

My Thai Baltimore Wins Mid-Atlantic's Largest Chef Competition

2015 Mason Dixon Master Chef Tournament Concludes

September 1, 2015 - Baltimore, MD - The Mason Dixon Master Chef Tournament, the largest culinary competition of its kind in the Mid-Atlantic a region, concluded August 16th in front of a sell-out crowd at the Inn at the Colonnade a Doubletree by Hilton Hotel (4 University Parkway, Baltimore).

The Tournament, which is in its fifth year, is a bracket-style single-elimination tournament. Competition started back in June with 16 chef teams vying for over \$12,000 in cash and prizes, and the title of "2015 Mason Dixon Master Chef Champions", and concluded on Sunday, August 16th with teams from My Thai Baltimore and Colony South Hotel & Conference Center going head-to-head for one final match. Both teams brought their expertise and creativity to "Battle Avant Garde", but only one emerged as the Champions – My Thai Baltimore!

Both chef teams were required to use a variety of featured products including:

- Tapioca Maltodextrine and Pop Rocks from Pastry Star
- Cherry Balsamic Vinegar from DeMedici
- Quail Eggs, Squab and Pheasant from AM Briggs
- Moody Blue Smoked Blue Cheese from Emmi Roth USA
- Cab Franc from Boordy Vineyards

In addition, each chef team had two secret ingredients they had to incorporate at the last minute. My Thai's secret ingredients were White Anchovies and Fontina, Colony South's secret ingredients were Chipotle Peppers and Nutter Butter Cream.

The My Thai team (Executive Chef Jirat Suphrom-in, Sous Chef Zach LeDoux, and Sous Chef Martha Walton), had 30 minutes of cold prep and just one hour of cooking time to produce their winning dishes:

Appetizer: **50 SHADES OF YUM** (pressure cooked squab in tom yum soup with yummy crispy wonton; served with yum yum sauce, lined with yum green curry sauce, and topped with yum foam)

Entrée: **HONEY SKIN PHEASANT PACKAGE** (with cheese rice and fried noodles, net and yolk, served with yellow miso crispy salad, and finished with a ginger garlic wine sauce)

Dessert: **MOJITO GALLO** (with pop rocks served with balsamic meringue and a cherry macadamia chunk sauce)

The Colony South Hotel team (Executive Chef Lanydrek Christ Pandzou, Sous Chef Elder Lopez, and Sous Chef Cheyenne Armstrong) created equally impressive dishes:

Appetizer: **BOULETTE** (fresh grounded fried squab boulette with radicchio salad, sliced poached baby pear, quail sunny side up egg, mint garlic aioli, watercress, toasted almond and pomegranate honey ginger balsamic dressing)

Entrée: **PHEASANT A L'ORANGE** (herbed pan braised pheasant with raisin mint Senegalese cous cous, bacon sauteed Brussel sprouts, shredded carrots, celery, red onions, shredded pilled potatoes and spiced orange gastric)

Dessert: **CREAM DE LAIT SUCRE** (Rich toffee cream with crispy cookie bar, white chocolate petal, fresh fruit leaf, sweet pistachio paste whipped cream and rum mango passion fruits sauce)

The expert judging panel for the night was Mitchell Platt, General Manager of The COSMOS Club in Washington, DC, Chef Marc Dixon, Owner of Barcocina, and Chef Adam Snyder of Brew House No. 16. This panel, along with audience members who purchased 'Judging Experience' tickets, tasted and voted to determine the night's winner.

The winning My Thai team received almost \$10,000 in prizes, including: \$1,000 cash from the organizers, a Wisconsin cheese making trip with sponsor Emmi Roth USA which includes airfare and an overnight stay with behind the scenes education and tours of cheese making facilities as well as a beer brewery tour (valued at approximately \$3,000), a cheese course kit also from Emmi Roth USA, a Vulcan convection oven and installation (valued at \$4,000), a professional Robo Coupe professional immersion blender (\$800), a \$250 ECOLAB gift certificate, the official Chef a la Mode Championship jacket and competition jackets, a fire-inspired trophy for the winning restaurant, gold metals for each member of the winning team, and of course bragging rights as the 2015 Mason Dixon Master Chef Champions!

The runner-up also receives culinary prizes from sponsors valued at over \$1,500, including a professional Robo Coupe professional immersion blender, a bar basket from American Metal Craft, a \$250 ECOLAB gift certificate, a cheese course kit from Emmi Roth USA, silver metals for each member of the winning team.

However, the biggest winner of the night was charity partner Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland (www.mealsonwheelsmd.org), who received a check for \$3,000 from the organizers. With this check, the Mason Dixon Master Chef Tournament has now donated over \$14,000 to local food-related charities since it began in 2010.

Prizes were also awards to a number of other teams and chefs over the semi-finals and final week of competition, including:

- **Best Appetizer** – Gourmet Again
- **Best Entrée** – Basta Pasta
- **Best Dessert** – The White Oak Tavern
- **People's Choice** – The Roasthouse Pub
- **The Clark Raines Rising Star Award** – Sous Chef Martha Walton of My Thai Baltimore was honored with this first-time award for the sous chef who demonstrated the most potential, talent and drive throughout the competition. The award named for friend and 5 year supporter Chef Clark Raines of Maple Leaf Farms, who passed away in April of this year.
- **Awards for 5 Years of Support for the Tournament** were also awarded to: Marc Dixon (Barcocina), Jerry Edwards (Chefs' Expressions), Jerry Pellegrino (Waterfront Kitchen), Mitchell Platt (COSMOS Club), Keith Shapiro (SYSCO Baltimore), Sarah Simington (Blue Moon Café), Ron Skidmore (Emmi Roth USA), Ted Stelzenmuller (Jack's Bistro)

The organizers would like to thank all of their sponsors, the chefs and restaurant participants, the expert judges, and everyone who came out to support the event over the summer. People interested in finding out about next year's tournament or chefs interested in applying to compete should visit the web site at www.MasonDixonMasterChef.com to sign up for updates or fill out the online chef application.

Interviews: Chefs are available for in-studio demos and phone interviews as well as on-site interviews pre or post competition. To set up an interview, please contact Karen@masondixonmasterchef.com.

Partners and Sponsors:

Partners: Boordy Vineyards, Restaurant Association of Maryland, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington

Platinum Sponsor: Inn at the Colonnade Baltimore, Emmi Roth Kase USA, The Umbrella Syndicate

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About The Mason Dixon Master Chef Tournament

More information available at www.MasonDixonMasterChef.com, on Twitter @MDMasterChef, and Facebook at Mason Dixon Master Chef.

About Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland

Meals on Wheels' mission is to enhance quality of life through the provision of nutritious meals, personal contact and related services to homebound individuals. Last year, over 740,000 home-delivered meals were prepared and delivered to more than 2,900 homebound clients through the coordinated efforts of Meals on Wheels staff and some 2,000 volunteers. Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland currently serves the following areas: Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard, Montgomery and Prince George's counties.