

Denmark's Best Chef and Waiter found at Foodexpo

March 17, 2024

The first day of the Nordic region's largest food fair, Foodexpo, was a major draw, featuring several prestigious competitions. Alongside the Chef and Waiter of the Year, the winners of the Danish Pastry Championship and the Danish Mocktail Championship were also announced. The fair, which this year marks 10 editions over 20 years and hosts more than 450 exhibitors and a wide array of events, is held at MCH Messecenter Herning from March 17-19, 2024.



Bjarke Jeppesen and Andreas Kobs Laursen from Treetop Restaurant in Vejle are the 2024 Chef and Waiter of the Year, celebrating their triumph with a hug. To the left is assistant Magnus Lund Hansen. Photo: MCH/Tony Brøchner.

Foodexpo's first day was a culinary showcase featuring a range of high-profile competitions. Alongside Chef and Waiter of the Year, awards were also given for Denmark's Best Pastry Chef and the winner of the Danish Mocktail Championship. Hosted by MCH Messecenter Herning from March 17-19, 2024,

the event marks its 10th edition over 20 years and features more than 450 exhibitors and a multitude of events.

The culinary competitions at Foodexpo Sunday featured some of the most prestigious names in the industry. Organized by 3F and HORESTA, the Chef and Waiter of the Year awards were presented to chef Bjarke Jeppesen and waiter Andreas Kobs Laursen, both from Treetop Restaurant in Vejle. The applause was resounding as the names were announced by host Timm Vladimir, and the joy was palpable in the wake of their victory.

"It's a huge relief, and we're so happy and proud – it's hard to hold back the emotions," said Bjarke Jeppesen. "It's a very prestigious club we've now joined, one that can't be taken for granted even if you strive for it. But you win if you train, and we always try to be the best version of ourselves – even in daily life. I'm tired and exhausted, but I'm also maximally happy and relieved," he concluded.

"It's incredibly significant to win this award," added Andreas Kobs Laursen. "The judges were five renowned chefs with two and three Michelin stars, so it's incredible to receive this acknowledgment from them. On a scale of 1 to 10, I'm 1,000 happy – there's so much training behind it, so it's a huge relief."

This is the first time the winners of both Chef and Waiter of the Year have come from the same restaurant.

Denmark's Best Pastry Chef and Mocktail Bartender

On the opening day, BKD - Denmark's Association of Bakers and Pastry Chefs, also crowned Denmark's Best Pastry Chef. The winner, Josephine Kirstein Hansen from Andersen Bakery in Copenhagen, was greeted with enthusiastic applause from the crowd.

Additionally, Foodexpo held the Danish Mocktail Championship, organized by Mixology International, with Manuel Lică from bartendercopenhagen.com taking the title. Sune Urth, a jury member and Head of R&D at Copenhagen Distillery, praised the winning mocktail's unique flavor profile, noting that "Manuel's mocktail had a bitterness reminiscent of an Amaro Highball with Fernet Branca and tonic. It was fascinating to taste a mocktail that had a strong flavor and a level of resistance that you'd expect from a cocktail with alcohol."

A Continuing Tradition

While professional competitions play a central role at Foodexpo, which celebrates its 10th edition over 20 years, the fair also features exhibitors from across the food industry, alongside a host of other activities.

Foodexpo was first held in 2004, combining three separate fairs, Interfair, Nordbag, and Hotel, Restaurant & Catering, with the vision of uniting the industry into a single large event. This vision is particularly appreciated by MCH A/S CEO Georg Sørensen, who was involved in merging the three fairs and is pleased to see that Foodexpo remains at the forefront of the industry.

"I'd like to congratulate the 13 industry associations that support Foodexpo on the opening of their 10th fair over 20 years and to thank them for their continued support in developing Foodexpo into the largest food fair in the Nordic region, and for hosting some of the most significant industry competitions," Georg Sørensen stated. "I'm delighted to experience the unique atmosphere in all our exhibition halls, where professionals come together to see, smell, hear, taste, touch, experience, and do business. Thanks to all partners and exhibitors for everything you bring to the fair. Visitors have a lot to look forward to in the coming days."

Competitions and Sustainability

The following days at Foodexpo will be packed with events, including the Danish Best Baker, the Danish Cocktail Championship, a range of student competitions, Nordic Chef and Waiter, and even Denmark's Best Rum Ball.

Visitors can also attend a variety of presentations and workshops, and delve deeper into sustainability in the food industry. The event features a hall titled "Nature's Pantry," focusing on organic and plant-based solutions.

Foodexpo takes place at MCH Messecenter Herning from March 17-19, 2024. For more information, visit foodexpo.dk and request press accreditation [here](#).

The fair is developed in close cooperation with 13 industry associations and organizations: BFS - Association for Large Kitchen Equipment, BKC - Association for Coffee and Convenience Solutions, BKD - Denmark's Association of Bakers and Pastry Chefs, Denmark's Fishmongers, De Samvirkende Købmænd, DSM - Danish Butchers Association, Association of Cantinas and Kitchens, Food Club, HORESTA, Diet and Nutrition Association, LBI - Association of Bakery Machines and Inventory Suppliers, MLDK - Brand Suppliers Association, and Nærbutikkernes Landsforening.

Competition Winners at Foodexpo March 17, 2024

Chef of the Year – Bjarke Jeppesen, Treetop Restaurant, Vejle

Waiter of the Year – Andreas Kobs Laursen, Treetop Restaurant, Vejle

Denmark's Best Pastry Chef – Josephine Kirstein Hansen, Andersen Bakery, Copenhagen

Danish Mocktail Champion – Manuel Lică from bartendercopenhagen.com