



## YOUNG CHEF CHALLENGE – REGIONAL FINALS

**YouthX**, a global initiative by Gulfood, continues to build on its legacy of success as it prepares to bring its second edition to The Speciality Food Festival this November. Following its previous triumphs at Gulfood and The Saudi Food Show, **YouthX** is set to bring together young chefs from the region's leading hotels, providing them with an unparalleled platform to showcase their culinary skills in a thrilling competition. This unique event aims to recognise and reward their valuable contributions to the region's ever-growing influence on the global gastronomic scene.

As a leading hotel in the region, we invite you to participate in the **YouthX Young Chef Challenge** at the upcoming **Speciality Food Festival**. This is a unique opportunity for your hotel to showcase its culinary talent and connect with other industry leaders, decisionmakers, and young hospitality professionals.

### BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE COMPETITION

The challenge is organised over a span of 5 months, commencing with a **Prefinal Selections in October**, followed by **Regional Finals in November**, culminating in the **International Finals at Gulfood in February 2024**.

The competitors' cooking skills are just one part of this contest. The primary themes of the challenge will be around **sustainability** and the utilisation of **locally sourced ingredients**, adhering to the standards of 5-star hotels and fine dining establishments. Judging criteria will encompass the inventiveness of the menu in line with the theme, its presentation, and flavour.

While evaluating the 3-course menu, the judges will also focus on the chefs' vision by asking specific questions and letting them explain their choice of ingredients and menu concept.

This competition is exclusively open to all hotels and resorts within the GCC. Each hotel is required to enter a team of 3 chefs, all under the age of 30. These teams will be tasked with preparing a 3-course menu in 60 minutes, using a designated set of ingredients. The competition is structured into 3 stages: **Prefinal Selections, Semi-Finals, and the International Finals**.

### RULES AND REGULATIONS

#### 1. PARTICIPANTS

- 1.1 The competition is exclusively open to chefs employed in hotels within the GCC region.
- 1.2 The competition is reserved to teams that consist of 3 chefs.
- 1.3 Each team will consist of chefs from the same hotel, regardless of their respective restaurants within the hotel property.
- 1.4 Competitors must be a minimum of 18 years old at the time of the competition.
- 1.5 Participating chefs must be no older than 30 years at the time of the competition.
- 1.6 Competitors of any nationality are eligible.
- 1.7 While a diverse gender composition within the teams is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged.
- 1.8 A maximum of 10 teams will be granted entry to the **Prefinal Selections** round in October.

## 2. APPLICATIONS

- 2.1 To apply, the team must fill out the online registration form, which can be accessed [here](#), or email [youthx@dwtc.com](mailto:youthx@dwtc.com) by no later than Monday, 30 September 2023.
- 2.2 The organisers reserve the right to reject at all time applications that do not comply with either the spirit or the rules of the contest.

## 3. COMPETITION BRIEF

- 3.1 The competitors (a team of three chefs) are to prepare a 3-course menu within 60 minutes.
- 3.2 The key themes to be incorporated into the 3-course menu preparation **are local produce and sustainable dining**, maintaining the standards of fine cuisine.
- 3.3 On the 2nd of October, the organiser will share the list of ingredients along with details of the selected suppliers and the procedure for requesting the ingredients.
- 3.4 Once the ingredients list is revealed, the teams are free to begin planning and testing their menus within their hotel kitchen facilities.
- 3.5 For the **Prefinal Selections** on the **13th of October**, each team must bring all the primary ingredients required to prepare the 3-course menu.
- 3.6 A panel of technical judges comprising chefs, experts, and journalists will assess the performance of each team.
- 3.7 The names of the judges will only be made public on the day of the competition.
- 3.8 The competition will consist of three stages:
  - a) **Prefinal Selections:** The top 4 teams will advance to the Regional Finals.
  - b) **Regional Finals:** The winner of Regional Finals will progress to the International Finals.
  - c) **International finals:** The winners from the regional competitions will compete against international teams.

