

## UK winner of “Le Taittinger” International Culinary Prize announced

Deepak Mallya, Sous Chef at one Michelin star The Ritz Restaurant at The Ritz Hotel in London, has been announced as the UK winner in the 54<sup>th</sup> edition of the “Le Taittinger” International Culinary Prize.

President of the UK National Competition, two Michelin star chef Michel Roux Jr, comments, “The competition was more challenging than ever in this unprecedented year, and each of the UK entrants deserves to be proud of the high standards submitted across the board. These young chefs have embraced the new format of ‘Le Taittinger’ to deliver ingenious and inspired entries. I am looking forward to discovering Deepak’s dish in Paris where he will compete against the international culinary talent of the other national finalists from around the world.”

Last year marked a turning point in the proceedings, with organisers placing a single product at the heart of the competition and giving candidates a free rein to showcase this ‘hero’ ingredient.

This year’s hero product is beef, with the gauntlet being thrown down for chefs to use their creativity and flair to choose a cut – or cuts – and design a dish that is both delicious to eat and visually spectacular. Competitors draw inspiration from all the influences of culture, country, heritage and style of cuisine before adding their own personal touch.

There remains one fixed competition rule: a single candidate per country is selected for the international final to represent their own country and culture. UK competitors submitted their detailed recipe creations with photographs and the story of their inspiration, which were all judged anonymously.

Deepak wins €2,400 and will now go forward to represent the UK at the International Final in Paris in January 2022. Until then, the victorious chef’s winning creation remains under wraps.

“In view of the levels of consistency that we have come to expect and strive for, the Taittinger International Culinary Prize is an experience that cannot take place virtually,” explains Vitalie Taittinger, president of the family-owned Champagne house. “A moment of both rivalry and sharing between various generations of leading chefs, we wanted to pledge the same commitment to the winners of the national stages as with every other year. That’s why, rather than run after the ‘permitted windows of opportunity’ and keep cancelling for the reasons that we’re all aware of, we’ve decided to take the necessary time, not more than a year, to ensure that the next international final can take place in the best possible conditions and to give the candidates every opportunity to showcase their talent.”



**Above: Deepak Mallya, Sous Chef at The Ritz Hotel and UK winner of “Le Taittinger” International Culinary Prize**

At the International Final in January 2022 in the famous kitchens of Ecole Ferrandi (French School of Gastronomy), Deepak will compete with the winners of the other national competitions. There they will be joined by the President of the Prize, Emmanuel Renaut, three Michelin-star chef of the restaurant Le Flocon de Sel 5\* in Megève, as well as the members of the jury. The eight finalists from around the world are:

- **Deepak Mallya** : United-Kingdom / The Ritz Hôtel in London (1 Michelin star)
- **Tristan Martin** : Belgium / Château de Grandvoir in Neufchâteau
- **Ryo Horiuchi** : Japan / Eterre by Alain Ducasse Palace Hotel in Tokyo
- **Louis Gachet** : France / La Chèvre d'Or in Eze (2 Michelin stars)
- **Maximilian Kindel** : Germany / Facil in Berlin (2 Michelin stars)
- **Victor Moriez** : Switzerland / Hôtel de Ville in Crissier (3 Michelin stars)
- **Louis Cespedes** : Sweden / Adam and Albin in Stockholm
- **Jan Smink** : The Netherlands / Smink à Wolvega

The contest, which is known as the “Everest of Gastronomy,” has been a mainstay in the calendar for over five decades and has seen the emergence of leading chefs in French cuisine, such as Régis Marcon, Michel Roth and Joël Robuchon.

The winner of the International Final will receive €20,000 and a medal, with the runner-up getting €5,000 and €2,500 being awarded to the chef in third place.

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**Notes to Editors:**

- For more information please contact Tash Najm at R&R Teamwork [natasha@randr.co.uk](mailto:natasha@randr.co.uk)
- Champagne Taittinger's origins date back to 1734 when the original House was founded by Jacques Fourneaux.
- Today it remains one of the few top Houses actively owned, and run, by the family named on the label and one of the few to own a significant number of vineyards, the second largest in the region, providing them with quality control from vine to bottle.
- With many of their Champagnes being matured in Taittinger's magnificent UNESCO status, 4th century Roman cellars, the hallmark of these wines is the high percentage of Chardonnay used, which gives them elegance, delicacy and finesse.
- Hatch Mansfield is the sole UK agent for Taittinger Champagne.