

## Culinary Arts FAQ

General Statement: Well this packet is a little smaller than it has been in the past. Why is that? We've been watching the national project schedule pretty closely over the last few years and it came to our attention why our students were coming so close to being medalists but still landing in the back end of the top ten. Maryland has some of the best culinary programs in the nation and this seemed odd. After looking into other states competitions, we realized that we were actually giving our culinary artist's too many guidelines. This year we have some fun changes:

1. We're going to have a grab bag for green vegetables. We've teamed with local produce vendors to supply our competition with fresh options to better challenge you.
2. We've added a spice rack grab bag. You can show us your skills by being loose on what spices go in to your dish.
3. We reduced the amount of vegetable cuts so you can focus more on creating your masterpiece.
4. We have fridges for your chickens! No ice schlepping, no sheet pans wrapped in plastic chicken juice mess... the judges are happy. When you complete your butchering, please bring provided vessel labeled with your number to the butchering judge. They will call your contestant number when completed so may start your broth. Please store chicken in supplied vessel with tape and contestant number in provided fridge during mise en place and lunch.

Tools - You may bring more tools if you want, the judges will use their discretion on if you can use tools that deviate from the list. Tool checks will be conducted upon arrival to contest location. No food substances of any kind will be permitted. We will be providing a communal salad spinner though hand washing your romaine and drying will be acceptable.

Plates: Everyone will receive the same plates. Do not bring your own.

## Caesar Salad

### **Can I make my own permanent emulsification dressing?**

No, we gave you two recipes total for the competition. Please follow both of them.

### **How should I prepare the chicken breast for my entree?**

We can admit we're biased on our chicken. Here's our "perfect chicken"

1. Sear skin side of seasoned chicken in very hot pan with oil. Sear until skin is crisp and deep golden brown. Do not fear the delicious flavor that is known as "Maillard Reaction"
2. Do not flip chicken, just drop entire pan into oven to finish chicken. This results in a crispy skin with a delicate, moist flesh. Finish chicken to 160 degrees and remove from oven to rest briefly. It will carry over to 165 degrees making it safe to consume.
3. Move chicken onto a cooling rack or another clean vessel and finish pan sauce with fond.

With that said, we are open to all chicken as long as it is out of the temperature danger zone. Please show us your "perfect chicken" on competition day.

### **Tips for making your pan sauce.**

Bon Appetit knows what's going on.

Now as a culinarian, you are familiar with the five mother sauces: Veloute, Bechamel, Espagnole, Hollandaise, Tomato Sauce. Three of these sauces can be born from a saute pan with leftover chicken bits and fat. For a veloute pan sauce, you would add more fat to your pan such as butter and heat until melted. Whisk in flour and cook until a blond roux forms. Add broth, wine, herbs, spices and simmer for ten minutes to fortify.

As for the mushrooms... these can come into play in few different ways. You can sauté them and add them to almost any finished sauce. You could deglaze your pan, add mushrooms, saute and then add your broth or white wine to simmer with seasoning. Again, this is a place we left wiggle room for our students to showcase their skills. We want to see them be creative.

## Starch Cookery

Please just follow the directions.

## Green Vegetable Cookery

This year we've decided to provide a grab bag of common green vegetables. They can be cooked or marinated in any fashion that is appropriate for the vegetable. You must yield an amount appropriate for two portions. A grab bag of spices and fresh herbs will also be available.

### **Should the flavor profile of my vegetable compliment my entree?**

Yes, you are composing one whole dish. We are expecting to see your thought process relate these three items.

**If you have any further questions, please email [skillsusamdfoodservice@gmail.com](mailto:skillsusamdfoodservice@gmail.com)**