



**2012 GOLDEN ONION**  
**Professional Cooking Competition**  
**Presented by the Vidalia Onion Festival Committee**

**COMPETITION MANUAL**

Please take the time to read this document very carefully and thoroughly.  
All information is subject to change and will be communicated upon revision.

The inaugural Golden Onion professional cooking competition will be held on Sunday, April 22, 2012 in Vidalia, Ga. at the Vidalia Community Center, 107 Old Airport Road, as the official kick-off event of the 35th Annual Vidalia Onion Festival. This professional cooking competition is intended to be an annual event, to be held in conjunction with the Vidalia Onion Festival each April.

The First Place champion will be awarded possession of the Golden Onion trophy for the period of one year; the trophy must be surrendered to the winner of the competition the following year. The First Place champion will also receive a commemorative plaque to retain indefinitely and a cash prize of \$500. Second (Silver) and Third (Bronze) place winners will also receive commemorative plaques plus \$250 and \$100, respectively.

Vidalia® Onions will be provided to competing chefs. All other expenses for travel and food/recipe ingredients are the responsibility of the competing chefs or as individually arranged with the restaurant(s) they represent.

**COMPETITION ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

Lead Chefs who wish to compete must complete and return all required entry documents to:  
**Ingrid M. Varn**, via email to [vacvb@bellsouth.net](mailto:vacvb@bellsouth.net) or fax to 912-538-1466, **no later than Friday, March 16, 2012**. Entrants will be disqualified if all items are not submitted:

- 1) Entry Form** – Must be complete, accurate and fact-checked.
- 2) Photo & Bio** – A high-resolution digital head shot of the Lead Chef (with any required photographer credit information identified) and written bio, for promotional use including distribution to media.
- 3) Competition Recipe** – All recipes submitted must use Vidalia® Onions as a featured ingredient. For consistency we ask that all recipes be written to serve 6 people. Include dish title, ingredients and preparation instructions. Accurate recipe ingredients and preparation instructions will be used as a criterion for judging. Recipes will be published on the Festival website and in other promotional materials.
- 4) Vidalia Onion Quantity Requirements** – Vidalia® Onions will be provided based on quantities requested.
- 5) Entry Fee** of \$100 (reduced to \$50 for members of the Georgia Restaurant Association). This fee will be refunded to chefs who enter but do not make the final roster of competitors.

*All forms and recipes become property of the Vidalia Onion Festival Committee and Golden Onion professional cooking competition for promotional purposes. Credit for recipes will be given to the chefs and their restaurants. It is the responsibility of the chef to ensure accuracy of ingredients and preparation instructions. Chefs retain rights to their own recipes for use in their own restaurants, cookbooks, etc.*

## **COMPETITION RULES & GUIDELINES**

A maximum of 12 chefs may compete. **Entries must be received no later than Friday, March 16, 2012.** Competitors are entered regionally on a first-come, first-served basis; to ensure chefs from across Georgia are able to participate, no more than 5 chefs may participate from any one city. **Contestants selected to participate will be confirmed no later than Monday, April 2, 2012.**

Each competitor is allowed one assistant chef.

Each competitor will have a total of 1 hour to prepare and submit 6 individually plated tasting portions of the pre-submitted recipe. Of the 6 portions prepared, 5 are for the judges' tasting and 1 is for display and photos. Judges will have 10 minutes to evaluate each dish plus additional time after all individual presentations.

### **Competitor Requirements:**

- Competitor must be a lead chef (job titles may include executive chef, chef de cuisine, chef/owner, etc.) for a restaurant in Georgia that is a free-standing restaurant. Restaurants associated with a luxury country club, resort or hotel are also eligible.
- No institutional chefs, i.e. food service distributors, caterers or corporate chefs for chains having 10 or more restaurants.
- Competitor will be responsible for plating up to 6 tasting portions with Vidalia® Onion(s) as an ingredient.
- Competitor is responsible for his or her own travel and ingredient costs. Vidalia® Onions will be supplied, based on the quantities requested during the entry process.

Chefs win the competition, not restaurants. Thus if the First Place champion of the Golden Onion owns or works at multiple restaurants, he or she may choose to rotate display of the trophy at these restaurants at his or her discretion for promotional purposes throughout the year. If the winner of the Golden Onion changes employers during the course of that year, he/she transfers the trophy to the new employer. The First Place champion earns the honor of possessing the Golden Onion for one year and agrees to surrender it the following year to the next champion. The Golden Onion trophy remains the property of the Vidalia Onion Festival Committee and may be revoked at any time for inappropriate use, display or behavior.

