



**EMIRATES INTERNATIONAL  
SALON CULINAIRE  
2026**



**ALEN THONG**  
GOLDEN COFFEE POT CHALLENGE 2026

**The Alen Thong Golden Coffee Pot Young Chefs Challenge by JM Foods**



**jmfoods** llc





### CONCEPT:

The competition will take place 6-8 July 2026 during the Emirates International Salon Culinaire at Madinat Jumeirah convention centre Dubai UAE.

A maximum of 9, four-chef International Culinary Teams, will be invited to Dubai UAE to participate in this major event which is designed to develop into the most notable gastronomic contest anywhere in the Middle-East for Young chefs.

The invited teams will enjoy such benefit of United Arab Emirates hospitality that there will be no need for them to bring anything to the show except themselves, ingredients and their special tools or equipment.

### THE CHALLENGE:

Three teams will compete per day, the Young International teams will each create a full, internationally-themed edible cold salad and appetizer and dessert buffet and plated main course for twenty- persons (total 20 portions). The main course shall be a hot dish to the team's choice. 4 additional Portions of all food items are to be provided separate for judging and to be served upon request of the judges, a schedule shall be given to the team for the service time of the items.

Each team will be provided with a hotel kitchen in which to prepare its mise-en-place and an event kitchen in which to finish its main course dish.

Nine respected WORLDCHEFS international culinary judges will adjudicate on the outcome of deliberations over the three days of competition.

In addition to the gold, silver and bronze medals available to all competing teams – there will be a grand trophy awarded to the over-all winner, with trophies also awarded to the first and second runners-up for teams.

### PR EXPOSURE:

If teams wish to be featured in our pre-salon publicity hand-outs, they must provide the Organisers before 27<sup>th</sup> February 2026 – with a JPEG format colour photograph of the team (Suitable for 300 dpi reproduction), together with the name of team, and the names of the Individual team members.

If a theme for the buffet is to be used, the name of the theme must be submitted to the organisers before February 27<sup>th</sup> 2026, if it is to feature in our pre-competition publicity.

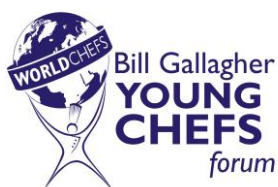
### QUALIFICATION:

Entry to the competition is by **INVITATION ONLY**. If interested to compete please email ECG Coordinator Andy Cuthbert [andic@eim.ae](mailto:andic@eim.ae)



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## SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TEAMS

The organisers will provide each overseas team with:

### A) TRANSPORT AND ACCOMMODATION

1. Complimentary hotel accommodation – 3 twin-rooms and 1 single room for judge for six nights with breakfast, check in 4 July check out 10 July 2026
2. A hotel kitchen in which to prepare the buffet mise-en-place.
3. Refrigerated transport and team transport from the hotel kitchen to the buffet venue on competition day.
4. Assistance letters for entry Visa's will be given but no guarantee can be given that entry will be permitted to the country as this is as per immigration policies of the country. Passport copies will be required 3 months in advance of entry for assistance in getting the visa's.
5. Important note, teams will need to pay for their airfare and on ground transport to and from the airport and hotel.
6. Teams must check prior to arrival what vaccines and requirements are needed it is recommended that teams take out travel insurance.

### B) EQUIPMENT:

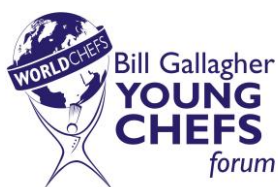
7. All buffet equipment will be provided, including (but not restricted to) show tables, dining tables, chairs, cutlery, chinaware, flatware, crockery, silverware, buffet risers, centrepieces, decorations, tablecloths, buffet cloths, etc. The organisers will provide a list and photographs of the buffet equipment, together with quantities provided. No other equipment is allowed to be used.
8. All kitchen equipment and standard utensils will be provided: whisks, ladles, spoons, chinoise, trays, bowls, teams are encouraged to bring their own small special utensils as they wish at their own cost.
9. It is expected that the teams wishing to bring specialised equipment's, moulds, special trays etc, that this be supplied by them. A list of such equipment is to be shared with the organizers to pre approve and then this list shall be shared with all teams to ensure fairness and transparency to all teams.

### C) AN ON-SITE COMPETITION KITCHEN

10. A complete industrial kitchen will be available for the hot kitchen category (See attached plan). These kitchens are designed for 1 team to work in together to produce their main course. Salad and dessert buffet to be prepared in host kitchen
11. A kitchen equipment technician will be on standby.
12. A professional hygiene company will supply all cleaning and sanitizing equipment and chemicals.

