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## The Young Chef of the Year Competition

The competition is for young chefs aged 23 years and under and sets them the task of serving a three-course meal using a number of set ingredients and a classic recipe which whilst testing their skills also gives them the opportunity to put their own flair and imagination into the dishes.

Within a 2 ½ period, the young chefs must produce a fish starter, the preparation of which must include filleting a whole fish, make a classic chicken sauté dish to include the butchering of a whole chicken with accompaniments of their choice and then make a dessert which they feel compliments the dining experience.

Competitors are required to submit their recipes, working methods and costings which are then paper judged with six young chefs going forward to the final with the cook-off taking place at Westminster Kingsway College. Unfortunately, one of the chefs was unable to attend on the day so the cook-off took place between five chefs.

This year the competition took place on Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May and saw six young chefs put themselves through their paces under the watchful eyes of Master Chefs Grant Hawthorne, Clive Roberts and Brian Henry. Brian is well used to competitions being very involved with the Welsh Chef of the Year completion and the Welsh Culinary Team.

Whilst the chefs were busy competing in one kitchen, Roger Jones of The Harrow at Little Bedwyn was working in another with the students of Westminster Kingsway College to prepare the dishes for the Young Chefs Awards Dinner scheduled for that evening.

Flavour and presentation make up 45% of the marks because ultimately it is the customer experience of the food on the plate that will impress. The remaining marks are awarded for innovation, originality and key skills of good practice, hygiene, workmanship, working method and timings.

**Josh Dallaway** (20) from Westminster Kingsway College prepared:

Paupiette of sole with a crab and salmon mousse  
on noodle vegetables with a lime and dill beurre blanc

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Classic chicken chasseur with turned buttered parsley potatoes

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Coconut and pineapple cake, Bacardi and lime sorbet with a sweet mango and mint salsa

**Dolton Lodge** (20) of The Galley Restaurant in Topsham prepared:

Bass with scallops, butternut squash purée, braised leek and a caviar beurre blanc

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Coq au vin with a twist, potatoes Dauphinoise, steamed vegetables and pan seared chicken breast with crispy shallots

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Vanilla crème brûlée with rhubarb jelly, ginger ice cream and apple and ginger purée

**Louisa Matthews** (21) from Eton College prepared:

Roast seabass with aioli crab cake, mussel stew and vegetables

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Classic chicken chasseur

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Rhubarb and custard, fresh custard doughnut with rhubarb sorbet, piped lemon curd and ginger jelly

**Oliver Smith** (20) of the Mirabelle Restaurant in the Grand Hotel at Eastbourne prepared:

John Dory with red pepper velouté, a fennel salad, garlic oil and lemon jellies

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Poulet sauté chasseur with Parmesan and mascapone polenta

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Orange panacotta with hibiscus mousseline, clove syrup, orange tuille and crystallized hibiscus petals

**Tomas Uragallo** (18) of Norwich Hotel School prepared:

Red mullet brandade

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Poulet sauté Bercy

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Strawberry artichoke roll

The competition was closely fought with some excellent skills on show and came right down to the wire as the clock ticked and the young chefs worked to put all three dishes in front of the judges within the allotted time.

Each judge marked the young chefs individually during the main preparation period and then whilst Grant Hawthorne stayed in the kitchen watching the final preparations, Clive Roberts and Brian Henry tasted the dishes in the Escoffier Room. Once the final dish was presented, Grant also went to lend his opinion to the flavour, texture and overall presentation of the dish.

Each chef had to prepare two plates of the dish so that the judges could taste one and one could be kept to judge overall presentation of the dishes.

Whilst the chefs cleared down, the judges deliberated and eventually came up with a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place with the winning chef having the opportunity to travel to Luxembourg courtesy of Villeroy & Boch.

Not wishing to keep the young chefs of tenterhooks, the results were revealed at the start of the awards dinner so that they could all really enjoy the delicious meal prepared by Roger Jones.

The winner of the competition was Louisa Matthews from Eton College with Oliver Smith from the Mirabelle Restaurant a close second with Josh Dallaway from Westminster Kingsway College in third place.



And here are two of Louisa's winning recipes ...

