

GRIFFITHS RETURNS TO WELSH TEAM FOR CULINARY BATTLE

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Former junior national chef of Wales winner Gary Griffiths has been recalled to the Welsh National Culinary Team for the Battle for the Dragon contest later this month.



Griffiths (pictured), who works at the The Quay Hotel and Spa, from Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, to compete against New Zealand and Croatia in this year's culinary showdown from February 17-19.

The Welsh National Culinary Team is determined to regain the Dragon Trophy after losing it last year to double Culinary Olympic champions Sweden.

The team is captained by Wayne Roberts, head chef at Portmeirion Hotel, Portmeirion and also includes David Kelman from Lower Slaughter Manor, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gennaro Adaggio from La Dolce Vita, Shrewsbury and Tom Middleton from Hotel Maes-y-neuadd, Talsarnau, Harlech.

The Battle for the Dragon contest is the showpiece event at the Welsh International Culinary Championships at Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, Rhos-on-Sea, Colwyn Bay, which are open to the public free of charge from 9am to 4pm each day from February 17-19.

The three countries will do battle in a Restaurant of Nations hot kitchen competition over the three days, each being allocated three hours to produce a mouthwatering three-course meal for 90 people under the supervision of a panel of international judges.

Wales opens the competition on Tuesday, February 17 followed on Wednesday by Croatia and New Zealand on Thursday. New Zealand's chefs will be cooking Welsh Lamb as their main course, while Wales will be cooking pork and Croatia Welsh Beef.

Following the Battle for the Dragon contest, Wales head to Glasgow to compete at ScotHot from March 2-4. This time the nation will be represented by a under 25 team, which includes Griffiths, Adaggio, Middleton, Chris Owen from the Castle Hotel, Conwy and Adam Nahalewicz from The Quay Hotel, Deganwy.

Team manager Graham Tinsley, co-owner of the Castle Hotel, Conwy and Nant Hall, Prestatyn, said: "We obviously had ScotHot in mind when we selected the team for the Battle and I have chosen the same menu for both competitions.

"Our goal is to develop young chefs in Wales because they represent the future. Both teams are very competitive and it would be great if we could win both competitions."

He said he was particularly looking forward to competing against New Zealand and seeing them cook with Welsh Lamb. "They will get to know what it's like to cook with the best lamb in the world," he added.

The Battle for the Dragon contest is jointly sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government and Hybu Cig Cymru. Tickets are sold for lunch on each of the three days, when diners are able to sample the culinary delights served up by the talented chefs. Tickets may be booked with Jane Cater, events manager at Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, on Tel: 01492 542 305 (office hours) or e-mail j.cater@llandrillo.ac.uk. Lunch costs £29.50 per person with a reduction to £26.50 when booking for all three lunches.

The Welsh National Culinary Team is sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government, C&C Catering Equipment Ltd, Brakes, Unilever Foodsolutions UK, Hybu Cig Cymru/ Meat Promotion Wales, Gourmet Classic Ltd, Villeroy and Boch, Friedr. Dick, Germany, Metcalfe Catering, All Clad and S. A. Brain and Co.

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The Welsh International Culinary Championships, which showcase the best Welsh and international culinary talent, are being sponsored by the Welsh Assembly Government to promote the food and drink industry brand 'True Taste'. Other sponsors are C&C Catering, Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, Clwyd Refrigeration, Welsh National Culinary Team, Dick Knives, Brakes, M & J Seafoods, Ecolab, Nestle Professional, Bwydlyn, Villeroy & Boch, H.N. Nuttall Ltd, iPebble, Llandudno Fruit Renaissance, Flogas, Farmers' Union of Wales, Unilever/Knorr and Imperial Hotel.

For more information visit the Welsh Culinary Association's website at www.welshculinaryassociation.com.

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For more information please contact Graham Tinsley, Welsh National Culinary Team manager, on 07765 404950 or Duncan Foulkes, public relations consultant, on 01686 650818.