



EMIRATES INTERNATIONAL SALON CULINAIRE 2026



GELATO Challenge African and Middle East 2026

6-8 July 2026, Dubai

A dedicated competition celebrating GELATO

1. TEAM COMPOSITION

Each team should consist of three (03) professionals made up of one (01) Team Manager and two (02) team members representing the same nations/territories with expertise in gelato, chocolate and pastry.

a. Team Manager

The Team Manager must be a citizen or permanent resident of the nation/territory participating in the competition and employed in the gelato/culinary/pastry sector for a minimum of eight (08) years at the point of registration.

b. Team Members

The two (02) team members must be a citizen or permanent resident of the nation/territory participating in the competition and employed in the gelato/culinary/pastry sector for a minimum of three (03) years at the point of registration.

Additional Information:



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- The Team Manager will be responsible for coordinating the participation of the team with the Organizing Committee.
- During the competition, the Team Manager is permitted to consult and assist the team in their preparation. However, he/she cannot judge the performance of their own team.

2. THE COMPETITION

6.1 OFFICIAL UNIFORM

Official team jackets and aprons will be provided by the Organiser and they must be worn throughout the competition and award ceremony.

All competitors and managers must wear black pants and appropriate footwear to conform to the industry grooming standard. No insignias, titles, or other forms of identification can be added to the uniform. If a team or any team member does not comply accordingly, the whole team will be disqualified.

6.2 THEME

The theme of this edition is “**ELEMENTS OF THE EARTH**”.

6.3 RECIPES

The Team Manager has to email the Organiser the title of the theme with completed recipes in English and a brochure with detailed description of the creations in English to andic@eim.ae Andy Cuthbert Guild Coordinator by **31 April 2026**, which will be printed uniformly by the Organiser and delivered to all the judges and the press. Any allergens must be indicated at the bottom of the recipes.

6.4 THE PROGRAMME

Each team has to prepare the following SIX (06) categories and complete within eight (08) hours.

I. GELATO MAKING

i. CHOCOLATE GELATO TUB

Teams must prepare a single flavour of milk base gelato (approximately 3-4kg) and decorated in one (01) metal tub. (two sponsor ingredients must be use).

Assessment will be based on the following criteria:

- the presentation of the variegation in the tub
- the unique creation of the flavors as well as the importance of the taste
- the aesthetic presentation of the gelato to the judges
- the texture of the gelato created

- the correct serving temperature

ii. FRUIT MYSTERY BOX

Prepare one (01) water-based gelato (3 to 4 kg).

The water-based gelato must be created and produced using a frozen fruit pulp sealed in a box by the notary, drawn by the competitors of each team and disclosed to the competitor only at the start of the challenge.

In addition: a market will be available offering fresh vegetables, aromatic herbs, spices, etc., which must be used during the competition for the production of gelato paired with the selected product.

Assessment will be based on the following criteria:

- the presentation of the variegation in the tub
- the unique creation of the flavors as well as the importance of the taste
- the aesthetic presentation of the gelato to the judges
- the texture of the gelato created
- the correct serving temperature

The milk-based Chocolate gelato will be scooped onto ten (10) wafer cones displayed on stands, and water-based gelato in ten (10) standard ice cream paper cups for jury tasting, free style presentation as served at a real food & beverage operation, toppings are allowed.

Quantity: Total ten (12) portions each, consisting of:

- Ten (10) portions for the professional jury
- One (01) portion for Chief Judge
- One (01) portion for photography

II. PLATED DESSERT

The plated dessert must include a chocolate component and at least one gelato flavour. It may be presented in assorted flavours and can include crunchy bases, fruit jellies, and biscuits.

It should feature an authentic presentation of the country that the team represents and should include native ingredients.

Quantity: Total Eight (8) portions each, consisting of:

- Five (5) portions for the professional jury
- Two (01) portion for Chief Jury
- One (02) portion for display and photography and Final Grand Buffet

Teams are not allowed to use pacojet. Each team may use their own dessert plates that suit their creation the best.