### **Ingredients & Tools:**

All competitors will be required to prepare a total of 6 tasting portions.

Limited advanced preparation is allowed. Meats and/or fish can be filleted and proportioned. Vegetables can be peeled and salads may be cleaned and washed but not cut or shaped in any form; beans may be pre-soaked. Exceptions are herbs, shallots and garlic which may be chopped in advance.

No finished sauces are allowed to be prepared in advance; however, flavored oils, original seasonings/spices and basic stocks (beef, veal, chicken, vegetable, or fish) may be brought in as necessary for the recipe.

Competitors must bring their own tools (knives, cutters, pans, etc.) to prepare recipes. No equipment is provided, so competitors must bring any butane burners and/or small electrical table top cooking appliances (microwave, oven, fryer, etc.) and small wares as needed to prepare recipes. It is also suggested that competitors bring any extension cords that may be needed.

Competitors must bring their own dishes (plates, platters, bowls, etc.) to present and display the finished dishes.

### **Work Stations and Cooking Areas:**

A safe and efficient working environment must be maintained at all times.

No branded products may be displayed on cooking stations unless supplied and approved by the Vidalia Onion Festival Committee. This is a strict policy and valuable opportunity available only to products provided by event sponsors as determined by the Vidalia Onion Festival Committee.

No corporate or business branded product names/logos are allowed on chef wear or displayed on working station or promoted through the event in any way. Chefs are encouraged to promote their restaurants, however, so chef wear with restaurant logos are acceptable. Professional attire is expected.

While all competitors may be working within the event staging area, each will be provided with his or her own workstation, which will consist of 6-foot front and back worktables. Trash containers, water, electricity will also be provided.

Competitors will have access to the host property's kitchen sink; in addition, for efficiency, large jugs of water will be located on each back table with a catch bucket underneath.

All competitors are responsible for cleaning, set-up and break-down of personal tools, small wares, china, etc.

### **Competition Schedule:**

Each competitor will have one hour to prepare his or her recipe. The judges will then have 10 minutes to taste and evaluate before the next dish.

The schedule for the 2012 competition is below and is subject to minor changes:

**11:30 a.m. - Chefs arrive**

**12:00 p.m. – Judges arrive**

**12:30 p.m. - All chefs must be set-up and at their stations. All judges must be present**

**12:30-12:50 p.m. - pictures taken, rules reviewed, chefs draw for time slots**

**1:00 p.m. - first chef begins**

**Staggered cook times, 1 hour each contestant with 10 minutes intervals for judging** (thus the second chef begins at 1:10 p.m., third at 1:20 p.m., etc., until the 12th chef begins at 2:50 p.m.; first presentation to judges begins at 2 p.m. and final at 3:50 p.m.)

**4:30 p.m. - Closing ceremony, winners announced and trophy presented**

**Judges' tastings will be blind.** Runners will serve the judges and identify each dish. The judges will have copies of each recipe, however, the chefs' names will not appear on judges' copies.

## **JUDGES**

There will be a total of 5 judges including a food writer, a representative of the Vidalia® Onion industry, and three professional chefs. (Details in future communications.)

While 5 plates are presented to the judges, 1 plated dish will be put on a display table for viewing and photography.

### **Judges scores will be based on:**

- Taste (50%) – Flavor profile and compatibility. Composition and harmony of ingredients. Prepared using appropriate techniques.
- Presentation (25%) – Dish is attractive, proper temperature and correct techniques.
- Creativity (25%) – Dish is unique; if preparing a classic dish, creative ideas have been incorporated.

Failure to adhere to the following factors will significantly reduce scores:

- Vidalia® Onion Flavor – Each dish must incorporate Vidalia® Onions. The onion flavors must be present and not entirely masked by other ingredients. Vidalia® Onions must enhance the dish as an essential element yet need not dominate the dish.
- Recipe Compliance – Chefs must adhere to the recipe submitted in advance and not make last-minute changes. The submitted recipe must be an accurate listing of ingredients and methods of preparations.

While tasting, judges take notes on their individual scorecards; after tasting all entries final scores are calculated and rankings recommended.

## **CONTACTS:**

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