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## Three top chefs select eight young finalists for hottest cook off in the county... the Kent Young Chef Award 2011

The electric live final at K College Tonbridge on Friday 25 November, for the Courier-backed **Kent Young Chef Award 2011**, came one step closer on Thursday 3 November as three top chefs on the judging panel selected the eight most original recipes featuring seasonal and local produce submitted by Kent secondary school students.

The paper judging for the Produced in Kent inspired competition, took place at Woods Restaurant in Tunbridge Wells. Woods Restaurant has not only sponsored the event for a second consecutive year, but the successful restaurant, produce store and bars on The Pantiles will provide the setting for the post-competition Kent Young Chef Award Charity Dinner in January 2012.

Head chef, Tommy Ward of Woods Restaurant, celebrity chef and multi-award-winning Kent restaurateur Richard Phillips gathered around the judging table, together with Brian Whiting, managing director of Whiting & Hammond (who are a brand new sponsor for the 2012 competition, alongside established supporters of the event - kff and Hadlow College). With 63 entries in total from dozens of senior schools across Kent, the three chefs were hard pressed to whittle the entries down to four finalists in the Junior and Senior categories.

Last year's **Junior** champ, **Thomas Perkins** aged 12, of Holmesdale Technology College, in Snodland will be back for a second year with a brand new recipe - *Partridge Breast with Apples, Braised Red Cabbage and a Kent Cider & Crème Fraîche Sauce*. Also selected as a finalist and the youngest entrant ever to enter the competition, **Charlotte Seaman** aged just 10, of St Saviours C of E Junior School, Westgate-on-Sea, near Margate impressed the judges with her adventurous recipe entitled *Seasonal Squash & Garden Grown Artichoke Risotto with Pan Fried Kent Wild Duck & Porcini Mushroom Sauce*.

Ashford School has been a huge supporter of the competition over three years, with the school submitting consistently high entries each year and representatives from Ashford competing in every final. The 2011 event will prove no exception as **Phoebe Icke** aged 11 was picked for her *Rack of Romney Marsh Lamb with Rosemary, Shallots & Beetroot* and fellow pupil **Hana Davis** also 11 was snapped up for her creative fish recipe - *Spicy Seafood Stew*.

In the **Senior** category, the competition welcomed back a very familiar face, **Alice Browning**, who won in 2009 and was a finalist in 2010 too. For a third year running, the Chatham-based St John Fisher Catholic Comprehensive School pupil impressed the judges with the seasonal and local credentials of her recipe as she entered a *Tea-smoked Quail in Apricot & Ginger Glaze* recipe, served with a *Quail's Egg Pasta Stack & Braised Lentils*.

It was a particularly happy ending for **Elliot Bland** aged 13 of Oakwood Park Grammar School, Maidstone. After two consecutive years of just missing out on the live finals, as 'first reserve', Elliot was thrilled to finally win the attention of the judges for the live final with his original *Elliot's Pukka Pork Devine!* Two newcomers in the senior group are **Drew Broster** aged 14 of Swadelands School, in Lenham, Maidstone with his *Forest Lunch* – featuring *Wild Rabbit & Kentish cider and pastry crust*; together with **Jordan Winter** aged 13 of Weald of Kent Grammar School, Tonbridge who will be cooking the second fish dish in the competition *Kentish Roasted Winter Vegetables with Pan Fried Locally Sourced Sea Bass and a White Wine & Dill Sauce*.

The eight finalists will travel to the stunning restaurant and kitchens at K College Tonbridge on Friday 25 November to compete in the live final, which will be screened to family and supporters in the restaurant.

The finalists will then be treated to a two course lunch with the county's movers and shakers and dignitaries, before the Junior & Senior winners are crowned *Kent Young Chefs of 2011* and receive the prestigious Kent Young Chef Award trophies.

The county's longest running and most highly respected young chef competition – which has the sponsorship backing of kff (Kent Frozen Foods), Hadlow College, Whiting & Hammond and Woods Restaurant, Produce Store & Bars in Tunbridge Wells will also ensure all eight finalists enjoy a host of other prizes including an amazing mini chef work experience day in one of Richard Phillips's prestigious three restaurants in the county.

With bumper hampers for the two winners (kindly donated by Woods Produce Store), all eight finalists will also receive a branded Kent Young Chef Award apron, a framed certificate and each recipe will be published on the Produced in Kent website on [www.producedinkent.co.uk](http://www.producedinkent.co.uk)

The two winners will then travel to the beautiful Woods Restaurant on The Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells in January 2012 to design a three course menu and be treated as 'guests of honour' on 19 January at the Kent Young Chef Award 2012 charity dinner, in aid of Hospice in the Weald. Woods Restaurant is already taking individual and group bookings for the evening on 01892 614411 [www.woodsrestaurant.co.uk](http://www.woodsrestaurant.co.uk)

**For more information or images on:**



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