

## Academy reveals finalists for 2011 UK Restaurant Manager of the Year

Six of the UK's top restaurant managers, plus last year's runner-up, will go through to the finals of the 2011 UK Restaurant Manager of the Year competition, following a semi-final held at the Westbury Hotel, London, earlier this week [28 February].

The seven finalists are:

Damien Bastiat, restaurant manager, Gidleigh Park, Devon

Michele Caggianese, restaurant & bar manager, Jumeirah Carlton Tower, London (last year's runner-up)

Nicolas Chesneau, restaurant manager, La Becasse, Ludlow, Shropshire

Shaun Corrigan, restaurants manager, The Grand Jersey

Markus Ludewig, restaurant manager, One Aldwych, London

Peter McAlister, brasserie manager, Malmaison Hotel, Belfast

Paul Shanahan, assistant food & beverage director, London Syon Park, Waldorf Astoria

All seven will compete at the final of the event being held on 16 May 2011 at the Corinthia Hotel, London.

'We had such a high standard of entries this year, that we have put a total of seven candidates through rather than six,' said Sophie Roberts-Brown, executive director. 'All of them were extremely impressive at the semi-finals' so we are in for an exciting final.'

The competition, supported by Hospitality Benchmark through the National Skills Academy for Hospitality, the Savoy Educational Trust and sponsored by OpenTable.com, seeks to find a restaurant manager who excels front-of-house, has great people skills, the ability to manage and inspire a team and who can demonstrate a strong business acumen. Previous winners include David Hennigan, previously of the Crown at Whitebrook, and Peter Avis of Babylon restaurant, London.

The winner will receive a week in New York to complete a stage at one of restaurateur Danny Mayer's Union Square Hospitality Group properties, staying in the top suite at trendy Manhattan boutique hotel The MAve, in the Flatiron District. The winners' restaurant will receive a 12-month subscription to the OpenTable reservation system.

The line-up of judges for the 2011 competition includes the 2009 Hotelier of the Year Jonathan Raggett, managing director of Red Carnation Hotels, former Le Gavroche maitre d' Silvano Giralдин, now director of Roux Consulting, Rémy Lysé, managing director, Rex Restaurant Associates, and Conor O'Leary, director of F&B, Hyatt Regency London The Churchill.

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### Editor's notes

### About the Academy

The Academy of Food and Wine Service (AFWS) established in 1988, is the professional body for front-of-house service. It is dedicated to improving the status and awareness of food and beverage service as a viable career choice, raising standards across the industry, and by encouraging teamwork to foster good relations with other industry sectors. The Academy can offer advice and training to anyone following, or considering, a career as a sommelier, wine waiter, waiter, bar manager or restaurant manager.

[www.afws.co.uk](http://www.afws.co.uk).

### **About the competition**

Following the submission of entry, CV, membership form, reference and written answers to questions, the judges selected the best entrants to attend the semi final at the Westbury Hotel, Mayfair on 28 February. Here they were interviewed by the judges on their knowledge and expertise, undertook a service management exercise and answered food-related questions and a general service knowledge questionnaire.

The seven semi-finalists will now go forward to the final being held at the Corinthia Hotel, London, on 16 May 2011 where they will present a business plan for a restaurant concept of their own, a food and wine matching exercise and complete a service-style scenario.

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