

Next Generation Chocolatier Competition 2008

COMPETITION BACKGROUNDER

Theme: Salty Sweet Chocolate

Concept: This is America's only national chocolate competition. The competition is like *American Idol*, only sweeter. It is open to US-based chocolatiers and chocolate makers that use artisan production methods. The competition's objectives are to set quality standards, encourage producers to meet those standards, raise consumer appreciation in well-executed confections, and showcase the results. Held in even numbered years, this competition is in its third cycle. It is managed by Vreeland & Associates, an events management and marketing research firm specializing in the confectionery industry.

Theme: This year's theme is **salty sweets**, drawing upon the growing popularity of salt to extend the flavor and texture of chocolate confections.

The Competition: The judging is conducted blind, with six finalists invited to the Awards Ceremony to compete for the *People's Choice Award*. Awards are bestowed on the chocolatier, not on their employer. They will be selected by our judging panel, a select team of six industry experts. See rules for more details.

Event Dates & Locations: The judging is scheduled for the second week of October, 2008 in New York City. Judging is closed to the public.

The Awards Ceremony Party will be held **November 5, 2008** at 6pm at the fabled 3 West Club overlooking Rockefeller Center and Saint Patrick's Cathedral, New York City. Come meet the winning chocolatiers, sample their chocolate, enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres and wine bar and kick-start New York's chocolate week.

Prize: The six finalists will each receive a citation. Four awards will be given for four categories: *Best Bonbon*, *Best Bar*, *People's Choice* and *Rising Star*. The *Rising Star* award is reserved for both students and emerging chocolatiers (under 30 years of age or in business less than five years). The *People's Choice* award is voted upon at the Awards Ceremony. All awardees will receive certificates with engraved medallions and commemorative photographs. Three *Honorable Mention* certificates also will be bestowed.

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Competition Rules

1. **Theme:** The theme of the 2008 Next Generation Chocolatier Competition is *salty sweets*, drawing upon the growing popularity of salt to extend the flavor and/or texture of chocolate confections. Salt must be integral to the creation of the chocolate piece.
2. **Samples:** Eligible samples include bonbons and bars.
3. **Awards:** There are four awards:
 - a. *Best Bonbon:* balancing salt and chocolate flavors
 - b. *Best Bar:* balancing salt and chocolate flavors
 - c. *Rising Star:* top scoring piece from a new/student chocolatier (bonbon or bar)
 - d. *People's Choice:* top scorer voted upon at the Awards Ceremony

The awardees will receive a certificate with engraved medallion and commemorative photograph.

4. **Eligibility:** The competition is open to artisan chocolatiers; that is, chocolatiers committed to small batch by-hand production techniques featuring the highest quality ingredients. Established professional chocolatiers must work at US-based companies.

The *Rising Star* award is reserved for emerging chocolatiers (under 30 years of age or in business less than five years) and students. All student entries must be accompanied by a signed letter of recommendation from their instructor.

5. **Vetting process:** All competition aspirants should submit their name, short bio, photo sampler of their work -- not necessarily the sample(s) they may submit for judging --- and a photo of themselves. The photos should be digital and in high resolution jpg or png format. These materials should be emailed before August 1, 2008 to Clay Gordon, Head Judge (see application form for e-mail address).

The jury will review the applications and select up to 15 nominations from among the established chocolatiers and up to 5 from emerging/student chocolatiers. Each nominee will be notified by August 27 and sent instructions on submitting their samples.

6. **Submission of samples:** Each nominee may submit up to two different flavors using the theme ingredient. The products may be bonbons and/or bars, but no more than a total of two entries should be submitted. **The samples should not contain any distinguishing marks or logos.** Nominees are expected to submit 36 pieces of each entry for judging. If submitting more than one flavor, each flavor must be packed in a separate box and be clearly identified.

Each box must include a completed entry form (which will be provided to nominees). All samples should be packaged in suitable shipping containers and mailed to the address provided on the entry form. These samples must be shipped to arrive no later than October 3 but no earlier than October 1.

7. **Judging process:** The judging is scheduled for the week of October 6 in New York City. This event is closed to the public. The judging is conducted blind and the results will be sent to all nominees by October 10, 2008. Six finalists will be invited to the Awards Ceremony to compete for the *People's Choice Award*.
8. **Judging criteria:** Each sample will be judged based upon:
 - a. Appropriate bonbons include shell molded, hand rolled and enrobed confections between 8 and 12 grams; bars should be between 50 and 85 grams.
 - b. Each submission will be judged on:
 - Outside appearance, shipping worthiness
 - Originality of filling, if appropriate
 - Balance of flavor with the theme ingredient
 - Texture
 - Balance of taste (sweet, acidic, bitter, salty)
9. **Awards Ceremony:** Vreeland & Associates will provide a \$350 travel stipend. Finalists should bring 200 samples of each finalist flavor and appropriate marketing materials or press kits. Finalists will be provided with a covered display table and signage. Finalists should be dressed in appropriate "chef" attire.
10. **Finality of the decision:** All decisions are final and binding. Participation in this competition is deemed acceptance of all the rules set forth above.
11. **Event Milestones:**

August 1	Deadline for submission of chocolatier contestant information
August 27	Announcement of selection of the 20 nominees
October 1	First day for arrival of samples from nominees
October 3	Deadline for arrival of samples from nominees
Week of Oct 6	Judging event at ICE, NYC
October 10	Announcement of the six finalists
November 5	Awards ceremony at the 3 West Club in NYC

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Contestant Application

Contact Information

Name _____
Company _____
Address _____ Phone _____
Address _____ E-mail _____
State _____ Zip _____

Rising Star Contestant Information

This award is reserved for both students and emerging chocolatiers (under 30 years of age or in business less than five years).

Qualifying information (age or yrs in business) _____
Instructors Name (for student applicants) _____

Submission Materials

All contestants must submit the following information:

1. Completed application form
2. Brief bio
3. Photo sampler of your work (not necessarily the sample(s) you will be submitting)
4. Personal photo
5. Signed letter of recommendation from instructor on school letterhead (if a student contestant)

The photos should be digital and in high resolution jpg or png format. These materials should be emailed before August 1, 2008 to Clay Gordon, Head Judge, at claygordon@pureorigin.com.