

Edmonton Convention Centre culinary team celebrating national success

The Edmonton Convention Centre is the proud home of one of Canada's top three chefs after returning home with a bronze medal from the Canadian Culinary Championship.

ECC executive chef Serge Belair and team just returned from Ottawa where they were competing at the Canadian Culinary Championship. Chef Serge finished on the podium in third place out of nine chefs from across the country who all won their regional qualifiers.

Chef Serge and his team members' journey started at the regional competition, the Great Canadian Kitchen Party, hosted at the Edmonton Convention Centre. He won first prize making a dessert with executive pastry chef Jason Wang – Chef Serge did again at the national championship for the third leg of competition and is the first chef in 14 years to place on the podium with a dessert. It was a Valrhona Bahibe Warm Chocolate Cake, white wine Sabayon, Chef's Gareb sous vide Pear served with Gorgonzola roasted pear ice cream, Maldon salt, Citrus Pear macaron and sorels grown by Strathcona Microgreens

The first leg of the competition the ECC team created a 'pâté en croute with pickled beet puree and winter greens, paired with mystery wine La Close Jordanne 2020 Pinot Noir Villages.

"The dish is a highly technical French pastry and pâté that typically takes three days to cure," the chef explains. "Francis [sous chef] and I menu planned, shopped, and prepared the dish for 300 guests in 10 hours with a \$600 budget (\$2 per guest). The cherry in the pâté paired perfectly with the mystery wine."

There was another leg of competition, but it was cancelled due to a power outage.

Chef Serge was the only chef in the competition representing a convention venue.

"It's an honour to represent Edmonton and our local producers on a national stage at a competition of this calibre," says Chef Serge Belair, executive chef, Edmonton Convention Centre. "Competing among the best chefs in the country is an important opportunity to showcase the innovation of our venue while pursuing the highest degree of culinary excellence."

Chef Briana Kim from Alice restaurant in Ottawa took home top spot and Vancouver's Chef Bobby Milheron won silver.

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About the Canadian Culinary Championship:

Canada's Great Kitchen Party is a social enterprise dedicated to "Building a Better Canada" through the elevation and celebration of Canadian excellence through food, sport and music. Staged in nine cities across the country, each event is a regional culinary competition which qualifies the winning chefs to move on to compete at the Canadian Culinary Championship on February 3 and 4 in Ottawa. Chefs, athletes, musicians and business leaders all come together for a spectacular experience and to provide young Canadians the opportunity to be extraordinary through sport, music and food. We proudly contribute to the following beneficiaries: Spirit North, MusiCounts and a local food charity. As the largest exposition of Canadian wines, over 200 wineries and local breweries and spirit companies are profiled at our events. For more information, visit greatkitchenparty.com.

About Edmonton Convention Centre:

Recognized by the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) as one of North America's top five performing venues, the Edmonton Convention Centre brings people together to learn, innovate, trade and celebrate in the heart of downtown Edmonton. Owned by the City of Edmonton and managed by Edmonton Economic Development, the venue hosts nearly 650 events and 500,000 guests per year, generating more than \$30 million in economic impact.