### D) INGREDIENTS:

13. The teams shall provide and pay for all their own ingredients a budget of AED 3000dhs per team is to be worked towards by the teams to ensure cost effective buffets are served. The organizer shall not repay any cost for ingredients. A market basket of ingredient prices will be sent to the team's as an indication of pricing in the city.
14. The sponsor JM Foods, shall provide a list of mandatory ingredients to be used including the Main Course and other proteins and shall be sent to the competitors by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 these ingredients must be used and will reduce the expense of the teams.
15. The use of lobster, foi gras imported expensive seafood and meats is discouraged.
16. The organizers shall endeavour to have the hotels hosting the teams in their kitchens to assist with procurement
17. It is the team's responsibility to procure all ingredients prior to their start day in the kitchens.
18. Teams are required to provide their list of necessary ingredients at latest by close on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2026 to the organizers.
19. All ingredients will be delivered to the teams mise en place kitchen at the dedicated hotel work-kitchen in conjunction with the teams and the host hotel.



20. No ingredients will be available in the competition kitchen; all ingredients must be brought to the competition kitchen on the competition day.
21. Sponsored ingredients may be available and these will be mandatory to be used. A full list of sponsors ingredients shall be sent to the competitors, 4 months in advance of the competition.

## THE TEAMS:

- Each team can comprise but not exceed: three chefs and 1 pastry chef, all of the 4 chefs must be under the age of 28 years on the competition day. Two helpers per team are allowed to work with the team for mise en place all must be under the age of 28. A team manager/ mentor may accompany the team and can assist the team in organisation and setting up the buffet, however is not allowed to cook for preparation nor competition day
- All team members including helpers can work for preparation, all team members including helpers can set up the buffet. In the hot kitchen, only 4 members work for the preparation, for hot kitchen service only 4 work and, the team manager/mentor is to manage the hot pass for the main course service, he/she can only place garnish on the plate and call the orders, he/she may not place the sauce or any other component on the plate. Helpers can help to clear and wash dishes .
- Each team can nominate a judge to come with the team. The judge can be a Worldchefs certified judge or a judge who has experience in judging international standard culinary competitions. Judges Airfare and Accommodation shall be borne by the organizers and judge's shall receive separate information.
- Each team member must send 3 months prior to the competition, passport copies, basic food hygiene or HACCP or related food handler documents that are used in their countries.

## THE AWARDS:

- Gold or silver or bronze medals; or certificates of merit will be awarded to each team. The award made will be commensurate with the adjudge standard reached.
- The top three teams of the competition will be presented with a trophy specially commissioned.
- Gold or silver or bronze medals shall be awarded for culinary art and pastry art from the buffet section and hot kitchen of the class.



## THE BUFFET:

### Young chefs Team:

- Each team must prepare a cold edible buffet and a dessert buffet for twenty persons.
- No raw protein food is allowed.
- The cold buffet must include the following:
  - a. Three salads, modern freestyle, can be in a bowl, or a platter
  - b. One fish and/or seafood platters
  - c. One meat and/or poultry platters
  - d. Three different kinds of cold tapas, 10 pieces of each 10-20grams each piece with a total of 30 pieces on platters
  - e. One cold soup
  - f. Three cold appetizers can be individually plated or on a communal/shared platter
  - g. Bread will be supplied by the Organizers.
  - h. Competitors to supply dips and butters 3 types total
- The Dessert buffet must include the following:
  - i. One gateaux, modern freestyle
  - j. One hot desert.
  - k. Three types of individual desserts modern freestyle 10 pieces of each can be individually plated or on a communal/shared platter
- The teams will be given only 48 hours to prepare the cold and dessert buffet items in the hotel kitchen.
- The menu must include appropriate dressings, sauces and condiments.
- NO aspic to be used.
- NO alcohol to be used.
- NO pork products to be used.
- All food items must be prepared in the team's respective Dubai/Dubai – based establishment as close to the serving time as possible.
- The teams should treat the buffet class as an outside catering operation as they would from their hotel.
- The buffet food set-up CANNOT begin before 11.00 and the food set-up must be finished by 12.00.
- Set-up time is restricted so as to maintain the highest standard of hygiene and food freshness for guests' consumption.
- Competitors have freedom of choice of serving methods either all portions in one large receptacle, or set out in a number of smaller receptacles as per the crockery provided
- All buffet items for the stipulated twenty persons are to be set on the table at one time, as a complete buffet.
- No replenishment of the buffet is allowed.
- An additional 4 portions of each of the buffet items are to be kept refrigerated for the tasting by judges
- A copy of the buffet menu must be placed on the table this will be provided by the organizers.
- The buffet menu placement is mandatory, but the menu itself is not judged.
- Ticket-holders for the lunch are allowed to consume any item from any team competing on that day from the buffets; but they will be restricted to choosing the hot main course from one team only.
- The organisers will provide service staff to manage the buffets and serve guests at the dining tables.
- The Team manager must be present during the guest service time to explain the food to the guests.





