

Jamaican chefs score silver at Americas Chef Competition

Local chefs Dennis McIntosh and Conroy Arnold, who participated in the JAMPRO organised mission to the Americas Food and Beverage (AFB) show, were silver medal winners at the Americas Chef Competition, which was held during the trade show at the Miami Beach Convention Centre in November.

The two-day competition, which is one of the highlights of the largest Americas-focused trade show in the hemisphere, saw the Jamaican duo going up against US and international teams in a culinary battle. Berletta Henlon Forrester, JAMPRO's Export Promotion Manager, noted that the participation of local chefs in the competition served to raise the profile of Jamaican cuisine and food products at the show.

"JAMPRO invited the chefs to enter the competition, as we saw the opportunity to highlight Jamaican cuisine and culinary skills on an international stage. We facilitated their application and also secured sponsorship of their airfare and accommodation," she stated.

Dennis McIntosh, President of the Culinary Federation of Jamaica and Executive Chef at Cardiff Hotel and Spa in Runaway Bay, St Ann, and Conroy Arnold, who has worked at Goldeneye and extensively in New York, presented a sumptuous menu that was distinctly Jamaican.

"I am personally very passionate about developing Brand Jamaica from a culinary standpoint, and at this event, I felt that it was important for us to reflect our rustic cuisine in the taste profile of our dishes," said McIntosh.

Facing the challenge of preparing six plates of appetisers, six plates of salads and six plates of entrées in 60 minutes, the Jamaican team started with a chicken breast stuffed with callaloo, served with a country-style vegetable ratatouille and callaloo puree. For the second dish, they prepared a version of escoveitch red snapper with a spicy vegetable salad and fried sweet potato wedges.

The main course featured loin of pork with light jerk marination, pickled pineapple with spicy mustard drizzle and seasonal vegetables. Presenting buffalo as a "mystery meat", the Jamaican team pan-seared the steak to seal in the natural juices and served it with a pomegranate and sorrel sauce.

In addition to showcasing Jamaica's culinary excellence, the AFB show provided significant exposure for six of the fifteen companies that were recently selected to participate in JAMPRO's Enterprise Development for Export Growth (Export Max) programme. The companies included Tijule, Southside Distributors, Central Food Packers, Gray's Pepper Products, Canco and Southern Fruits. Other participating companies within the JAMPRO sponsored Jamaica Pavilion were Grace Foods International, Continental Baking Company, First World Imports (Distributors of Walkerswood and Caribbean Dreams), Coza International (Distributors of Tru-Juice), Belcour Preserves and Coffee Solutions.

Delaine Morgan, Vice President, Trade and Business Development, JAMPRO, who led the mission, stated that JAMPRO had been working assiduously to promote local exports in overseas markets by attending strategic events such as the AFB show.

"AFB presents our Jamaican companies with the opportunity to showcase the best that Jamaica has to offer. We feel that this is the perfect vehicle for fostering meaningful business relationships and linkages with food distributors, importers, retailers, wholesalers while gaining vital trade and market exposure," she declared.

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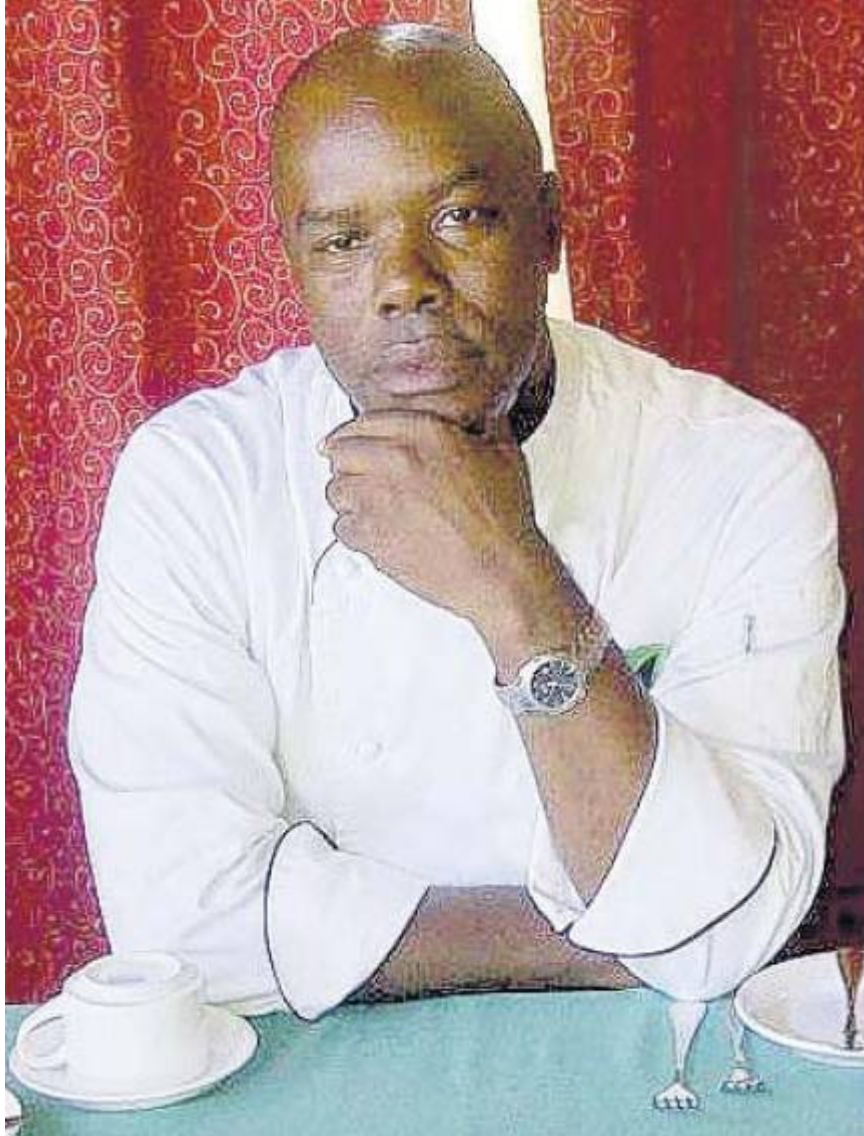
The AFB show is organised by the World Trade Centre located in Miami, Florida, and is the only event of its kind dedicated to the food and beverage industry in the Americas. It targets buyers from the entire region, which gives the participating Jamaican companies the opportunity for crossover into these target markets.



Escoveitch red snapper with a spicy vegetable salad and fried sweet potato wedges.

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2011 December 22



Dennis McIntosh, President of the Culinary Federation of Jamaica and Executive Chef at Cardiff Hotel and Spa in Runaway Bay, St Ann, teamed up with Chef Conroy Arnold to represent Jamaica at the Americas Chef Competition in Florida. The Jamaican duo earned silver medals.

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2011 December 22



Loin of pork with light jerk marination, pickled pineapple with spicy mustard drizzle and seasonal vegetables.



Chicken breast stuffed with callaloo, served with a country-style vegetable ratatouille and callaloo puree.

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2011 December 22