## 4. DATES OF THE COMPETITION:

- 4.1 PREFINAL SELECTIONS: **13th October at ICCA Dubai.**
- 4.2 REGIONAL FINALS: **8th of November, at The Speciality Food Festival**
- 4.3 INTERNATIONAL FINALS: **February at Gulfood**

## COMPETITION'S MAIN ELEMENTS

## 5. THE MENU

- 5.1 The menu should consist of **1 starter, 1 main course, and 1 dessert.**
- 5.2 Each team is required to prepare 2 portions of every course: one for the judging panel and another for photography purposes.
- 5.3 Competitors are permitted to bring their own plates and chinaware for plating, based on their preferences. Additionally, plates and chinaware will be provided in the kitchen for the competitors to use.

## 6. INGREDIENTS

- 6.1 Each team is responsible for providing all the primary ingredients needed to prepare the 3-course menu.
- 6.2 All ingredients brought by the teams must be in their raw, intact, and uncut form.
- 6.3 The selection of ingredients is a crucial aspect assessed by the judging panel. All teams must submit **"the ingredient form,"** previously supplied by the organiser during registration. Teams that fail to submit the form will be disqualified.
- 6.4 The organiser will solely supply the **"basic ingredients"** exhibited at each station in the kitchen. A list of these basic ingredients will be provided to the competitors.

## 7. EQUIPMENT

- 7.1 The list of the available equipment will be communicated simultaneously with the disclosure of the ingredient list (**2 October 2023**).
- 7.2 Competitors are permitted to bring their own kitchen utensils and small equipment. Large equipment such as ovens or cookers will not be permitted.

## 8. MARSHAL

- 8.1 The organiser will appoint an inspector known as **THE MARSHAL**.
- 8.2 The Marshal will oversee the timing of the competition and ensure compliance with the rules and regulations.
- 8.3 The Marshal is authorised to disqualify competitors in the event of a significant breach of the rules.
- 8.4 The marshal has the right to report the competitors to the jury and assign penalties in accordance with paragraph PENALTIES (point 10).

## 9. JURY

### Jury Procedures

- 9.1 The evaluation criteria scale ranges from zero to one hundred points, with zero representing the lowest score and one hundred signifying the highest. The total score for each section will be calculated by summing up the technical score sheets provided by the judges.
- 9.2 The winning team will be the one that gets the highest score.
- 9.3 The decision of the judges is final in all aspects of this competition.
- 9.4 Competitors are prohibited from discussing their score sheets with the judges.

### Jury Evaluation Criteria

A maximum of 100 points will be rewarded by the jury on the following criteria:

### SECTION A: OVERALL MENU EVALUATION

CRITERIA	POSSIBLE POINTS
9.5 Balance of the ingredients in the menu	9.6 0-8
9.7 Portion size and plating	9.8 0-8
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</b>	<b>16</b>

**SECTION B: PRESENTATION AND TASTE EVALUATION**

CRITERIA	POSSIBLE POINTS
Taste and flavour of each dish * 0-4 possible points for each dish	0-12
Presentation and eye appeal of each dish * 0 -4 possible points for each dish	0-12
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</b>	<b>24</b>

**SECTION C: SUSTAINABILITY/ LOCAL PRODUCE**

CRITERIA	POSSIBLE POINTS
Ingredient choice/sustainability	0-15
Proper utilisation of the ingredient/ wastage	0-15
Sanitation/food handling	0-10
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</b>	<b>40</b>

**SECTION D: BONUS VISION & KNOWLEDGE**

CRITERIA	POSSIBLE POINTS
<b>Vision &amp; Knowledge</b> This section is based on the chefs' answers during the menu presentation. The bonus is focused on the chefs' menu explanation, knowledge on the ingredient's sustainability and vision on the competition's main themes.	0-20
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</b>	<b>20</b>

