

Showcasing chef talent in the school pupils of Thanet

June 2016

The knives were out (but in a good way!) at East Kent College recently. Twelve budding young chefs competed for glory in the 2016 Thanet School Recipe Challenge.

The training kitchen at East Kent College was filled with excitement and mouthwatering cookery smells as the finalists in the recipe competition got to grips with unfamiliar equipment and did culinary battle for their school.

The distinguished judges had whittled the many entries down to just four finalists in each age category. The pupils had each submitted their own original recipe. Each one had to include at least one of the Thanet Earth crops of tomatoes, peppers or cucumbers. The judges, which this year included local resident and BBC Bake Off semi-finalist Chetna Makan, were looking for innovative use of ingredients and exciting flavours.

Just reaching the finals was a significant achievement, and each finalist was rewarded with a signed copy of Chetna's new recipe book along with a trophy and a commemorative apron. The winners bagged a tasty £300 in Tesco vouchers for their school, and they'll see their recipe printed as a recipe card at Tesco.

The chef tutors and college catering students were on hand as ever to reassure and assist in the college kitchens, and our judges – Jason Freedman (Curiously Kentish), Craig Mather (East Kent College), Chetna Makan (Food with Chetna), Mike Corbett (Tesco), Eleanor Mansell (Tesco) and Jo Scott (Broadstairs Food Festival) really enjoyed watching the preparation of the dishes and the all-important tasting of the finished recipes.

Now in its sixth year, the judges were very pleased to see so much creativity in the recipes. There was a record number of dessert dishes in the running, with a cucumber cheesecake recipe declared truly delicious. Mike Corbett, Technical Manager and food guru for Tesco salad products said: "Every year we're amazed by how skilled these young chefs are. Their accomplished use of the delicious products grown at Thanet Earth reinforces how versatile these crops can be. In the Thanet area our Eat Happy Project for schools has really captured the imagination, and we're very pleased that the local schools have embraced how important it is to help children connect with great, healthy food."

SCROLL DOWN FOR PHOTOS

- ENDS -

WINNERS:

Age 6-8

Ryan Gittins,

(Minster Church of England Primary School)

'Our daily favourite tray bake'

Age 9-11

Rhys Richardson

(Cliftonville Primary School)

'Spicy coconut and vegetable curry'

Age 12-16

James Beard

(The Technical School at East Kent College)

'Tomato carpaccio with grilled cheese and ham'

Information for Editors

Tesco was founded in 1919 by Jack Cohen from a market stall in London's East End where he began by selling surplus groceries.

The Tesco Eat Happy Project is our long term commitment to help children have a better relationship with food through field trips, live video chat, hands-on cooking and much more.

To find out more visit www.eathappyproject.com

About Thanet Earth

Making the most of the coastal setting and amazing natural light in Thanet is a development of greenhouses near Birchington. Inside these immense glass structures, expert growers are producing delicious speciality tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers for sale to the public through the UK's multiple retailers.

Thanet Earth is the UK's newest and largest facility of its kind. Not just a grower and packer of salad crops, the site is also a power station, housing Combined Heat and Power technology that's generating electricity for homes in Thanet every day. An environmentally-friendly site that makes use of rainwater harvesting, water recycling and natural pest control, Thanet Earth has a very low carbon footprint.

The site currently houses 4 greenhouses having begun production in 2009. The site will eventually be extended to a total of 7 greenhouses, all growing either tomatoes, peppers or cucumbers.

Tomatoes are grown all year round, using lights in the winter months to aid plant growth. Cucumbers and peppers are produced for 10 months of the year, from February to November.

More information from www.thanetearth.com and their education website for schools: www.discoverthanetearth.com

JUDGES

Craig Mather, East Kent College
Jason Freedman, Curiously Kentish
Chetna Makan, Food with Chetna
Mike Corbett (Tesco)
Eleanor Mansell (Tesco)
Jo Scott, Festival Director, Broadstairs Food Festival

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