III. GELATO CAKE

Each team must prepare two (02) gelato cakes, with a maximum of three (03) gelato flavours.

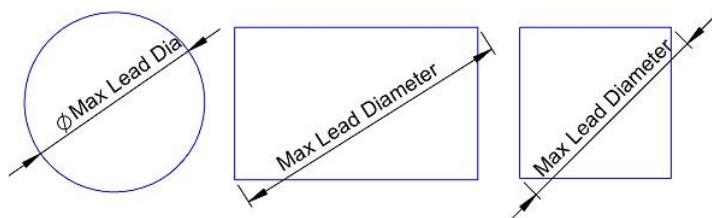
The following additions are permitted: semifreddo, fruit palettes, sauces, crunchy bases, biscuits, and candied fruit.

The cake must contain the ingredients provided by the semi-finished product sponsor.

The edible decorations may be made with a choice of: Chocolate/ Pulled sugar/Carved fresh fruit.

Each team must make two (02) identical decorated samples of each gelato cake creation, each measures between 18cm and 20cm diameter, with no height limit, and from which 12 portions must be cut: one (01) cake is for cutting and tasting, one (01) for photography and one (01) facsimile for the final Grant Buffet.

NOTE: 20cm diameter describe as below



IV. GELATO STICKS

Teams must produce two kinds of sticks with different creation, each containing at least one of the sponsor products. Gelato-making techniques are unrestricted. The sticks must have free, edible inserts and can be made with any of the sponsor's products stocked.

- The weight of each piece (including the stick, whether edible or not) must be between 40 and 100 grams with a tolerance of ± 10 grams, and they will therefore be weighed.
- A team member will cut the sticks for viewing by the judges, using the portion intended for the Team Manager of the presenting team.
- The shape of the stick is unrestricted.

Quantity: Total Eight (7) portions x 2 kinds, total 14 pieces, consisting of:

- Five (5) portions each for the professional jury
- Two (01) portion each for Chief Jury
- One (01) portion each for display and photography and Final Grand Buffet

The reference image is purely a generic sample

V. ARTISTIC SHOWPIECE



To display the artistic showpiece with the following mandatory requirements:

- Size of the base: 60 cm x 40cm
- Maximum height for showpiece (excluding the base): 60cm tall
- **The showpiece must be made with 60% chocolate and 40% other techniques**

Additional Information:

- Chocolate can be brought in melted or tempered. Chocolate show piece need made on site.
- Competitors are able to use maximum 9kg of chocolate for the showpiece and food from the following VALRHONA chocolate selection:
 - Equatoriale Dark 55% need confirm sponsor?
 - Ivoire white 33%
 - Milk Jivara 34%
- Ice-cream condiments for grand buffet can be made in advance in dummy.
- Pulled, casted, blown and any other sugar techniques and pastillage are allowed and must represent 40% of the showpiece.
- Form and mold are permitted but the mold must represent no more than 1/4 of the showpiece. Points will be deducted against the rules.

Specifications:

- Each contestant will assemble on site the sugar parts he/she has prepared and brought along, into a large artistic showpiece (Pulled, casted, blown Sugar, nougatine) reflecting the theme “ELEMENTS OF THE EARTH”.
- Contestants are allowed to bring structural elements to the competition (example. A sculpted base). The structural elements (Pulled, casted, blown sugar, Nougatine,) are composed of many parts (example. A sugar flower with many petals) cannot be brought already assembled but must be assembled on site during the competition).
- Nothing can be preassembled or glued together.
- Finished chocolate products and other cocoa-derived products (cocoa butter, cocoa powder, nibs, cocoa shells, cocoa mass, plastic chocolate).
- Sugar: sugar syrup is permitted. Pulled sugar may be brought cooked and coloured, Pressed sugar and Cast sugar allow brought in.
- Pastillage can be brought in dried and sanded but not coloured or joined as finished Sculpture.
- Other components, except mentioned above, must be made during the competition.
- Coloured fondant is allowed.
- The jury has the right to perforate the pieces of art to check them. Pieces of art containing prohibited elements will automatically be disqualified.

