



## TALENT, CREATIVITY AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF GASTRONOMY: NELSON FREITAS IS THE WINNER OF THE S.PELLEGRINO YOUNG CHEF ACADEMY AWARD 2023

*Representing Iberian Countries, Nelson Freitas stood out amongst the 15 regional finalists and won the title with the signature dish “Crispy red mullet, sea urchin and homemade black garlic” during the memorable two-day Grand Finale event in Milan.*

**Milan, 6th October 2023** – On the evening of 5 October the winner of the [S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy Award 2023](#) was announced, thus closing the fifth edition of the world’s most thrilling talent search for young chefs, created by the **S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy**. After a two-year competition, the Grand Finale took place in Milan where the 15 promising young chef winners of the competition in their respective regions brought their best, demonstrating their talent, creativity and vision for the future of gastronomy. **Nelson Freitas wowed the esteemed Grand Jury and won the prestigious S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy Award 2023.**

**Representing Iberian Countries**, the young chef Nelson Freitas, from Portugal, competed with his outstanding signature dish **“Crispy red mullet, sea urchin and homemade black garlic” conceived in partnership with the mentor Filipe Carvalho**. The Grand Jury made up of the world-renowned chefs **Riccardo Camanini, Hélène Darroze, Vicky Lau, Pía León and Nancy Silverton** praised Freitas for his refined culinary skills, selection of ingredients and the beauty of the dish in addition to the strong messages he/she conveyed. Alongside the previous S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy Award winners, **Jerome Ianmark Calayag (2021), Yasuhiro Fujio (2018), Mitch Lienhard (2016) and Mark Moriarty (2015)**, Freitas now has a path open to bring his talent and his work to the next level and shape the evolution of gastronomy.

Together with the S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy Award, three collateral prizes were assigned to reflect S.Pellegrino’s belief in the transformative power of gastronomy and its positive impact on society through food. The **Fine Dining Lovers Food for Thought Award**, voted for by Fine Dining Lovers readers, was given to **Ian Goh** with his ‘Heritage lamb’ as he best communicated his history, beliefs and values with his dish. **Liu He-Sen**, with his signature dish ‘Homemade oyster sauce with Shandong wagyu’, was the winner of the **Acqua Panna Connection in Gastronomy Award**, as he best embodied a balance between tradition and evolution in his signature dish whilst expressing the gastronomic heritage of Chinese food culture. Finally, **Artur Gomes**, with his “‘Vale das Lobas’ celeriac’, received the **S.Pellegrino Social Responsibility Award** assigned by The Sustainable Restaurant Association for the powerful message of sustainability conveyed through his signature dish.

**S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy** was created to help discover the great chefs of tomorrow and show them how to express their full potential through education, mentoring and experience opportunities. S.Pellegrino believes that gastronomy goes well beyond the table and that young chefs are those who will drive the evolution of the sector. The S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy Competition attracts hundreds of talented young chefs all over the world willing to make a difference and in particular **this edition marked a participation record: 166 chefs passed the preliminary selections amongst the 15 regions involved** and had the chance to engage with top chefs and show their potential in an international context.

**Stefano Bolognese, Sanpellegrino International Business Unit Director:** “This edition of the S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy Competition exceeded our expectations. The impressive participation of young chefs all over the world means a lot to us and we are proud to see that so



many talents share the S.Pellegrino belief to make the world a better place through food, it's all in their hands to make it possible. The Grand Finale event in Milan was a further confirmation of how together something great can happen and we would really like to thank all of those who came to Milan for two days of inspiring dialogues, idea exchange, and of course, excellent cooking. Our congratulations to Nelson Freitas who stood out in a very tough last competition, wowing our esteemed Grand Jury and winning the title. We wish Nelson a future full of opportunities and that he will treasure what he learned in this exciting journey to contribute to the evolution of the sector. Of course, we're thankful to all the promising young chefs who put all of themselves into their work and into their growth path with their mentors. We wish them the best of luck in their careers and to always apply their passion and values to every step of their work. This edition is now over but we would like to think of it as a new beginning for the young chefs and our commitment won't stop here as more details about the next edition of the S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy Competition are coming soon."

S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy Competition 2022-23 highlights are available on S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy and Fine Dining Lovers channels. To discover more about the exciting talent search please visit: [sanpellegrinoyoungchefacademy.com](https://sanpellegrinoyoungchefacademy.com).

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#### **About S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy**

Gastronomy has the potential to transform society, shaping a more inclusive, more sustainable future. But doing so requires talent. That's why S.Pellegrino has created S.Pellegrino Young Chef Academy, a platform to attract, connect and nurture the next generation of culinary talents. An environment that will empower them through education, mentoring and experience opportunities, as well as through the renowned global competition.

The Academy opens its doors to members from over 70 different countries, ensuring that talent is not constrained by geography, ethnicity or gender. This is a place where passionate young chefs interact with the most influential players in global gastronomy, and where together they cultivate an inspiring culinary community.

To discover more please visit: <https://www.sanpellegrinoyoungchefacademy.com/>

#### **About S.Pellegrino and Acqua Panna**

S.Pellegrino, Acqua Panna and Sanpellegrino Italian Sparkling Drinks are international trademarks of Sanpellegrino S.p.A., which is based in Milan, Italy. Distributed in over 150 countries through branches and distributors on all five continents, these products represent quality, excellence by virtue of their origins and perfectly interpret Italian style worldwide as a synthesis of pleasure, health and well-being. Founded in 1899, Sanpellegrino S.p.A. is the leading company in the beverage sector in Italy with its range of mineral waters, non-alcoholic aperitifs and drinks.

Sanpellegrino has always been committed to enhancing this primary good for the planet and works responsibly and passionately to ensure that this resource has a secure future.

**For more information:**

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