

The 47th Chaîne des Rôtisseurs International Jeunes Chefs Rôtisseurs Competition, hosted by Turkey Bailli Délégué Yves Léon, was held in the picturesque city of Istanbul, Turkey, from October 5th to October 9th, 2023. Countries participating were, Sweden, Canada, Australia, Great Britain, China, Norway, Netherlands, Finland, Hungary, Malaysia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Portugal, Germany, Thailand, Taiwan, Belgium, UAE, USA, Turkey, Bermuda and Switzerland. This prestigious event brought together young culinary talents from around the world, offering a platform to showcase their skills and creativity. The competition, known for its rigorous challenges, was a true celebration of the art of cooking.

The event's itinerary was not just about competition; it also allowed participants to immerse themselves in the rich culinary culture of Istanbul. Two walking tours on the first two days offered a chance to explore the city.

The first day took participants through the vibrant Spice Bazaar, a visit to Turkish coffee producer Mehmed Efendi, a stop at the Tatakale Bazaar and a chance to see inside Yerebatan Cistern. The historic district tour included iconic landmarks like the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, and Sultanahmet Square. Lunch at The Must, and a visit to the Grand Bazaar, made it a day filled with Turkish culinary delights. The day concluded with a delectable dinner at Beyti Restaurant, owned by Maître d'Honneur Beyti Güler.

The second day began with an intriguing tour of the Gülloğlu Baklava Factory, where participants had the opportunity to witness the filo masters at work. Lunch was at the renowned Hamdi Restaurant, followed by a visit to le Cordon Bleu for the competition briefing, kitchen tour, and the privilege to enjoy a sumptuous three-course dinner prepared by the senior students.

The highlight of the competition was undoubtedly the culinary challenge that took place on the third day. The young chefs were tested on their creativity, adaptability, and technical skills as they tackled a "black box" challenge. This year's black box contained a whole duck, 2 eggplants, 4 persimmons, 8 fresh figs, and 4 red mullets. Competitors were required to incorporate at least 25% of these mandatory items into their menus. They had 30 minutes to plan their menu and then 3.5 hours to prepare their first course, followed by 15 minutes for the main course and a final 15 minutes for dessert.

A unique aspect of this competition was the comprehensive feedback provided by both kitchen judges and tasting judges. Tasting judges had the challenging task of sampling 66 plates throughout the day, a testament to the competition's high standard. The post-

competition debriefing session allowed competitors to receive critiques and individual comments, providing them with valuable insights for their culinary growth.

The results were eagerly awaited, and the winners truly shone. Joseph Baffoe from the Bailliage of USA secured the first place Arthur Bolli Trophy, earning €2500, a 5-week intermediate course at le Cordon Bleu Paris, and a set of knives and tools from Wüsthof Manufacturing. Notably, Joseph also received the highest marks from the Kitchen judges. Maciej Pisarek from the Bailliage of Great Britain secured second place Eugénie Brazier Trophy, winning €1500 and an intermediate knife set from Wüsthof. Amber Heaton from the Bailliage of Australia clinched the third place Jean Valby Trophy, receiving €500 and a knife set from Wüsthof.

Competitions of this magnitude rely heavily on the expertise and impartiality of the judges. The event organizers extended their heartfelt gratitude to the jury members who hailed from 10 different countries, ensuring fairness and accuracy in the judging process. The perpetual sponsors, le Cordon Bleu represented by Defne Ertan Tüysüzoglu, Operations Director of le Cordon Bleu Istanbul, and Harald Wüsthof of Wüsthof Manufacturing, were also acknowledged for their generous contributions that enhanced the competition.

The 47th Chaîne des Rôtisseurs International Jeunes Chefs Rôtisseurs Competition in Istanbul was an incredible success. It brought together budding chefs from around the world, offered them a platform to showcase their talents, and celebrated the diverse culinary traditions of Istanbul. As the event ended, it was announced that the 48th Concours International des Jeunes Chefs Rôtisseurs would be held in Budapest, Hungary, promising another exciting chapter in the world of culinary excellence.

Lois Gilbert
Committee Member
Comité des Jeunes Chefs Rôtisseurs
Bailli Val d'Okanagan , Canada