6.5 FINAL GRAND BUFFET

Each team must display one Artistic showpiece:

- one plated dessert;

- one portion each of gelato sticks;
- one gelato cake;

Dessert and gelato sticks can be dummy and pre-made.

The Organiser will provide each team with one (01) 100 x 100 cm table for the buffet presentation. No background decorations will be accepted. Each team is required to supply their own linens.

No electric cable is allowed to cross the competition area. Rotating bases are allowed. The Organiser, however, disclaims any liability for failure in functioning any display system.

Any work exceeding the specified dimensions will be eliminated. Dimensions will be officially measured by the contest stewards and their conclusions will be final.

6.6 KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

Each team will be allocated one (01) kitchen with the following kitchen equipment provided by the Organiser or sponsors.

- 1 x Carpigiani Maestro
- 1 x Carpigiani Turbomixer
- 1 x Blast-freezer
- 1 x 2-door under counter freezer
- 1 x stainless steel table, 1200 x 600 x 850mm
- 2 x Induction stove (gas is strictly forbidden at the venue, except for portable gas torch)
- 1 x Trolley rack with 10 trays (600x4000cm)
- 1 x KitchenAid Mixer
- 1 x Sink with hot water
- 1 x microwave
- 2 x 13amp power point (230v)

The following equipment will be available at the sharing kitchen:

- 1 x Carpigiani Pastomaster
- 1 x 2-door upright chiller, 2 to 4 degree Celsius
- 1 x 2-door upright freezer, -18 to -24 degree Celsius

Teams have to use the equipment provided, unless stated otherwise. Please note that items provided above may be subject to change. Teams will be notified of such changes, if any, via email by the Organiser.

Each team is advised to provide/bring in the following items, if required:

- Kitchen utensils
- Pots and pans (induction enabled)
- Sugar lamp
- Chocolate warmer
- Torch
- Moulds, ladles, dishes, cutlery, scale etc.

Due to fire safety regulations, open flame and gas hobs and cooking equipment will not be allowed in the venue. Use of lighter, flambé torch, portable gas cartridge stove, candles etc. will be prohibited.

6.7 INGREDIENTS

A list of ingredients, if any, provided the Organiser or sponsors for competition will be sent to the team in due course. Teams have to use the ingredients provided, unless stated otherwise.

Ingredients which will not be provided by the Organiser or sponsors have to be brought in by the team themselves.

6.8 READY-MADE ITEMS AND PREPARATION

Please take note of the strict regulation on the pre-made items:

- Biscuit: All types of biscuits (including genoise, sponge, sacher, pain de Genes or Sponge cakes, dacquoise, meringue or sheets of cake are permitted to be brought in but not allow to cut or portion.
- Dough (including sable, crumble, puff pastry etc.) can be prepared, baked-ready and bring in for the competition.
- Macarons and Meringue (use for decoration) need to be made on premise.
- Decor elements (Dessert, Sticks & Gelato Cake) must be 100 % done on site.
- Eggs can be separated, and pasteurized, but not processed in any other way.
- Dry ingredients can be pre-weighted and -measured.
- Gelato mixture cannot premix and cook.
- NO alcoholic, pork ingredients are allowed.
- titanium dioxide, metallic powders, and artificial food colours are not permitted.

3. COMPETITION SCHEDULE AND SHOWPIECE PRESENTATION

All participating teams have two (02) hours to set up at the kitchen a day before the scheduled competition date.

All teams are required to report to the Kitchen Manager at least 45 minutes prior to their scheduled participation time. Teams do not present at scheduled time will be considered no-show and would be disqualified.

