



VICTORIA — Canadian chef, Joseph Tran took first place and the Gold Medal as the Canadian National Representative at the prestigious 42nd Concours International des Jeunes Chefs (Young Chefs) Rôtisseurs Competition held in Keelung, Taiwan earlier this month. The competition, open to young cooks under the age of 27, was hosted and sponsored by La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs.

Twenty-two of the world's finest young chefs were chosen for 2018 through selection competitions held in their respective countries, including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Dubai, Finland, Germany, Hungary, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, U.K. and U.S.

Tran, who is currently first cook at Inn at Laurel Point's Aura Waterfront Restaurant + Patio in Victoria, qualified for the competition by winning the Canadian National Jeunes Chefs Rôtisseurs competition last October in Ottawa.

A panel of 12 internationally certified chefs — all members of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs — judged the competition, awarding marks for taste, presentation, originality and kitchen technique. Each competitor was given four hours in which to compose a menu and prepare a three-course meal for four persons using ingredients presented in a "black box". Compulsory ingredients this year included blue crab, lamb rack, chia seeds, banana, tofu, porcini mushroom and cream cheese.

As Tran has a severe shellfish allergy, working with these ingredients posed a particular challenge, however, he has become an expert at blind seasoning seafood.

Tran's menu featured blue-crab-and-shrimp terrine with tofu-chive puff, miso aioli and scallion beurre blanc; marbled lamb rack with salt-baked lamb-cap-stuffed potato, braised leeks and carrot, soy-and-porcini jus; and a dessert featuring banana-and-cream-cheese mousse, citrus sable and white-chocolate-and-passion-fruit macaroon.

As the Gold Medalist, Joseph received a first-place prize of a five-week advanced culinary course at Le Cordon Bleu, Paris and an executive chef attaché case with a complete set of professional knives, from Wüsthof. He also received a set of professional Wüsthof carving knives for his exceptional skills and organization in the kitchen during the competition.