



THE ROUX SCHOLARSHIP

PRESS RELEASE

Six finalists announced

The names of the six chefs who will compete for the title of Roux Scholar 2017 are:

Martin Carabott, *Luca Restaurant, Clerkenwell, London*

Michael Cruickshank, *Bohemia, St Helier, Jersey*

Scott Dineen, *BaxterStorey, London*

Oliver Downey, *Fera at Claridge's, Mayfair, London*

Luke Selby, *Dabbous, London*

Matthew Whitfield, *The Driftwood Hotel, Portscatho, Cornwall*

Facts about the finalists:

- Scott Dineen is in his fourth final, Martin Carabott is through for the second time in a row and Michael Cruickshank was in the regional final last year.
- Matthew Whitfield made it to the regional finals in 2011 and 2012, he used to work at The Montagu Arms for Matthew Tomkinson, Roux Scholar (2005).
- Oliver Downey, works for Dan Cox (2008 scholar) at Simon Rogan's Fera at Claridge's.

The finalists were chosen following two regional finals, which took place on Thursday 23rd March 2017 at the University of West London and University College Birmingham.

Judges

In London: Alain Roux, Andrew Fairlie, James Martin, Simon Hulstone.

In Birmingham: Michel Roux Jr, Brian Turner, Sat Bains, André Garrett.

The challenge

This year the challenge was to create a recipe to serve four people using a whole fresh rainbow trout and 800g live mussels, accompanied by a sauce and two garnishes, one to include jasmine rice.

Contestants had 2½ hrs to cook their dish as originally submitted along with a dessert from a list of mystery ingredients given to them on the day.

The 2017 mystery box

The brief was to prepare a dessert for four people using the ingredients supplied. One ingredient could be omitted but at least 50% of the following ingredients had to be used:

100g caster sugar	15g fresh yeast
100ml whole milk	4 lemons
4 medium eggs	200ml double cream
200g plain flour	220g strawberry jam 'Francis Miot' (60% strawberry/39% cane sugar)
150g unsalted butter	

Quotes from the judges:

Michel Roux Jr. *"It was a great cook off today which bodes well for the final where knowledge of the classics will come into play."*

Alain Roux. *"I could tell which chefs had practiced, it showed in the way they prepared the trout. A few lacked the skill to fillet and portion correctly without waste and the result was that some of the fish we*



THE ROUX SCHOLARSHIP

tasted was unevenly cooked. The best got it spot on – moist and slightly pink, just what we were looking for!

The chefs used a wide variety of different ingredients and techniques, some were a bit too complex and although the dishes looked pretty they didn't deliver on taste. More is not always good! The complexity of the main dish caused problems for some, leaving a lack of time to focus on their pudding.

"When comparing notes with my cousin we had to make some difficult choices but we've got six strong chefs in the final which will make for an exciting competition."

What the Birmingham judges said:

Sat Bains. *"It's a great privilege to judge and see the stringent process from paper judging through to the final. We got two good finalists today. My recommendation for chefs coming back next year is to please practice, practice, practice and taste, taste, taste!"*

André Garrett. *"I'm interested to see who wins and what they do with this amazing opportunity. I would have liked to taste more flavour in the rice dishes today and in general more seasoning. Did they taste it?"*

Brian Turner. *"It was a fairly even competition this year and the top two stood out because of their respect for the products and the flavour of their dishes."*

What the London judges said:

Andrew Fairlie. *"Overall the standard was good. The chefs going through showed imaginative use of the trout and rice combination. The delicate texture of the rainbow trout caught out some of the other competitors."*

Simon Hulstone. *"Once more the desserts seemed to come second best to the savoury courses. I can't reiterate enough that a good dessert can carry you through to the final."*

James Martin. *"Those mystery box ingredients shone out for an enriched yeast dough dessert like a savarin, baba or doughnuts. It's perfect for this situation, simple and easily done in the time. What would I have done? Probably a baked savarin with lemon syrup served with Chantilly cream – leaving out the jam."*

National final – Monday 10th April 2017

The six finalists will compete for the title of Roux Scholar 2017 in the final, which takes place at Westminster Kingsway College, London. This time the recipe details are a complete surprise; 30 minutes before the start of the competition the finalists will be given the recipe and ingredients for a main dish, either classic or modern and given three hours to prepare and present it to the judges.

Innovative three-Michelin starred chef, Anne-Sophie Pic will head the panel of judges as honorary president alongside joint chairmen Alain and Michel Jr. They will be joined by James Martin, David Nicholls, Brian Turner, head scholar Andrew Fairlie as well as previous winners Simon Hulstone (2003 scholar), Sat Bains (1999 scholar) and André Garrett (2002 scholar).

Award Ceremony

The 2017 Roux Scholar will be announced at a prestigious award ceremony at The Langham, London, that same evening.

Save the date! Fans of the Roux Scholarship are invited to join the Roux family, online via LIVE link to watch the award ceremony, as the action unfolds.



THE ROUX SCHOLARSHIP

PRESS RELEASE

The awards show includes films charting the progress of competitors from paper judging, through to the Final. It will feature: behind the scenes footage of the six finalists battling it out at the cook-off to win the accolade of Roux Scholar 2017; a master class of the final dish by Michel Jr and Alain Roux plus a film of last year's winner, Harry Guy, talking about his stage at three Michelin-starred, Saison in San Francisco.

Access the live link from **7pm on Monday 10th April 7pm** via www.rouxscholarship, YouTube & twitter

Our sponsors

The Roux Scholarship is sponsored by a number of companies including: Aubrey Allen, Bridor, Cactus TV, The Caterer, Direct Seafoods, Global Knives, Hildon Natural Mineral Water, The Langham London, Champagne Laurent-Perrier, L'Unico Caffè Musetti, Mash Purveyors Ltd, Oritain, Qatar Airways, Restaurant Associates, TRUEfoods, and Udale Speciality Foods Ltd.

More details about all 18 chefs who competed and all of our sponsors are available on our website www.rouxscholarship.co.uk

Ends

Supplementary Information

Comments from the six finalists

Martin Carabott: "Today was amazing. I'm very happy and will give it my best for the big day."

Michael Cruickshank: "I'm surprised and excited for the final."

Scott Dineen: "it feels amazing! It's such an honour to get through to the final again. It's a dream come true. I'm going to strip back to basics this year to prepare for the final-practice sauces, pastry, the basics. This year I want it more than ever. This year I want to be remembered not for entering 4 times but for winning!"

Oliver Downey: "It feels great that all the hard work and effort paid off."

Luke Selby: "It was harder than I thought it would be but I was happy with what I did and it feels great to get to the final."

Matthew Whitfield: "I entered in 2011 and 2012 and didn't get through and then went and worked away for a while. I decided to have another go this year because due to my age this is my last chance. I'm very happy to get through and hope to try and enjoy the final."

Regional Prizes

No one went home empty handed; each competitor received the following gifts from our sponsors, as well as a commemorative certificate signed by all the judges:

- A Kazoku set of three **Global Knives**.
- A Moka pot with coffee, courtesy of **L'Unico Caffè Musetti**.
- A hamper of fine foods from **Mash Purveyors** product range.
- A **TRUEfoods** anniversary apron and tasting spoon.