TIME	ACTIVITIES
07.00am	Teams arrive at the venue, enter kitchen and report to the Kitchen Manager.
07.30am	Judges to inspect the kitchens.
07.45am	Competition starts.

11.00am	Tasting of “Plated Dessert” to start. Teams to showcase their creations, one after another in five (05)-minute intervals.
12.00pm	Tasting of “Gelato Making” to start. Teams to showcase their creations, one after another in five (05)-minute intervals.
01.00pm	Tasting of “Gelato Sticks” to start. Teams to showcase their creations, one after another in five (05)-minute intervals.
02.00pm	Tasting of “Gelato Cake” to start. Teams to showcase their creations, one after another in five (05)-minute intervals.
03.00pm	Teams to start setting up the Final Grand Buffet. Ingredients and composition of all dishes will be announced to the public.
03.45pm	Teams finish setting up the centerpiece and all creations at the display table. Judging starts. Five (05) penalty points will be deducted from the total score for every minute delayed on setting up the Final Grand Buffet after 03.45pm.
04.15pm	Teams clean their kitchen.
04.45pm	Judges to inspect the kitchens.

Five (05) penalty points will be deducted from the total score for every minute delay in set up after 03.45pm.

4. JUDGING CRITERIA

Maximum 100 points will be awarded to each of the following category.

- The head judge, accordingly with the GWCA Organizing Committee will control the marks, counting of the votes, as well as the team ranking.
- In the event of a tie, the total tasting scores will take precedence.

CATEGORIES	GELATO MAKING – CHOCOLATE MILK BASE	
Gelato Taste	20-40	Flavour fragrance Aromatic persistence balance in sweetness Perceived temperature
Gelato texture	15-30	Texture (the physical structure can be creamy or hard, smooth or rough, fine or coarse, hot or cold)
Creativity and presentation	5-10	Balance, combination of flavours, innovation
Cold feel	5-10	Appropriate and characteristic in sorbets, it is a defect in cream-based gelato.

Flavour combination	5-10	Consistency of combination and balancing of flavours and technical innovation.
Maximum Total	100	

CATEGORIES	GELATO MAKING –WATER BASE	
Gelato Taste	20-40	Flavour fragrance Aromatic persistence balance in sweetness Perceived temperature
Gelato texture	15-30	Texture (the physical structure can be creamy or hard, smooth or rough, fine or coarse, hot or cold)
Creativity and presentation	5-10	Balance, combination of flavours, innovation
Cold feel	5-10	Appropriate and characteristic in sorbets, it is a defect in cream-based gelato.
Flavour combination	5-10	Consistency of combination and balancing of flavours and technical innovation.
Maximum Total	100	

CATEGORIES	GELATO STICKS	
Gelato Taste	20-40	Flavour fragrance Aromatic persistence balance in sweetness Perceived temperature
Gelato texture	15-30	Texture (the physical structure can be creamy or hard, smooth or rough, fine or coarse, hot or cold).
Combination of flavours	10-20	Consistency of combination and balancing of flavours and technical innovation
Bite feel	5-10	Quality, compactness, and crunchiness of the coating; softness and texture of the inside; harmony between the inside and the coating; perception of the different textures.
Maximum Total	100	

CATEGORIES	PLATED DESSERT	
Dessert taste & flavour	25-50	Flavour fragrance Aromatic persistence balance in sweetness Perceived temperature
Dessert texture	10-20	Texture (the physical structure can be creamy or hard, smooth or rough, fine or coarse, hot or cold).

