



2018 NCRLA Chef Showdown *Presented by Got to be NC Agriculture*

The North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association Chef Showdown is North Carolina's premier culinary competition open to all professional chefs currently working in the state of North Carolina and distilleries based in North Carolina.

The 2018 NCRLA Chef Showdown will take place Monday Aug. 27, 2018, from 5:30 – 9 p.m., at Aria at Founders Hall in The Bank of America Center in Uptown Charlotte, NC, It is held in coordination with the first night of the [North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Expo](#). The NCRL Expo is Monday, Aug. 27 and Tuesday, Aug. 28, at the Charlotte Convention Center.

North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association

The North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association is the uniting force of the North Carolina hospitality industry. The association brings together restaurant and lodging establishments and partners who support our community. NCRLA impacts legislation and policies, cultivates relationships and provides valuable resources to help members run their businesses.

General Competition Rules and Procedures

- North Carolina Chefs and distilleries may apply to compete through an online application process at www.NCChefShowdown.com. Applications must be completed in their entirety and a high-resolution headshot must be attached to the application to be considered for entry.
- Applications will be accepted through May 9, 2018. NCRLA may extend the application period if necessary.
- Past chefs, distilleries and mixologists who have won the grand titles may not apply again until they are two years removed from their awards, even if they have changed venues/employers.
- Submission of participant application gives NCRLA the right to use each applicant's name, likeness and background details as provided above for any promotional materials related to this event, including but not limited to, use on the World Wide Web, printed materials, video, social media, press releases and advertisements. This information will also be shared with event sponsors.
- All participants agree to be photographed or taped for marketing or promotional purposes during the competition event.



- Chefs, distilleries and mixologists competing certify that they meet all eligibility requirements and that participation is not in violation of any employment or other agreement.
- If a chef or mixologist is representing a restaurant, restaurant group, or distillery, NCRLA requests that the restaurant submit a high-resolution version of their logo for marketing and promotional use, and requests that the establishment commit to promote the 2018 NCRLA Chef Showdown using both external and internal marketing channels.
- All participants will be asked to sign liability waivers at each venue. Every effort has been made to make all phases of this competition safe events; however, competitors waive all liability claims that may arise from participation in this event, including injury.
- NCRLA reserves the right to reassign dates or replace chefs should it become necessary (i.e. a chef must dropout, becomes ill, or is in violation of any competition rules, etc.)
- NCRLA will not be liable for cancellation or postponement in the event of acts of God or unforeseen national or regional events that are out of the control of organizers.

General Information for Chefs

- In both the semifinal and final rounds of competition, chefs will be asked to create a dish that represents the individual chef and his or her style.
- Chefs who are entering to compete for the title of NCRLA Chef of the Year must present a savory dish. Chefs who apply to compete for the title of NCRLA Pastry Chef of the Year must present a dessert.
- Sweet or savory, chefs must feature as many North Carolina proteins, produce or products as possible in the dishes presented, both at the regional semifinal rounds and at the final event, highlighting local and regional farmers and producers on the plate.
- From the applications received, a maximum of 36 chefs will be invited to compete in one of three regional semifinal rounds.
- The semifinal rounds will take place in one of three North Carolina regions:
 - Eastern North Carolina, at [Lawson's Landing](#) in New Bern, May 22
 - Western North Carolina, at [Highland Avenue](#) in Hickory, June 4
 - Central North Carolina, at [Vidrio](#) in Raleigh, June 25
(see the map to identify your specific region)
- When applying, chefs must agree to be available the day of their specific regional semifinal round as well as the final event on Aug. 27, 2018, from 5:30 – 9 p.m. at Aria at Founders Hall in The Bank of America Center in Uptown Charlotte, NC.



- Each competing chef may have one sous chef or assistant in the kitchen to help prep and prepare the food to present at both the semifinal rounds and the finals.
- Semifinal round winners will be announced in early July 2018.
- The top-scoring 21 chefs from the three regional semifinal rounds will receive the honor of being invited to participate in the 2018 NCRLA Chef Showdown finals, where they will prepare and serve their dish in sample-sized portions to 350-400 guests who will be in attendance.
- Based on semifinal round scoring, the chefs with the 12 highest scores will qualify to present at the finals to a panel of judges, as well as present a dish for photography purposes. Eight chefs will compete for the title of NCRLA Chef of the Year and four chefs will compete for the title of NCRLA Pastry Chef of the Year.
- The remaining 13 chefs will compete for numerous People's Choice awards and for the distinction of being named one of three 2018-2019 North Carolina Department of Agriculture Chef Ambassadors.
- All winners will be announced the evening of Aug. 27. You must be present to win.
- If at any time, a participating chef is no longer available to compete, the chef or the restaurant must let NCRLA Chef Showdown organizers know immediately. Chefs and restaurants may not sub in another chef.
- In the semifinals, chefs will not be reimbursed by NCRLA for any expenses for food, travel, parking, ingredients or labor associated with participation.
- In the finals, chef will receive a grocery stipend.

