

July 2025

NZ Chef of Year

Chef Sam Gradowski-Smith



NZCHEFS NEWSLETTER



Dear Members

Thanks for all the awesome feedback on the NZ Chefs Championship and the Worldchefs Judges Workshop. They certainly were great events, made possible by our generous sponsors and our small team of hard workers. Contestants came from throughout the country, and it was great to see the NZ Defence Force having a strong presence over the four days. Congratulations to all contestants and many thanks to all our Judges.

2025 saw the Champs reach a new level with the 6 **Moffat** electric kitchen bays, supported by Southern Hospitality. Worldchefs Vice President, Dr Rick Stephen, was the Chief of the Judges Jury during the competitions. He also presented the Worldchefs Judges workshop to a keen group of Judges.

During the Championships, NZ Chefs presented NZ Culinarian of the Year to Cam Davies, NZ Chefs candidate at the Global Chefs Challenge and Chef/owner of the Fat Duck in Te Anau. Chef/Author Robert Aitken received a NZ Chefs' Award of Excellence for his work in Culinary Historic Research.

Planning is underway for the NZ Chefs Hospitality Championships being held at MIT, 3-5 October 2026. We aim to have the Culinary Arts component as a Worldchefs endorsed competition. This will assist those who have been on a Worldchefs Judges workshop, in 2023 or 2025, move up the pathway to become official Worldchefs Certified Judges. Ideally, we plan to include an International Pastry Judge to present a masterclass and specialist workshop on Leading trends in Patisserie.

The NZ Chefs AGM will be held September 2025.

Four Board members' 2-year terms end at the AGM. These members can apply for a second term or stand down. Existing Board members are invited to submit an Expression of Interest which outlines what they have achieved for NZ Chefs members in the past two years, and what they plan to achieve in the next two years for members.

Expressions of Interest are also welcome from potential Board members. This must include a brief CV and an area of expertise they bring to the Board. Please note being on the Board means working in some capacity for the membership.

Areas of work have been identified as:

- Education and Professional development
- Chefs 25+. Including developing an Entry Level NZ Chefs Judging certificate and Senior Chef Competitor mentorship
- Youth development and Young Chef Club national co-ordinator
- Young Chefs competitions/club – Regional
- Admin/Membership
- Newsletter/ Social media/ Website

The Four remaining on the Board for another 1 year to complete their term are:

- President/Chairman
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Partnerships and Sponsorship

The Board can second members to assist or outsource tasks for Association related matters.

Yours in culinary kindness

Shannon Fryer

NZ Chefs Association
President

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NZ Chefs Championship Winners



NZ Pastry Chef of Year
Chef Achira Kularatne, Fairlee Bakehouse
with Erin Hall, Moffat NZ



NZ Emerging Chef
Chef Blake Cranch NZDF – Linton, with
Shannon Fryer, House of Knives
Nik from Akaroa Salmon was unable to attend

NZ Chef of Year
Chef Sam Gradowski-Smith



NZ Chefs Championship highlights



Chief Judge Geoff Scott, Robert Aitken, Shannon Fryer and Dr Rick Stephen



Emerging Chef of Year competitors, and Judges



from NZ Chefs Championships



Worldchefs' Dr Rick Stephen
tutoring young chefs



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Congratulations Chef Sam Gradowski-Smith!

Enduro extends its warmest congratulations to
Chef Sam Gradowski-Smith
a shining star in the New Zealand culinary scene!

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Dr Rick Stephen, Vice President Worldchefs and Chair of the Culinary Competition



Congratulations to the following who completed the Seminar

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Steve Gerstleging | Maigie Atienza |
| Scott Buchanan | Ken O'Connell |
| Cam Davies | Kenny Holloway |
| Nick Westerman | Troy Lochore |
| Matt Shuker | Dylan Hickey |
| Adele Hingston | Benjamin Murtha |
| Emily Cross | Todd Thorburn |
| Yu jin Han | Rhys MacDonald |
| Fabio Olgioti | Jordan Rihia |
| Frank Brough | Tinelle Walker |
| Elizabeth Camille | Matt Heath |

These Chefs are now on the pathway to becoming Worldchefs endorsed Judges. They will receive a badge from Worldchefs HQ in Paris and add that to their profile on The Worldchefs website.

The NZ Chefs Hospitality Championships will be held at MIT 3,4 and 5 October 2026.

We hope to have the Culinary Arts section of the programme Worldchefs endorsed to provide our seminar Participants to take another step on the pathway.

Competition Committee with attendees



Worldchefs Magazine

Named Best Food Magazine in the World at the 2025 Gourmand Awards

Magazine, by World Association of Chefs Societies, was named Best Food Magazine in the World at the Gourmand Awards, during the [Cascais World Food Summit](#), a prestigious event that took place from June 18-21 in Portugal.

