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CHTA ANNOUNCES TASTE OF THE CARIBBEAN 2026 TEAMS

Chefs and bartenders from 15 Caribbean destinations will compete at Wyndham Sam Lord's Castle All-Inclusive Resort in Barbados, with three new competitions featured this year

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (Oct. 20, 2026): The region's finest culinary and mixology talent is heading to Barbados. The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) today announced the teams competing in Taste of the Caribbean 2026, taking place **Nov. 16-19** at Wyndham Sam Lord's Castle All-Inclusive Resort, where an expanded slate of competitions will raise the bar for the Caribbean's chefs and bartenders.

This year's competition brings together 15 teams from Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Bonaire, Curaçao, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

What's New in 2026

Teams will compete across seven categories this year: *Chef of the Year, Junior Chef of the Year, Pastry Chef of the Year, Bartender of the Year,* and the new *Beef and Seafood* competitions. The *Beef and Seafood* competitions give chefs fresh opportunities to demonstrate technique with premium proteins central to Caribbean menus, with select teams entering each. Mixologists gain an additional stage through the new Vodka competition, which complements the established Bartender of the Year category.

Elevating Caribbean Talent and Cuisine

As the Caribbean's premier showcase for culinary mastery, cultural expression, and professional development, Taste of the Caribbean celebrates the region's diverse gastronomy while giving food and beverage professionals a platform to sharpen their skills and explore emerging trends. Competitors perform under the pressure of live competition and receive evaluation from respected judges, all while building connections with peers and industry leaders across the region. The competition also offers registered attendees a chance to witness the excitement firsthand, cheer on competitors, and share in the camaraderie that brings the region's culinary community together. For junior competitors in particular, the experience often marks a defining step in their careers.

Beyond the competition kitchens, the program features educational sessions led by regional and international partners including Certified Angus Beef, National Watermelon Promotion Board and U.S. Meat Export Federation.

The event also brings the region's flavors to a wider stage. Each team draws on local ingredients, traditions, and contemporary techniques, offering judges and guests a view of how Caribbean cuisine and mixology continue to evolve. Together, the dishes and cocktails presented reflect the cultural richness and creativity that distinguish the Caribbean as a culinary destination.

Awards and Programming

The competition culminates in the Taste of the Caribbean Awards, where top honors will be presented for Caribbean Chef of the Year, Caribbean Junior Chef of the Year, Caribbean Pastry Chef of the Year, and Caribbean Bartender of the Year, along with winners of the Beef and Seafood competitions. Additional medals and awards recognize achievements such as Best Use of a Product.

Taste of the Caribbean runs concurrently with the Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF), one of the region's most influential gatherings for hospitality leaders. CHIEF delivers strategic insights, peer-led workshops, and practical solutions tailored to the Caribbean tourism landscape.

Travel and Accommodations

CHTA has secured special rates at the all-inclusive host hotel for Taste attendees. Guests booking two nights or longer receive an additional $150 credit from CHTA, applied to the entire stay. Airline partners interCaribbean Airways and Winair are offering special airfares for travel to the event. For more information, visit https://chtataste.com/travel-accommodations/.

The competition is supported by Anything But Advertising (ABA), Certified Angus Beef, Interval International, Mastercard, the National Watermelon Promotion Board, and the U.S. Meat Export Federation. Wyndham Sam Lord's Castle All-Inclusive Resort serves as host hotel and sponsor of the Taste of the Caribbean Awards event.

Full program details, travel information, and updates are available at www.chtataste.com.

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About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the leading voice of the Caribbean hospitality and tourism private sector. For more than 60 years, CHTA has brought together national hotel and tourism associations, hotels, resorts and other accommodations, and allied businesses across the region. Through the collective strength of this regional network, CHTA represents the industry's interests, connects businesses and partners, and delivers the insights, resources and opportunities members need to navigate challenges, make informed decisions and grow their businesses. From advocacy and business intelligence to people development, sustainability, emerging technologies and market opportunities, CHTA helps members address the issues that matter most to their businesses while strengthening the Caribbean hospitality and tourism industry.