

Moët UK Sommelier of the Year 2013: semi-finalists announced

The names of the sommeliers through to the semi-finals of this year's Moët UK Sommelier of the Year 2013 have been announced today by the Academy of Food & Wine Service (AFWS).

This follows yesterday's [25 March] regional finals held simultaneously in Bristol, London, Manchester, Tunbridge Wells and Edinburgh. This year there were a record number of entries, with 89 making it through to the regional finals.

Elsa Corbineau, marketing director for sponsor Moët & Chandon said: "We were delighted with the level of entries this year, which have come from a broad range of establishments across the UK. This demonstrates a strong and growing interest in sommellerie and the wine skills and knowledge involved with the profession - something that we at Moët & Chandon are dedicated to supporting and promoting. We have had a large number of new competitors this year, which clearly shows that young sommeliers are keen to expand their experience and knowledge by entering this prestigious competition."

The 2013 semi-finalists are:

Romain Bourger, The Vineyard at Stockcross, Newbury

Tobias Brauweiler, The Ritz, London

Remi Fischer, Gleneagles, Perthshire

Michael Jenni, Launceston Place, London

Kathrine Larson, Orrery, London

Tanguy Martin, Hotel TerraVina, Hampshire

Stefan Neumann, The Fat Duck, Berkshire

Marcin Oziebly, Sam's Chop House, Manchester

Mark Perlaki, Hotel du Vin, Harrogate

Stuart Skea, 21212 Restaurant, Edinburgh

All 10 now go forward to the semi-finals at London's Mandarin Oriental, Hyde Park on 28 May 2013, along with last year's runners up **Laurent Richet** of Restaurant Sat Bains in Nottingham and **Clement Robert** of Medlar Restaurant, London.

At the semi final just three sommeliers will be selected to compete in the grand final later that day.

Now in its 34th year the Moët UK Sommelier of the Year competition seeks to find the best wine waiter or sommelier based on wine and drink expertise, ability to deal with customers, and front of house service skills. Last year's winner was Jan Konetzki of Restaurant Gordon Ramsay.

The panel of expert judges at the semi-finals and final will once again be chaired by current world champion sommelier and hotelier Gerard Bassett OBE, MW, MS.

AFWS executive director John Croft commented: "We have been keen to emphasis to anyone considering entering, that doing so is a great opportunity to learn from your peers and meet and network with others in the wine industry. The level of entries shows that

there are many young people in the sector prepared to have a go and to see what the competition involves.?

The winner of the Moët UK Sommelier of the Year 2013 title wins a unique trip to Maison Moët & Chandon to taste the Grand Vintage collections with chef de cave Benoît Gouez.

In addition, the Boutinot Bursary will fund an all-expenses paid trip to visit the Southern Rhone Valley during the 2013 harvest giving the winner a wonderful opportunity to learn more about this stunning area.

All three finalists will be given a 12-month complimentary membership of The Wine Guild of the United Kingdom, including an invitation to its annual winter banquet held at Vintners' Hall in London, the historic home of the UK's wine trade.

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EDITOR'S NOTES

About the Academy

The Academy of Food & Wine Service (AFWS), established in 1988, is the professional body for food and beverage 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 encouraging teamwork with other colleagues. AFWS 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

About Moët & Chandon

Moët & Chandon has been the champagne of success and glamour since 1743. Renowned for its achievements, firsts and legendary pioneering spirit, Moët & Chandon is the Maison that introduced champagne to the world. Synonymous with the most venerable of traditions and the most modern of pleasures, Moët & Chandon has celebrated life's most triumphant moments with grandeur and generosity for nearly 270 years.

Moët & Chandon Champagnes

Moët & Chandon shares the magic of champagne with the world, offering a range of unique wines for every occasion, mood and palate. From the iconic Moët Impérial to the Grand Vintage Collection, the extroverted Moët Rosé Impérial to the innovative Moët Ice Impérial, each champagne dazzles and delights with bright fruitiness, a seductive palate and an elegant maturity.