The announcement was made on stage at the Estoril Congress Centre by Edouard Cointreau, President and Founder of the Gourmand Awards, who praised the work for its depth and cultural significance:

"Congratulations to Ragnar Fridriksson and the entire Worldchefs team on the release of [Worldchefs Magazine Issue 30](#)—a powerful celebration of the global culinary community's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and professional growth. This milestone edition, launched in the lead-up to the Worldchefs Congress 2024 in Singapore, beautifully captures the spirit of mentorship and inclusivity that is shaping the future of gastronomy. With its thoughtful stories and global perspectives, the magazine serves as a vital reference point for the collaborative energy that defines Worldchefs and its expansive international network."

Founded in 1995, and with participation from over 200 countries, the Gourmand Awards are the only international competition dedicated to publications on food and drinks cultures. The competition is free and open to all languages. Each year, Gourmand organizes a global symposium in a location of notable gastronomic relevance, bringing together leading voices from the diplomacy, culinary, publishing, and cultural sectors.

Today, Worldchefs Magazine, with 31 published editions, continues to celebrate the unity and progress driving the global culinary community forward. It's a tribute to the legacy of chefs past and present, and a snapshot of the many ways Worldchefs' members are leading with purpose and passion. To read our latest edition, [click here](#).





APPENDIX I. WORLDCHEFS JURY CODE OF CONDUCT

Dear WORLDCHEFS Jury member, congratulations for being selected to represent WORLDCHEFS and our professional culinary fraternity at this prestigious event. As a member of the Jury you have a number of obligations that must be followed to ensure the competition is deemed professional and is successful for the organizing body.

As a member of the Jury,

1. I shall conduct my professional activities in a manner which reflects honor and integrity to our profession.
2. I will report for my duties at the time indicated or requested by the chairman of my jury team. If for some unforeseen circumstance I cannot report as required, I will notify the chairman immediately.
3. I will dress according to the dress code set out by the chairman of the jury and will maintain a professional appearance for the duration of the show.
4. I shall not engage in slander or disrespect a fellow member of the jury team and will not engage in any form of harassment and disrespectful or abusive behavior while representing WORLDCHEFS as a jury member.
5. I will judge all assigned tasks fairly and without bias, including on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation and national origin.
6. I support the growth of knowledge and the free interchange of ideas within the profession and respect and honor the views and opinions of colleagues and their right to express them.
7. I will ensure that I follow all WORLDCHEFS certified judging guidelines and will not deviate from these rules and regulations.
8. I will comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations in relation to occupational health and safety and food safety guidelines and standards.
9. I will not engage in any alcohol or substance consumption in any manner that could adversely affect my performance or endanger fellow judges, competitors and the general public and negatively affect the reputation of WORLDCHEFS.
10. I shall refrain from using my position on the jury to influence others in decisions relating to the competition in favor of one or another.
11. I will only comment as a member of the jury to competitors during the period allocated and only discuss items that I have been in the jury team to judge.
12. I will be alert to situations that may cause or have the appearance to cause a conflict of interest and provide full disclosure to the jury chairman.
13. All press related issues will be directed to the chairman of the jury and if approached, I will direct the media to the chairman of the jury and not engage in any publicity unless authorized to do so.
14. I shall participate in the various activities that are required to be a member of the jury, including feedback, team meetings and kitchen inspections as requested by the chairman of the jury.
15. Should I transgress from any of these rules and if I am no longer a WORLDCHEFS member in good standing, I am aware that I may be removed from the jury and also removed from the WORLDCHEFS Jury List in the future. I am also aware that my country president and association will be informed of the breach.
16. Violations of the Code of Conduct, or complaints against jury members, during competitions will be reported to the Jury President, who will consult with appointed Observer Judges and issue a ruling before the end of the competition. Warnings and/or revoked license are handled by the WACS CCC.

I understand and acknowledge all of the points above and will conform to this code of conduct as a WORLDCHEFS jury member.

My name (please print):

My signature:

Chairman of the jury, (please print):

Chairman of the jury, signature:

Date:



Nestlé Chefs Golden Hat NI and SI semi-finalists

North Island semi-finalist

Titirangi apprentice chef, Emily Morgan has been named the North Island regional winner in the prestigious Nestlé Golden Chef's Hat Award cook-off. This is the second time she has won the Award.

Taking place at AUT on Saturday the cook-off saw 18 rising culinary stars from across the North Island battle it out for a place in the Nestlé Golden Chef's Hat Award Grand Final.

Judged by a panel of experts from the NZ Chefs Association, Emily wowed the judges with a standout two-course menu.

