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**THOUSANDS OF INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS ATTEND THE RECENT WESTERN
FOODSERVICE & HOSPITALITY EXPO, SPONSORED BY THE CALIFORNIA RESTAURANT
ASSOCIATION**

Winners Announced for Several Culinary and Beverage Competitions

ANAHEIM, CA, August 17, 2023 – Restaurant Events LLC has announced that the recent [Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo](#), sponsored by the California Restaurant Association, was a huge success. The trade show and conference, which ran alongside Coffee Fest Anaheim at the Anaheim Convention Center, brought together hundreds of exhibiting companies and thousands of restaurateurs, foodservice and specialty beverage professionals, provided hours of education and dozens of special events including culinary competitions.

“What a wonderful week, there was a great energy and excitement throughout the show floor. We received such positive feedback on the content in the education sessions and the opportunity to source new products throughout the exhibit hall and we thank the California Restaurant Association, our exhibitors, sponsors, speakers, attendees, media partners, supporting organizations and partners who helped to make the event a huge success,” said Tim von Gal, Co-founder, Restaurant Events LLC, new owners of the event. “Success at a trade show isn’t just measured by the number of leads acquired, but by the lasting connections made, the knowledge exchanged, and the innovative ideas sparked, and customer feedback confirms we provided all three at the recent Western Foodservice Expo.”

The **exhibit hall** featured hundreds of leading vendors, demonstrating and sampling products and services for the restaurant, foodservice, and specialty beverage markets. There were three new food pavilions, including the Vegan and Gluten Free Showcase, the Korean Food Pavilion, and the Food & Trends Pavilion where attendees found delicious new items for their menus. Attendees also had access to **Coffee Fest Anaheim’s** trade show, education program and competitions for those involved with serving or retailing coffee, tea and related products while staying at the forefront of emerging trends.

The **Center Stage Culinary Area**, sponsored by Lamb Weston and United Robotics Group, featured demonstrations by local chefs including Mareya Ibrahim, Shaun O’Neale, Mel Cottingham, Riley Baird and Deanna “Bomb Chica” Colon. There were two exciting competitions. Congratulations to Tumara Arnett from Joselito’s Tujunga Mexican Food who won \$1,000 and the title **Rapid-Fire Challenge Champion**. Tumara’s dish, using Lamb Weston products, was judged by Master Chef Shaun O’Neale, and Bill Yee and Lidia Felix with the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Culinary Federation.

On Monday, August 7, Ramon Rodriguez, a local Anaheim bartender, won the **Hip Sip: Battle of the Modern Bartender Competition Bourbon Edition**. The competition was sponsored by [Savage & Cooke Distillery](#) and judged by Art Sutley, Hospitality & Nightlife Expert, Savage & Cooke Distillery; and Bar Rescue's Mia Mastroianni, and Phil Wills, The Spirits in Motion. Ramon won a trip to the Savage & Cooke Distillery, which includes airfare, 2-night accommodation in Napa, a tour of the distillery and a meet & greet with the master distiller.

Thirty education sessions, many standing-room only, provided actionable solutions and ideas, from industry subject matter experts focused on *A Q&A with Distributors, Plant Based All Over, Maximizing Restaurant Profit, Building a Successful Beverage Program, Leasing Restaurant Space, Building Culture, Legal Center Live, Social Media Moves, Digital Hospitality, Reducing Food Loss and Waste, Optimizing Restaurant Delivery*, and much more.

In addition, dozens of restaurant professionals participated in the Restaurant Management 201 Workshop. This brand-new workshop guided the entire management team through the process of becoming a cohesive team with strong leadership. Darren Denington and Alison Anne provided the knowledge, skills, and systems needed for a team to properly run a business' daily operations, while still having the time and focus to manage the business details that will drive you to success.

The Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo is sponsored by the [California Restaurant Association](#), (CRA) the uniting force in the restaurant industry, bringing together the community by impacting legislation, cultivating relationships, and providing valuable resources. The CRA offered ServSafe training in English and Spanish, hosted their board meeting, and offered *Legal Center Live Session* as part of the conference program moderated by Jackie Gutierrez, Senior Member Services Manager; with panelists Anthony Zaller, Partner, Zaller Law Group; Alden Parker, Shareholder, Fisher Phillips, and Bruno Katz, Partner, Wilson Elser.

The [Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo](#) is owned by Restaurant Events, LLC and sponsored by the [California Restaurant Association](#). Restaurant Events, LLC also produces the [Florida Restaurant & Lodging Show](#) and [Pizza Tomorrow Summit](#), which will be held November 8-9, 2023 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL; [the International Restaurant & Foodservice Show of New York](#), which will be held March 3-5, 2024 at the Javits Center in New York City and the 2024 [Western Foodservice & Hospitality Expo](#) to be held August 25-27 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

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