isik. Five cameras were placed strategically inside and outside of the car to capture each individual adventure on CD.

The competitors sampled traditional Turkish fare at many restaurants like KIYI and KIVA, and they were treated to dinner at 8 ISTANBUL, where the chef provided his personal interpretation of the traditional in a modern upscale way. Many of the competitors were inspired to go home and try their own twist on their native cuisine.

A tour of Old Town on our own private tour bus provided countless opportunities for experiencing the sights and sounds of what makes Istanbul a memorable city. Ottoman food historian, chef and food critic Vedat Basaran lead the walking degustation tour through the Spice Market and various back streets near Taksim Square. Vedat discussed the different local spices, provided cheese sampling from her favourite vendor and guided us past fresh fish, fruit and vegetable stalls with sampling along the way. The young chefs got to taste some of the more exotic dishes Turkey is known for, like fast food Kokorec (sheep's intestines with tomato and spices in a bun) and tavuk gogsu (sweet milk and rice pudding and pounded chicken breast). The tour was capped off with a visit to Istanbul's famous baklava restaurant Karaköy Güllüoğlu, where the owner and master baklava maker talked about the making and eating of this famous dish.

After the tour, the chefs were taken to Mulkak Sanatlari Akademisi (MSA), the culinary arts school hosting the competition. They had time to listen and ask questions at a briefing and draw for morning or afternoon start from David Tetrault, President of the Competition, Membre du Conseil d'Administration, as well as Kitchen Supervisor Takashi Murakami, Conseiller Culinaire, Canada, and Assistant Kitchen Supervisor Elif Denizci.

Chaîne des Rôtisseurs – Association Mondiale de la Gastronomie

Following the briefing they inspected the kitchen facilities where they would be working during the competition. Also present to assist with the chefs were committee members Klaus Tritschler, Bailli Deleque of Germany, and Lois Gilbert, Bailli of Moscow, and kitchen assistant Tigin Sertcan, Vice-Echanson Turkey. A press and sponsors dinner followed at the MSA restaurant, prepared by the culinary students.

With a 0430 wake-up call, the A group arrived at MSA and by 0600 drew for kitchen positions and start times. The black box was finally revealed when they entered the menu writing room. This year's mandatory ingredients were 1 whole sea bass, 4x130g chicken breasts with skin on, 500g chard leaves and 1 kg fresh peaches. The contestants had to use at least 50% each of the above mentioned items and could complement them with a large array of non-mandatory items. By 1230, the A group had completed the competition and Group B was just beginning, with the competition completely finished by 1800. This year, thanks to MSA, international Chaine members were able to watch a live stream of the B group, with commentary from Chef Kevin Walker of the United States. For those who were unable to watch live, the session will be available in the near future on the international website.

The kitchen and tasting judges provided excellent and fair scoring which resulted in a first place medal for Jan-Philipp Berner, Bailliage of Germany, second place medal for Jimmi Eriksson , Bailliage of Sweden, and third place medal for Yusuf Kizilirmak , Bailliage of Turkey.

Kitchen Judges:

Daniel Hiltbrunner,	Conseiller Culinaire Honoraire,	Abu Dhabi
Bernard Mirlycourtois	Vice-Conseiller Culinaire	Canada
Gottfried Menge	Vice-Conseiller Culinaire	Suisse

Tasting Judges

Letitia Prinsloo	Conseiller Culinaire Honoraire	South Africa
Marco Cameli	Vice-Conseiller Culinaire	Italy
Gabor Merczi	Maitre Rôtisseur	Hungary
Rudolf Van Nunen	Grand Officier Maitre Rotisseur	Turkey
Martti Lehtinen	Conseiller Culinaire	Finland
Gilles Company	Maitre Rôtisseur	Turkey
Karl Guggenmos	Officier Maitre Rôtisseur	USA
Heinz Hofmann	Conseiller Culinaire	USA
Phillip Westwood	Conseiller Culinaire	Australia

We are grateful to le Cordon Bleu, Paris, Wüsthof Manufacturing, Germany, Bragard, France and Chef's Hat, Canada who continue to support the Jeunes Chefs Rotisseurs competition year after year.

A special thank you to MSA founder Mehmet Aksel and Cem Erol , executive chef/instructor, for their generous support and assistance during the competition.

Next year the 38th Concours International des Jeunes Chef Rotisseurs will be held Sept 5th in Durban, South Africa.