

2016 Mississippi Seafood Cook-Off

Rules & Regulations

Hot / Cold Seafood Competition:

The seafood competition is an event in which competitors cook and present food to be judged on taste as well as execution of skills and presentation. For the individual competition, food will be needed for (7) portions – six tasting portions and one display.

In an "open" competition, six judges will taste the entry for judging. It is expected that chef competitors will dress in full professional chef's whites.

PROCEDURE:

Competitors will supply their tools, i.e., knives, cutters, pans and products/recipe ingredients to prepare the recipe. Small appliances will be allowed to be brought in by competitors.

Each competitor must complete the assignment within the fifty minute allotted time, allowing time within the 50 minutes for plating.

THE KITCHEN:

All competitors will be provided with his or her own workstation, which should consist of an adequate worktable. Sink with running water may be shared by competitors and caterers. Water will be provided at chefs' workstations. A safe and efficient working environment must be maintained.

SEAFOOD PROFESSIONAL:

Each competitor will have fifty minutes (this includes plating) to prepare (7) servings of a menu item. Of the (7) portions to be prepared:

- (6) for judge tasting
- (1) for photos/critique/press/display

The entry should highlight Mississippi gulf seafood and demonstrate regional and national cooking techniques. Also, basic culinary preparation skills and sanitation skills must be used.

Once, a contestant is selected to compete, the following preliminaries are to be completed and entered by May 9, 2016.

1. Completed entry documents
2. Typed, standardized recipes for the entry*
3. Photograph of chef*

*All photos and recipes become property of the Mississippi Seafood Cook Off competition for the sole purpose of promoting domestic seafood to the consumer. Photos and recipes will be used on

Mississippi Seafood website (MSSeafood.com), Eat Y'all website (eatyall.com), in press releases, and for other promotional purposes.

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

General Rules and Guidelines (Applicable to all competitors):

- Competitors must provide recipes with full ingredient list and cooking instructions. These will be given to the tasting judges.
- No advance preparation or cooking is allowed. Vegetables can be peeled and cut. Salads may be cleaned and washed but not cut or shaped in any form; beans may be pre-soaked. Exceptions are chopped herbs, shallots, garlic, and mirepoix.
- Competitors are allowed to bring in only the whole and raw materials stated in their recipes.
- No finished sauces are allowed; however, basic stocks (beef, veal, chicken, vegetable, or fish) may be brought in as necessary for the assignment.
- Competitors will bring his or her own tools, including small ware and plain white china (plates, platters, bowls, etc.) to display the finished dish.

COMPETITION SCORING

As the judges critique a display/entry, points are awarded in several areas and averaged to yield a single score for the display/entry.

Service/Tasting Evaluation - (60 possible points):

- 10 points – Presentation and general impression
- 15 points – Creativity and practicality / ease of preparation
- 10 points – Composition / harmony of ingredients
- 10 points – Correct preparation / craftsmanship
- 15 points -- Flavor, Taste, Texture and Doneness

TASTING JUDGES EVALUATE...

Presentation, general impression & serving methods. Hot food is hot and cold food is cold (including plates). Food is fresh and colorful, visibly seasoned, presented with some height, easy to eat, and pleasing to the eye. Fish slices are even, straight, and evenly shingled. Items are closely placed together to help maintain temperature and keep the plate from resembling a smiling face. Simple and practical, clean and careful serving with no fuss, no over-elaborate or impractical garnishing, plate and platter arrangement that makes for practical serving while maintaining a strong sense of the elegant.

Creativity and Practicality. The dish shows a degree of difficulty and creative flair, rather than something copied and overused. If using an old or classical idea, new, creative ideas have been used to transform the dish. Degree of difficulty, artistic achievement, work involved, originality.

Composition & Harmony of ingredients. Ingredients are compatible. Ingredient colors harmonize. Ingredient amounts are correctly portioned to give a perfect harmonization. Have any of the ingredients been duplicated? Taste and colors should enhance each other, display practical craftsmanship, and should be practical, digestible.

Correct Preparation and Craftsmanship. Classical names should correspond to original recipes and methods of preparation. Preparations must display mastery of basic skills.

Flavor, taste, texture, and doneness. The stated flavor in the menu and recipe are profound. Doneness and temperatures are correct. Stated vegetable cuts are correct. The stated cooking techniques have been applied correctly. The textures correspond to what was implied in the recipe. The flavor of the sauce or vinaigrette reflects what the recipe stated and is of the correct consistency. The correct degrees of caramelization have been shown. It tastes great.

The dish(es) portrays a high level of skill and exactness. The number of different skills employed throughout the menu distinguishes the caliber of the cook(s).

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR COMPETITORS AND JUDGES

The following list should provide a good beginning checklist of what is considered the most general guidelines for both competitors who are developing displays and for judges who will evaluate them.

- The criterion for judging all dishes is the recipe, with a brief description of ingredients and methods of preparations.
- More than one domestic Mississippi gulf seafood product may be used in the entry.
- Participants must supply their own seafood and ingredients for the competition.
- Ingredients and garnishes should harmonize with the main part of the dish and conform to contemporary standards of nutritional values.
- Unnecessary ingredients should be avoided and practical, acceptable cooking methods should be applied.
- Dressing the rims of plates will result in an unacceptable appearance.
- Product juices should not make a dish look unappetizing.
- Vegetables must be cut or turned uniformly.
- Plate arrangement and decoration should be practical yet appealing and should comply with daily standards.
- Avoid all non-edible items.
- Food prepared hot should not be placed on buffet platters or mirrors.
- Plated portions must be proportional to the dish itself and the number of persons specified.
- Sauce boats should be only half full.
- In general, portion weight should be in keeping with the norms of accepted practice and nutritional balance.
- If fruit is used to garnish, it should be cut into small pieces or sliced thinly.
- Less experienced participants are advised not to set their aims too high and to abide by fundamental cleanliness as much as possible in their work.

- All exhibits should be identified by their proper names both on exhibition tables and on entry forms.
- No identification of personal or business affiliation is allowed with the exhibits until the judging is completed.
- Finally, the punctual presentation of each exhibit at the appointed time is a matter of urgent necessity.

COMPETITORS SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON:

- Highlighting domestic Mississippi gulf seafood product(s) that represent their state best
- Originality -- new ideas
- Garnishes
- Practical portion size (cost considerations)
- Proper color, presentation and flavor combination
- Presenting a natural, appetizing look
- Properly cooked seafood

COMPETITORS SHOULD AVOID:

- Use of inedible materials
- Decorating with parsley, watercress
- Cluttering the platters
- Entering a previously judged piece
- Identifying your display prior to judging
- Serving of food on the rim of the platter
- Repetition in preparatory methods
- Excessive use of food coloring
- Use of plastic ornaments, flowers, etc.
- Use of tarnished silver
- Unsuitable serving dishes
- Presenting hot food on mirrors
- Over dressing or decorating the presentation table

COLD FOOD MAY BE DISPLAYED ON:

- Silver trays and platters
- Stainless steel
- Mirrors
- Formica
- Polished wood
- China plates
- Any other approved food surface

HOT FOOD MAY BE DISPLAYED ON:

- Lined copper dishes
- Stainless steel platters
- Earthenware dishes (oven proof)
- Dinner plates (china, porcelain, or ceramic)
- Imitation pewter
- Silver platters
- Glass containers
- Any non-porous surface

Although table decorations are not a part of the actual judging, a well presented and attractive table will add to the high quality image which the exhibitor attempts to project.