Flavour of individual components	5-20	Consistency of combination and balancing of flavours and technical innovation
Creativity	5-10	Assessment of innovation and creative expression.
Maximum Total	100	

CATEGORIES	GELATO CAKE	
AESTHETICS -Interior appearance	10-20	Decoration, glazing, and balance of shapes and colours of the inserts.
Gelato texture, Serving temperature	10-20	Cleanliness and cut resistance.
Balance of taste and flavour	15-30	Flavour fragrance
Creativity	10-20	Assessment of innovation and creative expression.
Relevance to the theme	5-10	Relevance to the theme.
Maximum Total	100	

CATEGORIES	ARTISTIC SHOWPIECE
Representation of the theme	5-10
How well the gelato / dessert in relation to the showpiece	5-10
Attention to execution and overall look of the showpiece	5-20
Artistic value	5-30
Skills and techniques	5-30
Maximum Total	100

CATEGORIES	WORKING STATION
Ability to work in front of the audience	1-5
Dexterity	5-10
Time management	5-10

Proper use of ingredients and proportion	5-20
Organisation and use of the space	5-15
Cleanliness of work station	5-20
Food wastage & hygiene	5-20
Maximum Total	100

- The head judge, accordingly, with the Organising Committee will control the marks, counting of the votes, as well as the team ranking. In every category, the lowest and the highest marks will be dropped. The remaining scores will be averaged.
- In the event of a tie, the total tasting scores will take precedence.
- The competing teams are solely responsible for the cleanliness of the work area and all equipment provided. The workstation will be inspected before and after the competition. Any team which leaves their workstation uncleaned will be penalised up to 30 points.
- Five (05) penalty points will be deducted from the total score for each minute of delay from the scheduled timing when serving the gelato, gourmet gelato, gelato cake and the plated dessert.
- The Organising Committee reserves the right to reproduce and use the entries exhibited.
- In the event of serious dispute over the regulations or a problem is not mentioned in the rules and regulations, the matter will be discussed between the jury and the head judge, and a final decision will be made.
- Teams are required to submit accurate market list, taking attention to avoid food wastage. Teams with unreasonable food wastage found after completion of competition items will be penalised up to 30 points.
- The Organiser reserves the right to rescind, modify or add on any of the above rules and regulations and their interpretation of these is final. They also reserve the right to amend a competition section, modify any rules, cancel/postpone the whole competition event should it be deemed necessary.

5. PRIZES, AWARDS & CERTIFICATES

A certificate of participation will be presented to all competitors who have completed the competition. The respective medals will be presented to competitors who attain the following points.

Gold with Distinction	100 Points
Gold	90-99 Points
Silver	80-89 Points
Bronze	70-79 Points

The top three (03) winning teams of the GWCA 2026 will have access to the Gelato World Cup 2028. Round trip air tickets and accommodation will be fully sponsored by the CGM Organiser. They have to register with the CGM Organiser in order to admit to CGM 2026.

Gelato Champion

The team scores the highest points will be awarded the **Gelato Champion** of the year and hold the title until the next edition. A trophy and medals will be presented to the team. All teams who achieve points for medals shall be awarded medals.

Best Plated Dessert

The team scores the highest points in the “Plated Dessert” category will be awarded the Best Plated Dessert and a trophy.

Best Gelato Cake

The team scores the highest points in the “Gelato Cake” category will be awarded the Best Gelato Cake and a trophy.

Best Artistic Showpiece

The team scores the highest points in the “Artistic Showpiece” category will be awarded the Best Artistic Showpiece and a trophy.

Best Tasting Degustation Prize

This award will be based on the total point of professional jury tasting

Special Media Favourite Award

Professional food journalists will comprise the jury and determine this award on a separate scoring sheet

Best Team Spirit

Presented by President of Jury

6. TRAVEL AND ACCOMODATION EXPENSES

The following will be provided by the Organiser to each confirmed participating team

- Accommodation for two (02) team members and Team Manager, consisting of one (01) twin/double room and one (01) single room for each team for a total of five (05) room nights.

The Team Manager by signing the present regulation releases the Organiser from any request of any kind made by the other Team Members.

7. NOTES ON TEAM MANAGERS

The communications with the Organizing Committee will be made exclusively by the Team Manager. As such, the Team Manager will be the only spokesperson of the team (or his/her delegate).