

Cooking Competition

1. Introduction

Cooking is an art that connects cultures, brings people together, and reflects the identity of a region. Known globally by different names—Gastronomie (France), Kulinarik (Germany), Cocina (Spain), Cucina (Italy), Kulinariya (Russia), Chūfàng Yìshù (China), Ryōri Geijutsu (Japan), and Pak Kalaa (India)—the art of cooking is an essential part of global heritage.

The Pythian Cooking Competition celebrates traditional and modern culinary talents from around the world. Whether it's age-old recipes passed down through generations or innovative fusion dishes, this competition welcomes all.

2. Eligibility

- Open to individuals of all genders and backgrounds.
- Age Groups:
 - Sub Junior: Below 12 years
 - Junior: 13–17 years
 - Youth: 18–25 years
 - Senior: 26–59 years
 - Masters: 60 years and above
 - Para Chefs: For participants with disabilities (all age groups)
- Participants may be home cooks, culinary students, or professionals.
- Each participant must prepare the dish themselves without outside help.
- In case of group or team categories, team members must be clearly declared and present.

3. Competition Format

- Offline Mode: On-ground cooking under time limit at a designated venue.
- Online Mode: Pre-recorded or live cooking demonstration with recipe and process submitted via video (for international and remote participation).
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4. Themes and Categories

- Traditional/Regional Dish
- Street Food Innovation
- Fusion Cuisine
- Healthy Cooking / Organic or Vegan Dishes
- Dessert Special
- Live Cooking Challenge (on-spot mystery basket)

5. Judging Panel

The jury will consist of:

- Renowned chefs from different countries
- Culinary experts or food critics
- Nutritionists (for health-based categories)
- Cultural or heritage food ambassadors
- One member from the Pythian Games Council for neutrality

No judge shall have any personal or professional association with any contestant.

Judges will remain neutral, and decisions will be final.

6. Public Opinion (Optional)

In select categories, the jury may consider public opinion through:

- Mobile App or Website Voting
- SMS Voting
- Live Audience Hand Raise (for onsite finals)

Public opinion will be taken into account as supporting input, not as the deciding factor.

7. Judging Criteria & Marking (Total: 100 Marks)

- Taste and Flavour (30 Marks): Overall balance, authenticity, seasoning
- Presentation & Creativity (20 Marks): Plating, colour, visual appeal
- Cooking Technique (15 Marks): Skill, method, and use of tools
- Hygiene and Cleanliness (10 Marks): Personal and kitchen cleanliness
- Theme Relevance (10 Marks): Connection to category or theme
- Time Management (5 Marks): Completion within time limit
- Nutritional Value (5 Marks): Health-conscious elements
- Ingredient Usage (5 Marks): Proper use of ingredients with minimal wastage

In online entries, video clarity and narration will also be considered for overall evaluation.

8. Awards and Recognition

- Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals in each category and age group
- Special awards:
 - Best Traditional Dish
 - Best Innovative Recipe
 - Health Champion Award
 - People's Choice Award
- All participants receive e-certificates
- Top performers may be invited for masterclasses, culinary exhibitions, or TV features

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9. Transparency and Neutrality

- All judging sheets will be signed and sealed by each jury member.
- Marks will be independently compiled and averaged.
- No participant will be allowed to contact jury members before or after the contest.
- In case of disputes, a neutral advisory panel will make the final call.