



Ontario's Trevor Ritchie Wins the 2010 Hans Bueschkens Junior Chefs Challenge Sponsored by Custom Culinary, Inc.



Trevor Ritchie accepts the 2010 Hans Bueschkens Junior Chefs Challenge Award From Mike Minor, CEC, AAC, HGT, Custom Culinary, Inc.

It's been a whirlwind ten months for Ontario's Trevor Ritchie. His gold medal at the Ontario Junior Culinary Challenge in Toronto last April led to the gold medal at the Canadian National Junior Culinary Competition in June which led to the gold medal at the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) Hans Bueschkens Junior Chefs Challenge held in Santiago, Chile during January 24-28, 2010. In less than a year, Ritchie won top honors among city, country and international culinary communities, securing this young chef's bright future.

The junior chefs' meals used a mystery basket of ingredients revealed to them just hours before the competition and included the host country's prized Chilean sea bass, to be cooked two ways. Contestants had 5-1/2 hours to prepare, plate and serve a three-course meal to the judges.

Ritchie's meal was roasted Chilean Sea Bass with Oyster Foam–Cold Smoked Chilean Sea Bass with Orange Gelée and Avocado Panna Cotta; a main course of Ribeye en 'Cocotte' wrapped with Prosciutto and layered with Portobello Mushrooms and Oven-Dried Tomatoes, Braised Beef Osso Buco with Shallot Soubise and Roast Garlic Infused Potato Fondant; and ending with a dessert of Dark Chocolate Pistachio Dacquoise, Pumpkin Mascarpone Sphere, Passion Fruit Sorbet, Raspberry Gelée and Caramel Sauce.



Ritchie's dessert: Dark Chocolate Pistachio Dacquoise, Pumpkin Mascarpone Sphere, Passion Fruit Sorbet, Raspberry Gelée and Caramel Sauce

Ritchie chose his boss, former Culinary Team Canada member and Executive Chef of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario's acclaimed Tiara Restaurant, James Olberg as his mentor and competition assistant. Olberg has the highest accolades for his protégé, saying, "In the 22 years I've been a chef, he's the best young cook at this age that I've ever seen. He's a natural leader." In true Canadian style, Olberg claims, "He's the Wayne Gretzky of chefs" for Ritchie's combination of class and technical skill honed at a deceptively young age.



Trevor Ritchie, Restaurant Chef & Chef de Partie, Tiara at Queens Landing Hotel, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

As if to prove Olberg's point, Ritchie commented to colleagues when he returned to his job as Restaurant Chef/Chef de Partie at the Tiara dining room in the Queens Landing Hotel, "My win in Chile was both the late end and the early beginning of a dream to reach the top. It has taught me to respect other talent and to face the competition with a fearless but humble confidence that I will carry with me for the rest of my career."

Olberg cites Ritchie's personality as giving him an important advantage. "Trevor is a calm person. It's not his nature to be nervous."

Custom Culinary's Mike Minor, CEC, AAC, HGT had the privilege of announcing the Hans Bueschkens Junior Chef Award in Chile. As he did so, he echoed the sentiments of the room and the spirit of Custom Culinary's long-standing sponsorship: "All of you are winners." Olberg agrees: "No one lost their composure. [The] students were amazing."

This award is especially meaningful because it honors fellow Canadian Hans Bueschkens who was two-term World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) president and inspiration to many of today's most accomplished young chefs.