[See rules specific to Regional Semifinal Rounds in appendix A.](#)

[See rules specific to the Final event on Aug. 27 in appendix B.](#)

General Information for Distilleries

- From the applications received, six North Carolina distilleries will be invited to participate in the 2018 NCRLA Chef Showdown.
- Each distillery is asked to select a North Carolina mixologist to create a craft cocktail featuring at least one of the distillery's spirits. All participating mixologists must be 21 years of age or older.
- Mixologists must check in at the venue, Aria Founders Hall, between 2 - 3 p.m.
- All participants must be ready for photos and announcements at 4 p.m., at which time they may not leave the building until the completion of the event.



- Each mixologist will be allowed up to two assistants to help create and serve sample sized cocktails to serve 350-400 sample-sized portions to event guests.
- Each mixologist will present to a panel of three judges, serving each a full-sized, fully garnished cocktails, as well as a fourth cocktail to be photographed.
- Based on the vote of the judges, one mixologist will be named 2018 NCRLA Mixologist of the Year. Distilleries and mixologists will also be in the offing for several People's Choice awards.
- No reimbursement is available from the NCRLA for product, travel, lodging, labor or any other expenses accrued for either the distillery or the mixologist's participation in the competition.
- NCRLA will provide each distillery/mixologist pairing with an individual bar, bar floor mats, plastic glasses and cocktail napkins.
- Mixologists are responsible for bringing their own ingredients, tools and other specialty items required to create their cocktail.
- In addition to resourcing from local farms, mixologists will be given a list of Pantry Sponsors who would be delighted to provide North Carolina product for use in cocktails served at the event. Use of these suppliers is not required nor will it be judged any differently than any other North Carolina products, protein or produce.
- Distillery/mixologist are encouraged to decorate booth/table space; however, the use of large signage and banners must be approved in advance by NCRLA Chef Showdown organizers.
- Mixologists may not use open flames or fryers at the competition facility. This includes gas burners, matches and torches of any size.
- Electrical equipment, such as sous vide machines, popcorn machines, mixers, electric coil or solid burners or induction burners are allowed. A list of electrical needs is required to event co-organizer, Heidi Billotto, three weeks prior to the Aug. 27 event.
- A dishwasher on staff at the host venue will be on hand and available to mixologists. Should a mixologist require dish washing, a bus tub is required clearly labeled with the mixologist name and distillery.
- Reimbursement is NOT AVAILABLE for travel, lodging, labor or any other expenses accrued for participation in the NCRLA Chef Showdown, however NCRLA will do its very best to work with area hotels to provide lodging for mixologists & distillery representatives traveling from more than 60 miles away, at the very best discounted rates available. NCRLA will get information to all participants for whom this applies as soon as we have it in hand.



Judging and Scoring

- Scoring at semifinal regional events and the final NCRLA Chef Showdown event for both chefs and mixologists will be based on best use of Got to be NC North Carolina ingredients, execution, creativity, originality, presentation and over all taste.

Parking

- Participants must use the Bank of America Center loading dock to bring coolers and equipment into Aria at Founders Hall and then must move their cars to park in the adjacent deck.
- Each participating chef, sous chef, mixologist and distillery will receive one complimentary parking space in the Bank of America Center garage, adjacent to the venue, for the afternoon and evening of Aug. 27.

Event Tickets

- The regional semifinal events are not open to the public. Please refer to the rules specific to regional semifinal rounds for guest information.
- Tickets for the 2018 NCRLA Chef Showdown may be purchased online at www.NCChefShowdown.com. There are no discounted rates for 2018 NCRLA Chef Showdown tickets.
- Participating chefs, sous chefs, mixologists, two bar assistants, and one distillery representative are not required to purchase tickets for the event.
- Each participating chef, sous chef, mixologist, mixologist assistant, and distillery representative will receive one (1) plus-one ticket to the 2018 NCRLA Chef Showdown.

