



CULINARY COMPETITION

Competitor Handbook

Welcome to the Inaugural Minneapolis Community Culinary Competition!

We have invited you to join us, Kelber Catering, because we are inspired by the creativity and passion that we see in our local farmers' markets, street vendors, and other home-based food businesses, and are excited to have you participate in this year's competition. This handbook contains everything you need to prepare, compete, and succeed.

Benefits to you, as a competitor:

- Personal development
 - Gain confidence in your skills
 - Receive professional and constructive criticism, focused on growth and improvement
- Professional growth
 - Network with other home-based and professional culinary professionals
 - Gain insights from other competitors and judges
- YOUR NAMED ITEM on a Minneapolis Convention Center Menu for a year!
 - The WINNER of the competition will have their item on the menu for an entire year
 - Kelber Catering will assist with naming the dish and creative marketing collateral to tell the winners food stories
 - \$5,000 to the Winner in Professional and Novice Categories

Event Date: December 10, 2026

Location: Minneapolis Convention Center

Check-in Time: 2:00pm

Competition Start Time: 4:00pm

1. Competition Overview

Mission & Purpose

Mission Statement

Our mission is to celebrate culinary creativity, foster community engagement, and elevate local talent by providing a dynamic platform where food creatives of all backgrounds can showcase their skills, share their stories, and inspire others through the art of food.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this community culinary competition is to bring people together through a shared passion for food while supporting local chefs, promoting cultural diversity, and encouraging mentorship between seasoned professionals and emerging talent. Through friendly competition, collaboration, and innovation, we aim to strengthen community connections, highlight regional flavors, and create memorable experiences that nourish both body and spirit.

Categories

- Novice
- Professional

Judging Criteria

Competitors will be evaluated based on:

- Dish Complexity
- Presentation
- Flavor
- Representation of the individual cook

(Refer to official rubric provided separately.)

2. Eligibility

- Age requirements: must be 18 or over
 - Professional: Current or former Chef, Cook
 - Novice: Someone who has never cooked professionally
 - Required documentation with application on October 15, 2026: Resume or Bio on each competitor. This information will be fact checked for accuracy. Any incorrect information may result in automatic disqualification.
 - Registration deadline **October 15, 2026**
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3. Competition Rules

General Rules

- All competitors must check in by designated time
- Late arrivals may result in point deductions or disqualification
- Professional conduct is always required

Food Safety

- Proper handwashing required
- Gloves required when handling ready-to-eat foods
- Time and temperature compliance mandatory (monitored by Kelber Catering Inc. Culinary team in conjunction with the Minneapolis Health Department)
- No cross-contamination

Failure to comply will result in disqualification.

4. Kitchen & Equipment

Provided by Organizers

- Tables
- Basic prep area
- Standard kitchen equipment; grill, stove top, ovens
- Power access
- Sink access
- Refrigeration access
- Cutting Boards
- Bar Towels

Competitors Must Bring

- Specialty tools
- Knives
- Small wares
- Plating materials
- 1 assistant or helper is permitted

All equipment must meet safety standards.

5. Ingredient Policy

Competitors supply their recipe of ingredients prior to the competition entry deadline of October 15, 2026

If you are bringing ingredients:

- Must arrive properly labeled
- Your recipe Pre-prep guidelines must be strictly followed
- No pre-cooked proteins
- All items must be reviewed by Kelber Culinary Team and in Serve Safe guidelines

6. Competition Timeline

Activity	Time
Check-In	2:00pm
Kitchen Orientation	2:15pm
Competition Start	4:00pm
15-Minute Warning	5:30pm
Competition End	6:00pm
Judging	6:00pm – 7:00pm
Awards Ceremony	7:15pm

Late plating and presentation to the stage will result in point deductions

7. Plating & Presentation

- Number of plates required: (2)
- Portion size requirements
- Garnish your plate and present for photo opportunity and marketing purposes
- No external props allowed

8. Judging Process

- Judging will be live by Kelber selected judges
- Judges may ask questions of the entrant live on stage
- Scores will be tallied by Kelber CFO and scores are final

9. Awards

- 1st Place \$5000 each category
- People's Choice \$500.00 – determined by QR code voting on site
- KCI Scholarship Winner - \$5000.00 to be awarded to a student who is enrolled or starting in a Minneapolis based culinary program

10. Code of Conduct

Competitors must:

- Always demonstrate professionalism
- Always respect fellow competitors
- Follow all MN Food Safety Rules
- Accept judge feedback respectfully

Unsportsmanlike conduct will result in disqualification.

11. Media & Photography Release

By participating in the City of 10,000 Flavors, competitors grant permission for photography and media usage for promotional purposes.

12. Contact Information

Competition Director: John Doody – Steering Committee Chair
Email: jrd31159@gmail.com
Phone: 612-759-4720

Entrant Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone _____

Dish Name: _____

(be creative)

Recipe: Please attached typed version of your recipe.

Acknowledgment and Hold Harmless Agreement

By submitting an entry and participating in this culinary competition, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to abide by all competition guidelines, rules, and policies. I further agree to accept all decisions made by the judges and organizing committee as final and binding.

I hereby release, indemnify, and hold harmless all sponsors, Kelber Catering, members of the Steering Committee, and their respective affiliates, officers, employees, agents, and representatives from any and all claims, liabilities, damages, losses, or expenses arising out of or in connection with my participation in this competition.

Entrant Signature

Date

Culinary Competition Steering Committee Representative

Date