

Ethiopian Lady wins first-ever Grand Chef Competition

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LONDON

An Ethiopian Culinary Competition came to a climax with style on Friday 3rd August as celebrity chef, Levi Roots and Ethiopian chefs from London's five star hotels, Alemayehu Seyoum and Kahsaye Yehdego, declared Mrs Genet Gebre Mariam winner of the *Grand Ethiopian Traditional Cuisine Contest 2012*, in the presence of invited guests that included members of Ethiopia's Olympic Delegation to London 2012. Mrs Rahel Negasi and her assistant Mrs Yalem Bayu came second while Mrs Mulu Tesfaye clinched third place.

The Competition, held at the Ethiopian Embassy, was part of the Embassy's ongoing Cultural Olympic designed to showcase Ethiopia's diverse cultural assets during the course of London 2012 Olympic Games.



Top: Mrs Genet Gebre Mariam winner of the *Grand Ethiopian Traditional Cuisine Contest 2012*, 1st Runner Up, Mrs Rahel Negasi and her assistant Mrs Yalem Bayu (left) and 2nd Runner Up Mrs Mulu Tesfaye (right)



H.E. Ambassador Berhanu Kebede, Ethiopia's Ambassador to Great Britain and Scandinavian Countries, awarded prizes to the winners. In his opening remark, the Ambassador echoed the sentiment he had expressed at the qualifying round: "the mere fact that they had taken the trouble to take part in the first ever Ethiopian Culinary Competition makes them all winners." He said that the aim of holding such an event was to promote Ethiopian cuisine to a wider public, as well as to offer Ethiopians a platform to showcase their culinary skills.



A total of eleven competitors (10 ladies and a gentleman) took part in the qualifying round, held on Monday 30th July. Competitors laid out for the judges mouth-watering dishes, ranging from Doro-wot to Kitfo to Tihlo. Five of competitors who had scored the highest points qualified to the final round where they demonstrated how they cooked one of the three dishes they had prepared earlier, while the runners-up took their defeat with exemplary grace.



Mrs Genet's marinated beef ribs garnished with green pepper and tomatoes was the "winner dish" while *Hilbet* and *Tihlo* with a variety of vegetarian dishes came second and third winning dishes respectively.



H.E. Commissioner Abdeta Yadeta, Ethiopia's Commissioner for Sports handed out Certificates of Acknowledgement to the three judges, while the Hon. Amanuel Abraham, MP and Executive Committee Member of the Ethiopian Athletics Federation, and Woizero Rahel Asefa, Area Manager of Ethiopian Airlines, handed out Certificates of Participation and consolation prizes to runners up of the final and qualifying rounds respectively.



Levi Roots (centre) with Ethiopian chefs, Alemayehu Seyoum and Kabsaye Yehdego

At the end of the event Levi Roots spoke on how delighted he was on tasting “excellent dishes from a country with which he has sentimental attachments.” He promised to visit Ethiopia in the near future. In expressing their delight at taking part in the event, the two Ethiopian chefs Ato Alemayehu Seyoum and Ato Kabsaye Yehdego, spoke of being spoilt for choice in the discharge of their duties.

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