### Roast Seabass with Aioli Crab Cake

SERVES 2

4 x 4oz portions      seabass  
1oz                      melted butter  
1oz                      seasoned flour

Trim each portion neatly, score the skin and dip into seasoned flour. Brush with melted butter.

#### *For the aioli crab cake*

4oz                      fresh white crab meat  
1oz                      mayonnaise  
1 clove                crushed garlic  
1oz                      fresh white breadcrumbs  
1                        finely chopped red chilli  
1 tsp                    chopped coriander  
1                        chopped spring onion  
1oz                      flour  
1                        egg  
2oz                      Japanese breadcrumbs



Mix together the crab meat, mayonnaise, garlic, breadcrumbs, spring onion and chilli. Form into 4 neat crab cakes. Pané with the flour, egg and breadcrumbs. Chill until service.

#### *For the mussel stew*

8oz                    fresh mussels, scrubbed and de-bearded  
2oz                    white wine  
1oz                    chopped shallots  
1oz                    chopped fennel  
1oz                    chopped carrots  
1oz                    chopped tomatoes  
1 pinch                saffron  
8oz                    fish stock  
2oz                    double cream  
1 tsp                    chopped parsley  
2oz                    Pernod  
1oz                    butter

Boil the white wine and shallots, add the mussels and steam until they have just opened, drain and reserve the cooking liquid. Sweat the fennel and carrot in butter until soft. Add the pernod and reduce by half, add the saffron, tomatoes, fish stock and the mussel cooking liquid and simmer for 10 minutes.

Blitz the sauce with a hand blender and push through a fine sieve. Bring back to the boil, add cream and reduce to a nice sauce consistency.

Reserve until service, when the mussels and parsley can then be added.

#### *For the vegetables*

8                        baby carrots  
8 small                asparagus tips  
8                        baby leeks  
8 pieces                baby fennel  
1oz                      shelled broad beans  
1 tbsp                 fresh peas

Blanch the carrots, asparagus and leeks in a little salted water, refresh and drain. Braise the fennel in a knob of butter until tender. The rest of the vegetables will be added to the fennel and gently reheated at service.

### To Serve

Pan fry the seabass fillets, skin side down until the skin is nice and crispy, turn over and finish in the oven until just cooked. Deep-fry the crab cakes until crispy and hot. Warm the mussel sauce, add the shelled mussels with a few in the shells for garnish. Stir in the parsley and check the seasoning. Warm the fennel, throw in the blanched vegetables and season.

Place a crab cake in the middle of 4 bowls, spoon around the mussel stew, sprinkle over the vegetables and top with the sea bass. Serve immediately.



### Rhubarb and Custard

*Fresh custard doughnut, with rhubarb sorbet, piped lemon curd and ginger jelly*

*For the rhubarb sorbet*

25 ml cold water  
225g rhubarb, trimmed, partly peeled, chopped  
43g caster sugar plus extra to taste  
lemon juice, to taste

For the rhubarb, place the water, rhubarb and sugar into a pan, cover with a lid and bring to the boil. Continue to boil for 2-3 minutes, then remove the lid, reduce the heat to a simmer and simmer for a further 4-5 minutes, or until the rhubarb is tender. Set aside to cool. Transfer the cooled rhubarb to a food processor and blend to a purée. Transfer the puréed rhubarb to a fine sieve and push it through the sieve with a wooden spoon, collecting the sieved liquid in a bowl. Once the mixture has cooled, add sugar or lemon juice, to taste, as necessary. Transfer the sieved rhubarb purée to an ice cream maker. Churn, following the manufacturer's instructions, for 15-25 minutes, or until the sorbet is smooth and has set. Store in the freezer until needed.

*For the doughnut*

125g full-cream milk  
7g fresh yeast (or 3½g dried)  
250g strong bread (baker's) flour  
30 g unsalted butter (room temperature)  
20 g caster (superfine) sugar  
5 g salt (or to taste)  
2 large eggs  
peanut (ground oil) for deep frying  
25g caster sugar for dusting

Gently warm the milk to body temperature. Crumble the fresh yeast into the flour with your fingertips as if you were making a crumble, If using dry yeast, just mix in with the flour. Rub in the butter, then add the sugar and salt, then add the beaten egg and milk. Knead for approximately 10 to 12 minutes or until you have a nice smooth elastic ball of dough.

