

Lorcán Leavy Crowned Compass Apprentice Chef of the Year 2022

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Eight Compass apprentice chefs battled it out at the annual Compass Chef of the Year culinary final, held at the Compass Group headquarters in Chertsey. Each chef was presented with a mystery box of ingredients, including chicken, mackerel, and seasonal produce, and tasked to create two courses in just two hours.

After an incredibly close competition, Lorcán Leavy, Apprentice Commis Chef at a Restaurant Associates site in the City, was crowned Compass Apprentice Chef of the Year 2022. His winning menu was a starter of Charred Mackerel, Fennel and Baby Beetroot, followed by Roasted Chicken Breast with Leek and Asparagus. Dylan Patel, Apprentice Chef de Partie at Restaurant Associates and Joao Fioribelli, Apprentice Professional Cookery Chef at Compass Ireland came second and third respectively.

Lorcán was recruited under an apprenticeship scheme and joined Restaurant Associates seven months ago, he is studying his Level 2 Commis Chef apprenticeship at Westminster Kingsway College. He was absolutely thrilled to take home the trophy and commented: "I'm really happy to have won, it's been a really good learning experience and has taught me to stay calm under pressure."

Places in the final were earned by competing in regional and semi-final competitions earlier this year. All competitors will be part of the brigade of chefs to cook at the annual Apprenticeship of the Year special dinner at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in July, where Lorcán will cook his winning menu for over 100 VIP guests.

Head of Apprenticeships and Early Careers at Compass Group UK & Ireland, Jonathan Foot, said of the competition: "I'm blown away each year by the standard of cooking from our apprentices, especially with

them only having 24 hours to create a menu from the mystery box. The Compass Apprentice Chef of the Year competition presents our apprentice chefs with a fantastic opportunity to work under pressure and apply the skills and knowledge that they've learnt as part of their apprenticeship qualification.

The culinary competition was judged by Michelin Chef and Compass Ireland Culinary Ambassador Danni Barry; Mark Belford, Culinary Academy Vice Principal, HIT Training; Compass Group UK & Ireland Culinary Director, Nick Vadis; and B&I Executive Chef, Jason Trotman.

Finalists:

Ainhoa Diez Fernandez – Apprentice Chef de Partie, Chartwells Independent

Carlos Cruz – Apprentice Commis Chef, Compass Ireland

Dylan Patel – Apprentice Chef de Partie, Restaurant Associates

Jacob Banting – Apprentice Commis Chef, ESS Defence

Joao Fioribelli – Apprentice Professional Cookery Chef, Compass Ireland

Laura Smith – Apprentice Senior Production Chef, Chartwells Independent

Lorcán Leavy – Apprentice Commis Chef, Restaurant Associates

Patricio Pienovi – Apprentice Commis Chef, Compass Ireland