



Association  
Mondiale de la  
Gastronomie

## JCR Newsletter



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*Our intention with this newsletter is to inform the new candidates for the next International competition. This newsletter will also be provided to members of Bailliages that are involved in Regional and National competitions and be posted on the JCR Alumni Facebook page. If you have any questions, please contact Lois Gilbert, International JCR Committee Member at*

*Lois.gilbert@mc.com*

### DESTINATION ISTANBUL 2026

**April 16-20, 2026**

#### Competition Program

- April 16: All competitors must arrive before 1700 Official Welcome dinner.
- April 17: Tour, lunch at Hamdi, Kitchen tour and briefing Cordon Bleu, Dinner
- April 18: Competition, dinner Sans
- April 19: Debriefing, Cruise, Awards, Gala
- April 20: Departure



#### Important Links:

[www.evisa.gov.tr](http://www.evisa.gov.tr)

<https://competitions.chainedesrotisseurs.com/pages/24/competition-newsletters.html>

<https://competitions.chainedesrotisseurs.com/pages/226/information-for-competitors.html>

### From Competitor to Judge

*Celebrating the chefs whose journeys have come full circle.*

Each of the culinary professionals featured here once stood where this year's competitors now stand — focused, determined, and full of ambition. Through training, discipline, and the generosity of mentors, they built careers that carried them onto national and international stages.

Today, they return to share that experience. Their role on the other side of the competition is more than evaluation; it is encouragement, guidance, and a commitment to helping the next generation grow.

### Meet the Assistant Kitchen Supervisor: Sydney Hamelin, Canada, 2024



**Then:** Rising competitor discovering the international stage.

**Now:** Silver Medal winner stepping behind the scenes to help others succeed.

Originally from **Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**, Sydney discovered her love of cooking by watching her mother in the kitchen. That early inspiration grew into a career that has taken her across Canada and onto some of the world's biggest stages.

From **Top Chef Saskatchewan (2019)** to representing Canada at the **Culinary Olympics**, Sydney has continued to build an impressive list of achievements. Now based in **West Kelowna**, she earned **Silver Medal** at the **Jeune Chef Rôtisseurs International Competition in Budapest (2024)**, helped Team Canada secure **gold and silver** at the **Shanghai International Culinary Cup**, and most recently placed **third** at the **Global Chefs Semi-Finals for the Americas**.

This year, she returns to the Jeune Chef international competition in a new role — eager to learn what it takes to run a world-class competition from the inside.

*"This competition changed my confidence, my skills, and my direction. I'm excited to help the next group of chefs experience that same growth."*

### Meet the Tasting Judge: Leah Patitucci, Canada 2022



**Then:** Apprentice learning the craft in Vancouver kitchens.

**Now:** National team leader and respected chef giving back as a judge.

From her first days as a young apprentice at **Hawksworth Restaurant**, Leah Patitucci set her sights on a career defined by discipline, teamwork, and constant improvement.

Through Vancouver Community College she earned her **Red Seal** and was named **Student of the Year**, while also gaining early international exposure with **Culinary Team Canada** at the IKA Culinary Olympics. Her development continued in leading kitchens including **Blackbird Bistro**, **Temper Chocolate & Pastries**, and **The Pear Tree**, before moving on to **Mission Hill Family Estate**.

Today, Leah is **Sous Chef at the Fairmont Pacific Rim**. She served as **Captain of the Junior Culinary Team Canada (2021–2022)** and represented the country as a team member from 2019 to 2023, earning numerous distinctions along the way.

Now she embraces the opportunity to stand on the other side of the pass.

*"To step from competitor to judge is an honour. It allows me to pass forward the mentorship that shaped my career."*



## Meet the Tasting Judge: Sindre Hjelmseth, Norway 2021

**Then:** Chaîne competitor with big dreams.

**Now:** World champion and mentor returning to guide the next generation.

Sindre Hjelmseth began working in professional kitchens at just 12 years old, setting in motion a journey that would take him to the top of podiums around the world. Now 28, he is a chef at **Stallen Restaurant in Oslo** and one of Norway's most accomplished competitors.

His remarkable résumé includes **Gold Medal** victory at the **Chaîne des Rôtisseurs International Final in Paris (2021)**, multiple national and Nordic titles, and two **Category Gold Medals** with the Norwegian National Culinary Team at the **2024 Culinary Olympics**.

Sindre's culinary philosophy is rooted in precision, balance, and deep respect for ingredients. Classical in foundation and modern in expression, his cooking is thoughtful, layered, and exacting, where presentation always serves flavour.

Returning to Chaîne as a judge holds special meaning for him, as it was the competition that helped launch his international career.

*"Chaîne des Rôtisseurs helped shape my future. Returning to support young chefs beginning their own journey is a true privilege."*

Looking ahead, Sindre continues to compete with ambitions that include future national championships and, ultimately, standing again on the highest step of the podium.

Together, these chefs represent the path from ambition to achievement — and the responsibility that comes with experience. Each of them once carried a knife roll into a competition kitchen, guided by hope, nerves, and the belief that hard work could open doors.

Today, they return not simply as officials, but as mentors, role models, and living proof of where dedication can lead. Their presence reminds every competitor that this moment may be the beginning of something extraordinary.