



basque culinary world prize

A generation of international chefs have transformed the gastronomic world by shaping their environment beyond the kitchen and expanding their role in society. Some have even redefined their profession by integrating new sensibilities, skills and passions into their approach — introducing new creative and social perspectives.

We have established the Basque Culinary World Prize to celebrate this evolution and to recognize how chefs can improve society through gastronomy. Each year, the prize will be awarded to an exceptional chef who demonstrates —by his or her own transformative initiatives— how gastronomy can be an engine for change.

The rise of gastronomy in recent years has thrust chefs into the spotlight. It is not simply media hype that has seen them elevated to their current position: it is because of their influence in the real world.

Chefs now take seriously all aspects of food from the environment to health and nutrition —areas that were once considered the preserve of science, medicine, the food industry and government.

Is it right for chefs to become involved in sustainability debates, regional development or cultural projects? Should cooks become obsessed by health or hunger, and raise the alarm about the destruction of our planet's biodiversity?

We think so. We are convinced that the world of gastronomy can have an impact when influential chefs take on the responsibilities that come with having a public voice. They can challenge conventional wisdom and, best of all, look for solutions to problems that concern us all.

Our Mission — to connect, to inspire and to mobilise

The Basque Culinary Center is a pioneering international academic institution, created in 2011 with the backing of the most influential chefs in the world. The Centre's mission is to highlight, at an international level, the relevance that chefs can have.

Through our institution, located in one of the world's major gastronomic capitals, we have had the opportunity to bring together a wealth of talent. The Basque region has historically been at the heart of many important trends in modern cuisine. It is therefore a fitting place to hold the very first prize to celebrate the cooks that have chosen to improve society through gastronomy. Through this prize, we want to bring together chefs who can inspire the next generation and to mobilize those chefs determined to make a difference.

The Basque World Culinary Prize will identify these transformative individuals. The working men and women striving to excel. The innovative, creative, determined (and sometimes impetuous) trailblazers that, are, above all, engaged with their community.

As well as identifying and celebrating those who stand out, the prize will make a financial contribution to the winner—which they will be able to invest in developing a community project or good work of their choice.

True pioneers

The members of the International Council of the Basque Culinary Center show the heights that chefs can reach when they transcend the conventional frontiers of their profession.

In Spain, Ferran Adrià totally changed the way we relate to food: he opened up boundless possibilities by promoting exchanges between different disciplines. In haute cuisine, this started an unstoppable revolution.

In France, Michael Bras taught us the challenge and responsibility of a chef to express, through a dish, the time and space in which he or she lives. In Denmark René Redzepi blended new forms of cooking with a strong commitment to sustainability and - with one powerful speech - reinvented Nordic cuisine and tipped the scales in favor of local food culture. He blended new forms of cooking with a strong commitment to sustainability.

Gastón Acurio persuaded the authorities of his country that gastronomy could propel growth in the Peruvian economy, providing an important tool for social improvement with practical initiatives like the Instituto de Cocina Pachacutec.

In Italy, Massimo Bottura opened his kitchen doors to jazz and contemporary art, suggesting that the passions of a chef could also be a source of inspiration. He seized the opportunity of the Expo de Milán 2015 to set up the Refettorio Ambrosiano: a dining hall open to all in which cooks made use of leftovers from expo's pavilions to give food for those in need. This was an ethical manifesto for the 'No Waste' movement—calling for greater awareness of the 1,300 million tons of food thrown away each year. And so on...

If there is something that these professionals and the Basque Culinary Center share, it's the sense of vocation with which they have linked cuisine to other disciplines. And it's their desire to make a positive contribution to their communities through concrete actions.

For this reason, our International Council will be responsible for electing the winner of the Basque Culinary World Prize: Ferran Adrià, Yukko Hattori, Massimo Bottura, Michel Bras, Dan Barber, Gastón Acurio, Alex Atala, Heston Blumenthal, René Redzepi, Enrique Olvera and Joan Roca. Each year, special guests will be added—experts in other diverse fields—to compliment their perspectives during deliberations.

A commitment to academic rigor

We want to capture the work that chefs are involved in throughout the world. Therefore, we openly invite active professionals from the gastronomical world to nominate chefs throughout the website www.basqueculinaryworldprize.com.

The nominees will be chefs who express through their actions, in an exceptional way, how gastronomy can become a valuable engine for change. Each nomination will need to present arguments as to why a candidate is a model of transformation, and demonstrate in detail what the

chef has done to contribute to his or her environment from a variety of perspectives: social, cultural and economic – either locally or internationally.

As an academic institution, the Basque Culinary Center guarantees the transparency of this judging process. It will form a technical committee of BCC staff, who will be joined by specialists from other institutions. This committee will receive nominations: it will analyze, compare and verify the information before choosing a list of twenty finalists to pass on to the jury.

The jury will be composed of fifteen members: eleven from the International Advisory Council of the BCC, and additional members chosen for their experience in other disciplines. The decision on the winner of the Basque World Culinary Prize will be made, by majority vote, by the members of the jury present at the annual session of the International Advisory Council of the BCC in San Sebastian.

The winner will receive a financial contribution of €100,000, which he or she will commit to a project in which gastronomy will serve as an engine of transformation.

Euskadi: a region of *change makers*

Euskadi is a land privileged by its gastronomic resources. Uniquely, it has been the cradle of many important movements and figures in the history of global contemporary cuisine. Although firmly rooted in its traditions, Basque cuisine has always known how to mix tradition and innovation. It has established trends and become a source of inspiration for other global models of haute cuisine.

With an exceptional combination of sea, mountains and fertile valleys - beautiful spaces ideally suited to gatherings - and the people's untiring devotion to culinary excellence, Euskadi is an ideal place to host such an innovative award. Through the Basque Culinary World Prize these values: quality, excellence and a 'talent for transformation' - will be celebrated.

The pleasure of eating and drinking well, respect for local produce, and a love of creativity, innovation and collaboration are the remarkable characteristics of the Basque people that set them apart. It is no coincidence that this is the region with the most Michelin stars per capita, and with some of the most interesting and influential culinary offerings.

Launching the prize in San Sebastian emphasizes the unique spirit of the region. At the same time, it adds to its claims as an exceptional gastronomic destination, which keeps delivering more and better reasons to visit and to enjoy.

The establishment of this prize will also help define the Basque region as *change makers*, creating an impact throughout the world.