Place into a bowl that has been floured, cover with a tea towel and leave in a draught free place for

approximately 1 hour or until doubled in volume. Using the rounded end of your scraper, turn out the dough on to a slightly floured work surface and divide the dough then roll in to tight balls. Grease and lightly flour a baking tray with flour. Leaving space between them so they don't touch when raised, place the doughnuts on the tray with the seam side down. Dust them lightly with flour. Cover with a tea towel and let them prove until nearly doubled in size, approximately 45 minutes.

Using a saucepan deep enough to deep fry, heat the oil over medium heat to 180°C (360°F). Carefully and gently lift the first doughnut into the oil. It should sizzle straight away. Add up to 5 doughnuts at a time. Fry for approximately 30 to 45 seconds until they start to colour and then turn them over and fry the other side for approximately the same time. Remove the doughnuts and drain on kitchen towel. Let them cool.

*For the pastry cream for filling the doughnuts*

2 egg yolks  
50g caster sugar  
13g plain flour, sifted  
1 vanilla pod, with a line scored down the side, or 1/2 tsp vanilla extract  
175 ml milk

In a bowl, whisk the egg yolks with the sugar until light and thick, then stir in the flour. Put the vanilla pod (if using) in a saucepan with the milk and bring it slowly just up to the boil. Remove the vanilla pod and pour the milk onto the egg mixture, whisking all the time. Return the mixture to the pan and stir over a low-medium heat until it comes up to a gentle boil. (It must boil for it to thicken.) Continue to cook, stirring all the time (or use a whisk if it looks lumpy), for 2 minutes or until it has thickened.

Remove the saucepan from the heat, add the vanilla extract (if using) and pour into a bowl. If the mixture goes a little lumpy while cooking, remove the saucepan from the heat and whisk well. If it is still lumpy when cooked, push it through a sieve. Cover with cling film and allow to cool. It must be covered, or the surface must be rubbed with a tiny knob of butter to prevent a skin forming.

Once cooled pipe into the doughnuts and lightly dust each doughnut with sugar.

*For the lemon curd for piping onto the plate*

113g unsalted butter, melted  
77g caster sugar (superfine sugar)

*To serve*

Place the warmed doughnut onto the plate along with a ball of sorbet and pipe the lemon curd on random spots along with the ginger jelly cubes.

*Four of the young chefs who competed in the MCGB competitions – The David Lyell Scholarship and the Young Chef of the Year competition are part of the five-man team short-listed for WorldSkills 2013. The young chefs are Anabelle Wilson winner of the David Lyell Scholarship, Danny Haong (2011) and Louisa Matthews (2012) winners of the Young Chef of the Year competition and Stephen Smith from Westminster Kingsway College who competed in this year's David Lyell Scholarship.*

Juice of 2 lemons

1 medium egg  
1/2 gelatine sheet

Put the melted butter, sugar, lemon juice, and eggs into a large, heatproof bowl or steamer insert and whisk until smooth. Place the bowl over a pan of gently simmering water, making sure the water does not touch the base of the bowl. Whisk continuously until the mixture thickens; it should leave a trail on the surface when drizzled from the whisk.

Soak the gelatine sheet in a large bowl of cold water for about 5 minutes, until it is completely soft.

Remove from the bowl, squeeze out excess water, and then dissolve the gelatine in 1 tablespoon of boiling water. Add it to the hot curd and mix well.

Pass the curd through a fine sieve and then blitz it in a food processor for a minute or two, until it lightens slightly in colour and becomes aerated. Cool before using.

*For the ginger jelly*

250g apple juice  
250g crabbies ginger wine  
37g stem ginger finely chopped  
20g fresh ginger  
2 ml ginger syrup  
2 leaves gelatine

Place all the ingredients except the gelatine into a pan and reduce to 300 ml leave to infuse. Add the soaked gelatine then pass through a sieve into a tray and chill until set. Once set cut into cubes.



