

2018 James Beard Restaurant and Chef Awards

Entry Deadline: 12/1/2017 11:59:00 PM Eastern Time

The Restaurant and Chef Awards were established in 1990 by the James Beard Foundation.

Nominee Selection and Judging

Anyone can submit a chef or restaurant for consideration during the online open call for entries starting October 15, 2017. There is no entry fee.

The Foundation received more than 24,000 entries for the 2017 Restaurant and Chef Awards.

The Restaurant and Chef Committee produces a ballot with approximately 20 semifinalists in each category. This ballot is distributed online to a voting body of over 300 previous James Beard Restaurant and Chef Award winners; 250 panelists divided evenly among 10 regions (see below); and 18 members of the Restaurant and Chef Award subcommittee. All votes count equally and are tabulated by the independent accounting firm Lutz & Carr.

The 20 semifinalists in each category are announced on February 14, 2018. After this announcement is when the first ballot goes out electronically to the judges. The 5 semifinalists with the highest number of votes become the nominees. The 5 nominees in each category are announced on March 14, 2018.

A second ballot is then distributed to the same voting body to determine which nominee receives the most votes. Winners are announced at the Awards ceremony on May 7, 2018 in Chicago.

Criteria for Restaurant and Chef Awards

1. Outstanding Restaurateur

A working restaurateur who sets high national standards in restaurant operations and entrepreneurship. Must have been in the restaurant business for at least 10 years. Must not have been nominated for a James Beard Foundation chef award in the past five years.

2. Outstanding Chef (Presented by All-Clad Metalcrafters)

A working chef in America whose career has set national industry standards and who has served as an inspiration to other food professionals. Must have been working as a chef for the past five years.

3. **Outstanding Restaurant** (Presented by Acqua Panna® Natural Spring Water)
A restaurant in the United States that serves as a national standard bearer of consistent quality and excellence in food, atmosphere and service. Must have been in operation 10 or more consecutive years.
4. **Rising Star Chef of the Year** (Presented by S.Pellegrino® Sparkling Natural Spring Water)
A chef age 30 or younger who displays an impressive talent and who is likely to make a significant impact on the industry in years to come.
5. **Best New Restaurant** (Presented by True Refrigeration®)
A restaurant opened in the calendar year before the award will be given that already displays excellence in food, beverage, and service, and that is likely to make a significant impact in years to come.
6. **Outstanding Pastry Chef**
A chef or baker who prepares desserts, pastries, or breads in a restaurant, and who serves as a national standard bearer of excellence. Must have been working as a pastry chef or baker for the past five years.
7. **Outstanding Baker**
A chef or baker who prepares breads, pastries, or desserts in a retail bakery, and who serves as a national standard-bearer of excellence. Must have been a baker or pastry chef for at least five years.
8. **Outstanding Service** (Presented by Goose Island Beer Company)
A restaurant in operation five or more years that demonstrates high standards of hospitality and service.
9. **Outstanding Wines, Beer, or Spirits Professional**
A beer, wine, or spirits professional who has had a significant national impact on the restaurant industry.
10. **Outstanding Wine Program**
A restaurant in operation five or more years that serves as a national standard bearer for excellence in wine service through a well-presented wine list, knowledgeable staff, and efforts to educate customers about wine.
11. **Outstanding Bar Program**
A restaurant or bar that demonstrates excellence in cocktail, spirits, and/or beer service.
12. **Best Chefs (10 Regions)**
Chefs who have set new or consistent standards of excellence in their respective regions. May be from any kind of dining establishment and must have been working as a chef for at least five years, with the three most recent years spent in the region.

The Regions

Great Lakes (IL, IN, MI, OH)

Mid-Atlantic (D.C., DE, MD, NJ, PA, VA)

Midwest (IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD, WI)

New York City (Five Boroughs)

Northeast (CT, MA, ME, NH, NY State, RI, VT)

Northwest (AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY)

South (AL, AR, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, FL, LA, MS)

Southeast (GA, KY, NC, SC, TN, WV)

Southwest (AZ, CO, NM, OK, TX, UT)

West (CA, HI, NV)

America's Classics

A restaurant with timeless appeal, beloved in its region for quality food that reflects the character of its community. The establishment must have been in existence at least 10 years and be locally owned; preferably it is also informal and moderately priced.

Each year, five winners are chosen by the Restaurant and Chef Awards Committee. Winners are announced in March.