## THE HOT MAIN COURSE

- Each team must prepare (using the venue kitchen only) and serve twenty-four plates of an individually plated main course as would be served in a modern high-end international restaurant environment.
- Preparation of the main course is 4 hours and cannot begin before 8am
- All mise en place is to be made in the competition kitchen for the main course as per Worldchefs hot kitchen rules.
- Twenty plates will be served in the restaurant, four plates will go for judging and photographs
- Main-course, the main protein will be sponsored and must be used and this will be supplied by the organisers to the teams prior to the competition, no other protein can be used in the main course, and accompaniments are to competitors choice.
- Main-course must compliment the cold and dessert buffets.
- Worldchefs hot kitchen guidelines are to be followed for preparation of mise-en-place.
- Main courses will be served in an a-la-carte style to the dining room.
- Guests will be limited to only one main course from one country and these will be pre-sold and ordered.

## THE BUFFET SET UP:

- The organisers will provide one 3m x 3m table covered with plain white cloth; height approx. 79.2 cm. Table is to be used for the cold buffet and for the dessert buffet.
- A 30 CM round chaffing dish for the dessert with heat fuel organizers. Teams are to request the insert from the organizers for hot dessert
- The tables will be dressed and risers and the country flag will be provided by the organizers.
- No tables other than those provided are allowed to be used.
- No other cloths or buffet equipment may be used and no replacement is allowed
- Access to the venue is from 0700 each day (although access time on day one can be problematic due to the need for Dubai police to make a full security check-up before the official opening). All timings are subject to change, please check with organisers.
- Dressing of buffet table may begin at 0800 for buffet risers placement etc.
- All food for the buffet must to be transported to the venue in refrigerated vehicles.
- An area in the back of house will be allocated per team to finish off plating their buffet items as needed; this will be a restricted space with maximum 4 Nos 180cmx75cm banquet tables and limited refrigeration.

## THE SERVICE ELEMENT (Provided by the organisers)

- Waiters to wear appropriate uniform
- Waiters to welcome and seat guests as they would in their hotel
- All linen, and operating equipment for both table and buffet service, this is to include but not limited to cutlery, chinaware and glasses and any other service utensil shall be supplied.
- The overall service, although not judged, will play an important part of the operation.
- Waiters are allowed to assist the culinary team with buffet set up also if required.

## THE BACK OF HOUSE ELEMENT (Provided by the organisers)

- the utility sinks of the competition kitchens need to be utilised for washing pots.
- A stewarding manager and team leaders will be on site to assist and ensure cleanliness of BOH at all times
- A team of professional stewards will be on hand
- All chemicals will be provided
- A receiving area shall be made available for the arrival of the teams on their competition day, truck drivers will know this location



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### COMPETITION SCHEDULE: ( example of timings)

• Enter Kitchen	07.00
• Table Decoration Set-up:	08.00 to 11.00
• Press/Media Access :	08.00 to 14.00
• Cold food plating and finishing & Hot main-course preparation:	08.00 to 12.00
• Food buffet Set-up:	11.00 to 12.00
• Judge's Food Tasting:	12.00 onward
• Guests Service:	12.00 to 13.30
• Hot Kitchen service:	12.30 to 13.30
• Kitchen clear	13.45

### JUDGING POINTS CRITERIA:

- Brought Material/Mise-en-Place 5 points: Clear arrangement of materials. Clean working place, proper working position, clean work clothes, proper working technique. Correct utilisation of working time and punctual completion.
- Service 5 points on time delivery of food and set up
- Hygiene 10 points: Standard of attention paid to hygiene during the preparation of food.
- Correct professional preparation 20 points
- Presentation/Innovation 10 points: Ingredients and side dishes must be in harmony. Points are granted for excellent combination, simplicity and originality in composition.
- Taste & Texture 50 points: Each dish must have appropriate taste and seasoning. In quality, flavour and colour, the dish should conform to today's standards of nutritional values.
- Judges will spot-check teams' premises before or during the scheduled competition date to check on mise-en-place. They might check more than once.
- Teams not following the rules and regulations will receive penalties or even disqualification
- Worldchefs judging rules will apply as for International teams

### FEEDBACK:

Teams wishing to seek judges' comments should ask the organisers for an appointment with the leader of the judging team.

### HYGIENE:

A professional food-safety company has been engaged to oversee all aspects of hygiene practice at the competition. Additionally, it is quite possible that Dubai Food Control Section will conduct its own hygiene inspections as and when it sees fit. The organisers have no control over these two entities.

The teams may need to provide to the organiser specific requirements for food safety regulations in line with Dubai Municipality guidelines further information will follow.

### QUESTIONS/REQUESTS:

All questions and requests must be sent via email to: [emiratesculinaryguild@gmail.com](mailto:emiratesculinaryguild@gmail.com) or [andic@eim.ae](mailto:andic@eim.ae) the question and its answer will then be broadcast to all team leaders.

### ENTRY TO OTHER CLASSES:

Individual members of International Buffet teams are welcome to participate as competitors in other classes of the salon culinaire. Please ask the organisers for details of the classes available for entry.

ENDS.



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