Emily's menu included a mouthwatering sous vide beef rump with parmesan espuma, MAGGI Instant Mashed Potato duchess potatoes, Swiss chard cigars, mushroom and MAGGI Jus Lié Mix sauce. Dessert was a tamarillo souffle, crème fraîche and Nestlé Docello French Vanilla Mousse, quinoa and Uncle Toby's Traditional Oats crumble.

Emily said: *"I entered the competition to push myself out of my comfort zone and see how I stack up against other young chefs in the North Island. My goal is to keep learning, growing, and eventually work in some of the best kitchens in the country."*



South Island semi-finalist

Invercargill apprentice chef, Sam Kissell has been named the South Island regional winner in the prestigious Nestlé Golden Chef's Hat Award cook-off.

Taking place at Ara Institute of Canterbury, the cook-off saw 15 rising culinary stars from across the South Island battle it out for a place in the Nestlé Golden Chef's Hat Award Grand Final.

Assessed by a panel of experts from the NZ Chefs Association, Sam Kissell impressed the judges with a standout two-course menu earning the highest score of the day.

Sam's menu included a delicious seared beef rump, coriander and broccoli puree, honey glazed brussel sprouts, broccoli florets, MAGGI Instant Mashed Potato horopito and cumin croquette, plus a

MAGGI Jus Lié Mix red wine jus, chimichurri and pickled carrot ribbon.

Dessert comprised shortbread, lemon and a Nestlé DOCELLO Snowcap White Compound Chocolate crema, poached rhubarb, Uncle Tobys Traditional Oats and ginger crumb, plus a candied lemon zest.

Sam said: *"This is the second time that I've entered the competition, and I wanted to see if I could push myself beyond what I had achieved personally and among my peers. My goal now is to focus on the Sydney finals and explore opportunities overseas."*



The final will be held in Sydney, in September

National Secondary School Culinary Challenge 2025

Regional Winning Dishes

NORTHLAND

SCHOOL: Te Kamo High School

TEACHER: Charlotte Selby

STUDENTS: Kōrari Horncy & Ella Matson

DISH DESCRIPTION: Pan seared succulent Silver Fern Farms lamb loin - marinated in lemon, garlic and rosemary - are interspersed between crisp pieces of capsicum to create delicious lamb kebabs.

Accompanied with delicate oven baked Kūmara chips and a fresh, tangy tzatziki; garnished with Rescued Kitchen Heirloomacy tomato jerky slivers

THESE LINKS TAKES YOU TO A PICTURES OF THEIR DISHES. [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Team Photograph [Here](#)

SOUTH AUCKLAND

SCHOOL: Botany Downs Secondary College

TEACHER: Angie Thomson

STUDENTS: Kate and Georgia Sole (sisters)

DISH DESCRIPTION: Herb crusted lamb loin, on cauliflower purée served with hand-crafted Kūmara gnocchi, tossed in a sage-infused brown butter. Accompanied by peas, broad beans, parmesan tuile, walnuts, and blue cheese.

THESE LINKS TAKES YOU TO PICTURES OF THEIR DISHES [Here](#) [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Team Photograph [Here](#)

WAIKATO, BAY OF PLENTY

SCHOOL: Waikato Diocesan School for Girls

TEACHER: Ms Michelle Knott

STUDENTS: Tanesha Jeyakumar and Lily Priscott

DISH DESCRIPTION: Lamb Loin with Smoked Kūmara, Spiced Tamarillo Gel & Broccolini Gratin

Three succulent slices of Silver fern medium-rare lamb loin are artfully arranged alongside silky smoked Kūmara purée, offering a subtle sweetness and depth. Star anise and cinnamon-spiked tamarillo gel lends a vibrant acidity that cuts through the richness, while a broccolini gratin provides a savoury, crisp contrast. Roasted garlic purée and crispy parmesan add texture and an umami finish to balance the dish

THESE LINKS TAKES YOU TO PICTURES OF THEIR DISHES [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Team Photograph [Here](#)

HAWKES BAY, POVERTY BAY, GISBORNE

SCHOOL: Napier Girls High school

TEACHER: Rachel Pollett

STUDENTS: Ellah-jo Winikerei-King and Sophie Lyndon

DISH DESCRIPTION: Succulent pistachio and herb-crusted Silver Fern Farms lamb loin, nestled on oven-roasted red Kūmara and a silky orange Kūmara purée, accompanied by garlic-glazed bok choy. Finished with a vibrant herb and capsicum salsa verde, a drizzle of herbed Greek yogurt, and a crispy Kapiti cumin seed gouda and sesame lavosh.

THESE LINKS TAKES YOU TO PICTURES OF THEIR DISHES [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Team Photograph [Here](#)

NSSCC 2025 Regional Winners continued ...



