

Wanted: Future Stars of Gastronomy

The Academy of Food & Wine, the industry's front-of-house training body, is inviting all student chefs and wine waiters in the UK to showcase their talents and menu planning abilities in its new competition, Future Stars of Gastronomy.

The competition, sponsored by Discover the Origin, seeks to find the student chef and wine waiter team that plans and cooks the most impressive and well-considered two-course menu with matching wines. Judges will take into consideration the theory and reasoning behind the food and wine combination, the presentation of the entry and the execution of the cooking and serving.

The Future Stars of Gastronomy competition aims to support the learning and development of hospitality students and reward talent and creativity, said Nick Scade, chairman of the Academy of Food & Wine. The aim is to encourage learners and recognise excellence in teaching establishments.

Discover the Origin is the campaign to promote PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) products. These include Parma Ham, Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, Burgundy wines, Port and Douro Valley Wines. The two-course menus must include the two Discover the Origin ingredients and wines must be PDO wines.

Any college or university is invited to enter one or more teams in what will prove a fantastic way to demonstrate students' abilities and raise the profile of their establishment.

The winning Future Stars of Gastronomy 2010 will receive a 10-day, all-expenses paid trip, courtesy of Discover the Origin, to understand the history and provenance behind the products of the wines from Burgundy, the hams from Parma, the cheese from Emilia Romagna and the wines from Porto and Douro Valley.

Entry forms can be downloaded from the Academy's website at www.afws.co.uk. The closing date for entries is 4 January 2010.

For further details email Linda Pettit on linda@tilburstowmedia.co.uk or call 01737 823721/07973 789853. Alternatively call the Academy of Food & Wine on 020 8661 4646 or email helen@acfws.org.

Editor's notes

About the Future Stars of Gastronomy competition

Entries are sought from pairs comprising a chef and a front-of-house student, waiter or bar person. The students must be attending any college or university in the UK offering nationally recognised hospitality and catering qualifications. The college or university must have an in-house restaurant open to the public and staffed by their current students. Entries will only be accepted by pairs comprising of a chef and a front-of-house student, waiter or bar person.

Entrants must send their completed entry form back to the Academy of Food & Wine by 4 January 2010, after which a multiple-choice questionnaire must be completed by 8 February 2010.

From these a number of successful teams will be selected from five regions. The chef from each selected team will then be asked to submit a two-course menu, listing ingredients, method and description. The front-of-house student will be asked to choose Discover the Origin wines to match each course and explain why and how they complement each other.

Each regional winner (five teams) will then be visited by the judges and will have to prepare and serve the two-course meal.

All five teams will be invited to attend the final awards ceremony on 19 July 2010 at Westminster Kingsway College, London, where the winner will be announced at a drinks reception for invited industry guests. The overall winner will be presented with a framed certificate, trophy and details of the chef and front-of-house student prize.

About the Academy

The Academy of Food & Wine is a not-for-profit social enterprise organisation, founded in 1988. It is the hospitality industry's only professional training body dedicated to wine service and food service skills. The Academy's purpose is to identify, promote and maintain the highest professional standards for the education and training of food and wine waiting staff and bar assistants in the UK hotel, restaurant, catering and bar industry.

The Academy's objectives are: for every waiter/waitress, wine waiter and bar assistant in the industry to be a member of the Academy ? their professional body; to gain greater recognition for these operatives throughout the industry by accreditation, badging and recognition; to help members develop, maintain and advance their knowledge, skills and ability; to provide an interface between educators, service staff and their employers; and to enhance member's career prospects. Currently the Academy has over 1,000 members.

About Discover the Origin

Discover the Origin is a three-year campaign designed to raise awareness around five key European PDO products: Parma Ham; Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese; Burgundy wines; Port; and Douro Valley wines.

The aim of the campaign is to highlight the importance of these products amongst distributors and food and drink professionals to drive sales. This will be achieved by educating people on the benefits their quality image offers the trade commercially.

The campaign is supported by some key personalities in the world of food and drink: Peter Gordon, head chef of London's Providores and Tapa Room; Katie Caldesi, TV chef and author; Xavier Rousset, master sommelier and co-owner of Texture; and Gearoid Devaney, past winner of the Academy of Food & Wine's UK Sommelier of the Year.

The campaign supports the importance of provenance, good production methods and fair-trading.

The trade bodies behind the campaign are: The Burgundy Wine Board (BIVB), the Port and Douro Wines Institute (IVDP), the Parma Ham and Parmigiano-Reggiano Consortiums.

The PDO stamp of approval is attributed to these five food and drink products certifying that they are unique to a particular region and of outstanding quality.

Burgundy Wine Board (BIVB)? www.burgundy-wines.fr

Port and Douro Wines Institute (IVDP) ? www.ivdp.pt

Consortium of Parma Ham - www.prosciuttodiparma.com

Consortium of Parmigiano-Reggiano - www.parmigiano-reggiano.it

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