

Hotel TerraVina wins Gastronomy Team of the Year

Sommelier Laurent Richet and sous chef Neil Cooper from Hotel TerraVina in Hampshire have won the Academy of Food & Wine's 2010 Gastronomy Team of the Year after an exciting 'cook & serve' final at London's Westminster Kingsway College yesterday.

Assistant sommelier Clement Robert and executive chef Steven Titman from Summer Lodge, Dorset, were runners-up in the competition, held in association with Discover the Origin, with sommelier Susanta Kumar Das and executive chef Sudha Shankar Saha of Saffron in Birmingham taking third place.

'This year the finalists were all of an extremely high standard which gave the judges a tough time deciding on an eventual winner. The Gastronomy Team of the Year competition is going from strength to strength and demonstrates that good teamwork between front-of-house and back-of-house can result in really creative cooking and wine and food pairings,' commented Academy of Food & Wine deputy chairman Paul Breach.

Fellow judge Rob Kirby, chef director of Lexington Catering, said: 'The team from Hotel TerraVina demonstrated a thorough understanding of food and wine matching - they understood what worked and showed true cooking skills matched with wines that complemented rather than dominated the food. These were well thought out, well executed dishes.'

The five finalists were asked to cook and serve a two-course meal with wines for a panel of expert judges. Dishes had to include Discover the Origin PDO ingredients Parma Ham and Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese and be accompanied by a Burgundy, Port or wine from the Douro Valley, also part of the Discover the Origin campaign.

Laurent and Neil's winning two-course meal included a starter of hand-dived scallops, cauliflower, quail eggs, Parmesan, Parma ham and white chocolate, accompanied by a Niepoort, Redoma Branco, Douro Portugal 2007. The team's main course was pig trotter spring roll, confit belly and poached loin of pork, smoked potato, Parmesan, Parma ham and chorizo foam and celeriac fondant served with Nuits Saint-Georges, Michel Gros Burgundy, France 2004.

Hotel TerraVina receives an Academy training bursary, along with the team's personal prize of a 10-day trip to France, Portugal and Italy. Summer Lodge receives an Academy training bursary.

The winners of the Academy's student competition, Future Stars of Gastronomy, was announced yesterday as student sommelier James O'keeffe and student chef Jack Hone from Westminster Kingsway College, London.

Joint runners-up in the competition, which was open to chef and front-of-house students from any college or university, were student sommelier Adam Finney and student chef Enming Liang from University College of Birmingham and student sommelier Gareth Pugh and student chef Tom Allerton from Thames Valley University.

The winning college receives an Academy of Food & Wine training bursary together with the team's personal prize of a 10-day trip, courtesy of Discover the Origin, to gain an insight and understanding into the history and provenance behind the products of the PDO campaign. The runner-up colleges will each receive an Academy training bursary.

The Gastronomy Team of the Year and Future Stars of Gastronomy competitions, now in their second year, are designed to highlight the importance of a good working relationship between kitchen and front-of-house staff and to encourage teamwork and innovation between the disciplines.

For further press 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 Gastronomy Team of the Year competition

Upon receipt of the completed entry form, a multiple-choice questionnaire was sent to each team for completion. The judges then marked the questionnaires and selected a number of successful teams from each of the following regions: The South, London, Wales & The Midlands, The North, and Scotland.

The selected teams then submitted a two-course menu (a starter and a main or a main and dessert). All the ingredients used in the preparation of the menu had to be listed and the method of preparation fully explained as well as an overall description of the finished dish. Their dishes must include Discover the Origin PDO ingredients Parma Ham and Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese and must be accompanied by a Burgundy, Port or wine from the Douro Valley, also part of the Discover the Origin campaign.

The sommelier or front of house team member was asked to state the 'Discover the Origin' wines chosen to match each course and supply a full explanation as to why they were selected and how the wines and dishes complemented each other. A panel of judges then reviewed all the entries and the best team from each region was awarded a Regional Winner Certificate and trophy. Each regional winner (five teams) was then invited to attend a 'cook and serve' final at Westminster Kingsway College, London, to prepare and serve their two-course meal to the judges and explain why the two matches were selected. The judges included: Rob Kirby, chef director of Lexington Catering; Andrew Jones, head chef of the Westbury Mayfair Hotel, London; Paul Breach of the Academy of Food & Wine; former Sommelier of the Year Gearoid Devaney of Sarment Wines; and Amy Batchlor, account executive, Westbury Communications.

About the Future Stars of Gastronomy competition

Entries were sought from pairs comprising a chef and a front-of-house student, waiter or bar person. The students had to 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 staffed by current students.

After the initial entry form the teams completed a multiple-choice questionnaire from which a number of successful teams were selected from five regions. The teams were then asked to submit a two-course menu, a starter and main or a main and dessert. All the ingredients used in the preparation of the menu had to be listed and the method of preparation fully explained as well as an overall description of the finished dish.

The sommelier or front of house team member was asked to state the 'Discover the Origin' wines chosen to match each course and supply a full explanation as to why these wines were chosen and how they complement the food.

Each of the six regional winning teams then prepared and served their two-course meal for a panel of visiting judges. The six teams were invited to the final awards ceremony on 19 July 2010 at Westminster Kingsway College, London, where the winning team was announced at a drinks reception and presented with a framed certificate, trophy and details of their 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 Tapas Room; Katie Caldesi, TV chef and author; Xavier Rousset, master sommelier and co-owner of Texture; and Gearoid Devaney, past 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

For further press information on Discover the Origin please contact:

Westbury Communications

Tel: +44 (0) 207 751 9170

Email: dtopressoffice@westburycom.co.uk

(ends)