WELLINGTON, KAPITI, WAIRARAPA

SCHOOL: Kapiti College

TEACHER: Samantha Davey

STUDENTS: Jacob Stagg & Jett Bal

DISH DESCRIPTION: Mexican Spiced Lamb Loin Tacos - Juicy spiced lamb loin - zesty Mexican slaw - rescued crumb Kūmara tortilla-kasundi - crispy halloumi, with lime caviar and mint spiked Kapiti yogurt

THESE LINKS TAKES YOU TO PICTURES OF THEIR DISHES [Here](#) [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Team Photograph [Here](#)

TARANAKI, WHANGANUI, MANAWATU

SCHOOL: Spotswood College

TEACHER: Felix Harman

STUDENTS: Samantha Scown & Rozan Flores

DISH DESCRIPTION: Moroccan Lamb Stack - Ras el hanout-crusted lamb loin grilled medium-rare, stacked on savory couscous cakes. Paired with Kūmara-red pepper romesco and tangy cucumber tzatziki. Garnished with micro herbs for flavor and visual appeal.

THESE LINKS TAKES YOU TO PICTURES OF THEIR DISHES [Here](#) [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Team Photograph [Here](#)

TASMAN, NELSON, MARLBOROUGH, CANTERBURY

SCHOOL: Christchurch Boys' High School

TEACHER: Katrina Boyd

STUDENTS: Sam Dunstan and Toby Dixon

DISH DESCRIPTION: Kūmara and Kapiti smoked cheddar croqueta, served with Silver Fern Farms lamb loin, Kūmara puree, served with a rocket and radish salad and a Kapiti smoked cheese crisp.

THESE LINKS TAKES YOU TO PICTURES OF THEIR DISHES [Here](#) [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Team Photograph [Here](#)

OTAGO, SOUTHLAND, WEST COAST

SCHOOL: John McGlashan College

TEACHER: Duncan McLean

STUDENTS: Luke Miller and Jemaine Wheeler

DISH DESCRIPTION: Seared Silver Fern Farms lamb loin with leek confit and Kūmara espuma. Plated with crispy Kūmara skins and a salad of red radish cress, wood sorrel and gorse flowers. garnished with chili and basil oil.

THESE LINKS TAKES YOU TO PICTURES OF THEIR DISHES [Here](#) [Here](#) and [Here](#)

Team Photograph [Here](#)

Proud to be a Chef applications open on 4 August 2025

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Curried Cauliflower & Mushroom Pie

A delectable blend of tender cauliflower and earthy mushrooms enveloped in a rich aromatic curry-infused filling, all encased in a golden flaky pastry crust

Ingredients

Brûlée Cups:

60ml Extra virgin olive oil

120g Butter, diced

8 Shallots, diced finely

1 Leek, sliced finely

1 tsp Cumin

1 tsp Coriander seeds

1 tsp Turmeric

1 tsp Fenugreek

2 tsp Pink peppercorns

80g Flour, sieved

20g MAGGI® Gluten Free

Vegetable Booster +400ml

warm water

1L Water

2 Cauliflower heads,

roughly trimmed into large

florets

100g Butter

60ml Olive oil

20g MAGGI® Gluten Free

Vegetable Booster

200g Button mushrooms halved

60g Butter

10 Sheets puff pastry

4 Egg yolks

Method

Preheat oven to 200°C fan forced.

Add extra virgin olive oil and butter to a pot over low-medium heat. Gently sweat leek and shallots until tender and translucent (4–5 mins). Add cumin, coriander seeds, turmeric, and pink peppercorns, and cook until fragrant.

Add in flour to make a roux and cook out. Mix 20g MAGGI® Gluten Free Vegetable Booster with 400ml water and add gradually to roux, mixing vigorously, to form a velouté. Adjust seasoning. Once stock is added and desired texture is achieved, transfer to a gastronome tray lined with baking paper and allow to cool in the fridge.

Place the cauliflower florets in a container with a lid. Melt 100g butter and mix it with 60 ml olive oil. Pour butter and olive oil mix over cauliflower florets. Cover the florets with a lid and shake container well to coat cauliflower in the butter and olive oil mix. Place the florets on a lined baking tray. Season the cauliflower with 20g MAGGI® Gluten Free Vegetable Booster. Roast cauliflower at medium high oven temperature till golden brown, then allow to cool.

In a hot pan sauté the mushrooms in 60g butter and keep to cool down.

If frozen, allow puff pastry to come to fridge temperature. Form into desired pie shape, placing velouté on the bottom and cauliflower and mushroom on top. Seal pie, dock pastry, and glaze with egg yolk. Bake at 200°C for 12 minutes or until golden.



*Recipe and photo by Karl Seidel
Culinary Advisory Chef Nestlé Professional*



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