**10. PENALTIES**

10.1 Penalties will be determined by the marshal and promptly communicated to both the competitors and the jury.

10.2 Lack of punctuality: 1 – 5 points

10.3 Excessive wastage of ingredients: 1 – 10

10.4 Lack of cleanness and work organisation: 1 -10

10.5 Exceeding the allotted time for dish preparation: 1 – 10

## COMPETITION PROCEDURES

### 11. Registration

- 1.1 The organiser will provide details about the time and location of the competition's first stage: **Prefinal Selections**.
- 1.2 Competitors are required to arrive at the location on time. Any delays will result in the imposition of penalty points.
- 1.3 The team shall report to the marshal in order to be registered.
- 1.4 If one of the team member is unable to participate due to unforeseen circumstances, the team has the option to replace them before registration. The new team member must adhere to all the stipulations outlined in paragraph 1: THE PARTICIPANTS.
- 1.5 If two members of a team are unable to participate for any reason, the team will be disqualified.
- 1.6 The team must submit the ingredients list form to the marshal for registration completion. Failure to submit the form will result in the disqualification of the team.
- 1.7 The Marshals will assess and approve the ingredients. Any ingredients that do not align with paragraph 6: THE INGREDIENTS will be excluded from the list and will not be used.
- 1.8 The marshal will allocate an ID number to each team and communicate the starting time along with the assigned working stations.
- 1.9 The team should inform the marshal about the team leader, who will receive a distinctive badge for identification.
- 1.10 In case of disputes concerning the registration process or ingredients, the marshal will refer the matter to the Jury, which will rule on the dispute.
- 1.11 The decision of the jury is conclusive and irreversible.

### 12. Start of the competition

- 12.1 The marshal will initiate the 60-minute countdown and officially start the competition.
- 12.2 Competitors are allotted 60 minutes to craft a 3-course menu, producing 2 portions for each course, totaling 6 dishes.
- 12.3 The marshal will announce the time every 15 minutes.
- 12.4 At the end of the 60 minutes, the competitors shall stop all activities.
- 12.5 Competitors who do not adhere to the end of activities will be subjected to a penalty.

### 13. End of the competition

- 13.1 The marshal will call each team individually to present their dishes to the jury.
- 13.2 When the team is called, the team must collect their dishes and accompany the marshal to the front of the jury table.
- 13.3 The jury will assess 3 of the dishes, while 3 dishes will be displayed on the photography table.
- 13.4 During the assessments time, the team leader will have a 5-minute slot to explain the menu and respond to the jury's queries. This segment contributes to the jury's evaluation, accounting for 20% of the total votes.
- 13.5 Teams will not be permitted to return to the kitchen until all teams have completed their presentations in front of the jury.
- 13.6 After all teams have showcased their menus, the jury will announce the top 4 teams with the highest scores, who will advance to the Regional Finals.

#### **14. REGIONAL FINALS (8<sup>th</sup> of November 2023 at Top Table – The Speciality Food Festival)**

- 14.1 The regional finals will take place in November at Dubai Trade Centre's TOP TABLE kitchen on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2023. The timings will be provided at a later date.
- 14.2 The regulations and guidelines will remain consistent with those of the **Prefinal Selections**.
- 14.3 Due to possible logistic issues, there might be some differences in certain competition procedures. Competitors will be informed of any procedural variations through detailed communication should such circumstances arise.

#### **15. INTERNATIONAL FINALS**

- 15.1 The International Finals hosted at the world's biggest food and beverage sourcing event, **Gulfood 2024**.

While the competition's rules and procedures will remain unchanged, the finalist teams will receive new, event-specific RULES AND REGULATIONS tailored for this occasion.

#### **16. PRIZES**

There are 2 prize categories: Regional Finals and Winner

##### **16.1 Regional Finals: 8 November 2023**

100,000 AED in cash and value in kind:  
45,000 AED in cash equally divided among the three members of the winner team.  
55,000 AED in value in kind in products and discounts dedicated to the team member and the hotel.  
Detailed description of the prize will be communicated in a separate document.

##### **16.2 Winner of YouthX International Finals: February 2024**

1-week internship in a 3 Michelin Star Restaurant for the 3 members of the winning team. All the expenses paid by the organiser.  
Detailed description of the prize will be communicated in a separate document.