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Seafood News Supply & Trade

Arrington, Altiero named 2012 Maine Lobster Chefs



By SeafoodSource staff

26 October, 2012 - This year's annual lobster cook-off competition in Portland, Maine, yielded two winners for the first time, as a panel of judges along with the audience chose their favorite.

Mackenzie Arrington, of Boothbay Harbor, Maine, and Kerry Altiero, of Rockland, Maine, both won the title Lobster Chef of the Year 2012, with Arrington taking the people's choice award, and Altiero getting the judges' pick.

The event is part of the annual four-day Harvest on the Harbor event, and more than 200 audience members attended and voted. For the first time this year, a panel of judges also took part, including Steve Cory, executive chef at Portland restaurant 555, Kathleen Fleury, assistant editor at DownEast magazine and Sharon Rose, WCSH 6's morning report anchor.

The All-Star Challenge included three chefs who have participated in the Maine Lobster Chef of the Year competition in the past: Kerry Altiero of Cafe Miranda in Rockland, Mackenzie Arrington of The Dutch in New York City, and Melissa Bouchard of DiMillo's on the Water in Portland.

"All three chefs did an exceptional job representing Maine lobster during its peak harvest season and showcasing innovative new ways for people to enjoy Maine Lobster," said Marianne LaCroix, executive director of the Maine Lobster Promotion Council. "We are proud to host this annual competition and pleased to partner with Maine's premier food and wine event, Harvest on the Harbor, which allows us to share this special event with people from all over the country."

Arrington grew up in Boothbay, and now lives and works in New York City. In 2009, Mackenzie graduated from The Culinary Institute of America and won the title of Maine Lobster Chef of the Year that year. He then served as chef ambassador for Maine in 2010, taking third place in the Great American Seafood Cook-off in New Orleans. Most recently, Mackenzie joined Chef Andrew Carmellini's The Dutch restaurant in New York. For Thursday's competition, Arrington prepared Ricotta Gnudi, Maine lobster with truffle, chanterelle and chervil.

Altiero is the chef and owner of Cafe Miranda in Rockland, which he opened in 1993. He and his family renovated the historic Owl Benevolent and Fraternal Club located at 15 Oak St.

in downtown Rockland. For the competition, Altiero prepared Maine Harvest Pasta Salad with Maine lobster, corn, tomatoes and parsley.

Both winning chefs received \$1,000 in prize money and a plaque.

The Lobster Chef of the Year competition is a part of the larger Convention & Visitors Bureau's culinary event Harvest on the Harbor, held annually at Ocean Gateway in Portland. It includes both nationally-recognized chefs using Maine products and local chefs to celebrate Maine as a culinary travel destination. Last fall, more than 4,000 visitors attended the event.

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