



PRESS RELEASE

Martin Carabott crowned 35th Roux Scholar

Martin Carabott has won the 2018 Roux Scholarship. Martin beat five other finalists in a fiercely contested final held at Westminster Kingsway College, London, on Monday 26th March, where they were asked to prepare and serve *Pigeonneaux Valenciennes-style, with a vin jaune sauce*.

The 29-year-old chef who was a national finalist in 2016 and 2017 was battling it out against Ben Champkin from L'Enclume, Cumbria; Oliver Marlow from Roganic, London; Sam Nash from L'Enclume, Cumbria; Fergus Wilford from Cliveden House, Berkshire, and Ryan Porter from Northcote, Lancashire.

Commenting on the 35th national final, Michel Roux Jr said: "There was a fantastic standard, six highly motivated and talented chefs. They all struggled with the boning of the pigeon, which was a real challenge and not something often found on a menu, but it required a classic skill and that's what The Roux Scholarship is all about."

Alain Roux added: "As with all the Scholarship final recipes, there is a core challenge at its heart, this time to debone a pigeon which is a small, fiddly bird. To perform this successfully took not only skill but also time and careful planning. This recipe was a real challenge, but the winner was outstanding."

Michel Guérard (Honorary President of Judges 2018) said: "There were six heroes of the kitchen here. All gave a pleasurable interpretation of the dish which charmed all the senses of sight, smell and taste. Boning a bird is a very important skill, you need to be dexterous in the kitchen. Being a chef is a manual job and you need to be careful with manual skills."

Winner Martin Carabott said: "I'd been in the national final for the last two years but this was much more difficult this year. It really doesn't get any easier with experience, there's always something unexpected. There's always pressure when you are watched by these superstar chefs. You need to be disciplined and focused."

The six chefs, all under 30 years old, had three hours to cook the Auguste Escoffier-inspired recipe, in front of the judges. Three-Michelin starred chef Michel Guérard, honorary president of the judges, led the panel alongside joint chairmen Alain and Michel Jr. They were joined by Brian Turner, head scholar Andrew Fairlie as well as previous winners Simon Hulstone (2003 scholar) and Sat Bains (1999 scholar). This year saw the return of Angela Hartnett to the judging panel, and two new judges Clare Smyth and Rachel Humphrey. André Garrett (2002 scholar) stood down from judging this year because finalist Fergus Wilford is in his brigade.

The winner was announced at a glittering awards ceremony at The Langham, London, in front of an audience of top chefs and prestigious guests from the world of hospitality.

The winning chef, receives £6,000, and an invitation to cook and train under the supervision of a leading chef at a prestigious three star Michelin restaurant anywhere in the world for up to three months. This is in addition to an impressive list of prizes and culinary experiences provided courtesy of our sponsors.

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The Roux Scholarship is sponsored by a number of companies including: Aubrey Allen, The Balvenie, Bridor, Cactus TV, The Caterer, Direct Seafoods, Global Knives, Hildon Natural Mineral Water, The Langham



THE ROUX SCHOLARSHIP

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Photos, from photographer Jodi Hinds, available via this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/63lg8iimvq4gyq9/AADGYuv69ChG0C6UJbUuSpraa?dl=0>

Go to www.rouxscholarship.co.uk for more information about the Roux Scholarship competition and details of the long list of prizes the winner and finalists received courtesy of our sponsors.

Further information:

- The recipe of pigeonneaux Valenciennes-style, with a vin jaune sauce includes whole roasted pigeons stuffed with forcemeat and sweetbreads, garnished with spinach and carrots. It is served with glazed polenta and morels timbales, accompanied with a vin jaune wine sauce.
- Last year's winner Luke Selby works alongside Martin Carabott at Ollie Dabbous' new restaurant Hide, which opens in April. Martin is senior sous chef at Below (the bar), and Luke is head chef at Above (fine dining restaurant).
- It was Martin's last chance to enter the competition, which is open to chefs under 30 years old. The other finalists are all keen to enter again.
- The film of the Roux Scholarship 2018 will be broadcast as part of Saturday Kitchen on Saturday 31st March on BBC1.

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