Questions? Call or email Heidi Billotto, NCRLA Chef Showdown host and co-organizer, at 704.502.4439 or hinc@carolina.rr.com OR Mindy Wharton, NCRLA co-organizer and NCRLA Director of Marketing and Business Development, at 919.277.8585 or mwharton@ncrla.org.



APPENDIX A.

Additional Chef Rules and Information for Regional Semifinals:

- Participating chefs in each region will present to a panel of judges. A chef will present every 20-30 minutes or so throughout the day.
- Once chefs have been selected to participate in one of the semifinal rounds, each chef will be assigned a specific presentation time.
- Chefs and their assistants are asked to arrive at the regional host venue 1 hour prior to their presentation time.
- Chefs will be provided with a list of available equipment in the host venue kitchen. Otherwise, chefs are responsible for bringing their own ingredients, tools and other specialty items required to create their dish.
- Chefs may not use permanent or portable oil fryers.
- Chefs must submit the name of their dish and recipe two weeks prior to their semifinal round.
- Chefs may bring their own plates for presentation, or basic plates will be available from the host venue.
- To save on time and kitchen space, it is strongly suggested that chefs come with mise en place and any other component of the dish that may take some time to bake, cook or freeze, already prepared.
- A dishwasher, on staff at the host venue, will be on hand and available to chefs.
- A server, on staff at the host venue, will be on hand to help the chef serve the judges.
- Chefs are solely responsible for cleaning their work stations and keeping up with all of their belongings.
- While the participating chef is presenting to the judges, the sous chef or assistant will be charged with cleaning the work station and packing things up in a timely fashion, leaving the space in the same condition in which it was found.
- Chefs may bring one sous chef or assistant to help in the kitchen and up to two guests to observe the presentation, take photographs, promote on social media, etc.
- Participating chefs and their guests must leave the venue once an individual chef's presentation is complete.
- No reimbursements for product, travel, lodging, labor or any other expenses accrued for participation will be offered by the NCRLA for the regional semifinalist rounds.



APPENDIX B.

Additional Chef Rules for the Aug. 27 Finals

- Chefs must check in at the venue, Aria Founders Hall, between 2 - 3 p.m.
- All participants must be ready for photos and announcements at 4 p.m., at which time they may not leave the building until the completion of the event.
- Chefs must submit their recipes to event co-organizer, Heidi Billotto, three weeks prior to the competition for approval. To assure that there is a wide assortment of food and flavor, requests to feature specific proteins will be honored on a first-come first-served basis.
- If needed, participating chefs traveling in from out of town may have access to the kitchens, coolers and freezers at either Aria Tuscan Grill or City Smoke Restaurants, both adjacent to the event space. Those arrangements and specific needs will need to be made with Heidi Billotto.
- Participating chefs must be prepared to serve a sample-sized portion to 350-400 guests.
- Chefs who compete for NCRLA Chef of the Year and NCRLA Pastry chef of the year must present six individual-sized plates of their dish to present to the judging panel and for photography.
- Chefs are not required to cook the same dish they did in the semifinal round.
- In addition to resourcing from local farms, chefs will be given a list of Pantry Sponsors who would be delighted to provide North Carolina product for use in dishes served at the event. Use of these suppliers is not required, nor will it be judged any differently than any other North Carolina products, protein or produce.
- Chefs are responsible for bringing their own ingredients, tools and other specialty items required to create their dish.
- While chefs are encouraged to decorate booth/table space, use of large signage and banners must be approved in advance by NCRLA Chef Showdown organizers.
- Chefs may not use open flames or oil fryers at the competition facility. This includes gas burners, matches and torches or any size.
- Electrical equipment, such as sous vide machines, popcorn machines, mixers, electric coil or solid burners or induction burners are allowed. A list of electrical needs is required to be given to Heidi Billotto three weeks prior to the Aug 27 event .
- A dishwasher on staff at the host venue will be on hand and available to chefs. Should chefs require dish washing, a bus tub is required clearly labeled with the chef name and restaurant.



- Chefs are solely responsible for their belongings.
- To receive the grocery reimbursement, participating chefs will be sent a NCRLA reimbursement form, which is required to be returned to NCRLA with receipts of purchased product attached within 30 days after the Aug. 27, 2018 event. Pre-payment is not available.
- Reimbursement is NOT AVAILABLE for travel, lodging, labor or any other expenses accrued for participation in the NCRLA Chef Showdown; however, NCRLA will do its very best to work with area hotels to provide lodging for chefs traveling from more than 60 miles away, at the very best discounted rates available. We will get information to all participants for whom this applies as soon as we have it in hand.