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**Washoku World Challenge 2016**  
**A Japanese cooking contest for international chefs**  
**The No. 1 overseas Japanese cuisine chef is Cheong Cherng Long from Malaysia**

**TOKYO, Japan, December 20, 2016** — On December 15 the final round of Washoku World Challenge 2016, a Japanese cooking contest for international chefs hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, was held in Tokyo and finalist Cheong Cherng Long (31 years old) from Malaysia won the crown of No. 1 overseas Japanese cuisine chef (Gold Prize). The Silver Prize was won by finalist Shaun Presland (45 years old) of Australia. The Bronze Prize was won by finalist Songkran Comnew (35 years old) of Thailand.



Cheong Cherng Long from Malaysia receiving the Gold Prize Crystal Trophy from State Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ken Saito at the Awards Ceremony held in a Tokyo hotel

The original dish prepared by Gold Prize winner Cheong Cherng Long was Akamutsu no kenchin yaki. This is a dish prepared by roasting tofu and winter vegetables wrapped in akamutsu (rosy seabass), which is delicious in winter. This time the competitors were required to use winter vegetables and Cheong Cherng Long added a side dish of gobo stuffed with soft boiled pumpkin



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with the seeds removed, while also devising a way to add edamame tempura, demonstrating an awareness of giving variety to the coloring and texture of the dish. He was highly evaluated for the overall degree of perfection of the dish, including not just the flavors but also the arrangement.

Cheong Cherng Long held the trophy as he spoke about his renewed determination to “use what I have experienced and learned on this trip to Japan for my future self and to do everything I can to share genuine Japanese food with the world.”



Cheong Cherng Long receiving the Gold Prize and talking about his renewed determination. The original dish “Akamutsu no kenchin yaki” created by Cheong Cherng Long.

The Washoku World Challenge 2016 received entries for 205 dishes from 26 countries and regions (the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Iran, India, Indonesia, Australia, South Korea, Singapore, Scotland, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Taiwan, China, Nepal, Pakistan, Hungary, the Philippines, Finland, France, Brazil, Vietnam, Belgium, Malaysia, Mexico, and Romania). After the entry deadline, the 23 dishes entered by the 20 candidates who passed the initial screening were recreated in Tokyo according to the recipes and judged on elements such as their understanding of washoku techniques, taste, appearance, originality, and viability in their home countries. From those 20 candidates, ten were selected to compete in the final round.

The theme for this year’s final round was Ichiju Issai (“one soup one side”), a core concept of Japanese cuisine. The competitors made the recipe they had entered and also two assigned



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dishes of rice cooked in a ceramic pot (Donabe Gohan) and Miso soup with minced horse mackerel balls (Aji no tsumire no misoshiru). For the assigned dishes, the competitors were judged on flavor and also how they cut the food with their knives, how they made the dashi broth, and their skill level, etc., during preparation of the dishes.



Each competitor had two hours to make their original dish and the assigned dishes of rice cooked in a ceramic pot and Miso soup with minced horse mackerel balls for four people (left). The completed dishes were taken to the judging room and the judges evaluated the dishes based on presentations by the competitors themselves and tastings of the completed dishes (right).

The prize-winning competitors and their dishes are as follows. (Honorifics omitted)

Prize	Name	Profile	Nationality	Dish
Gold	Cheong Cherng Long	31 years old, male Oribe Sushi Restaurant Chef Assistant	Malaysia	Akamutsu no kenchin yaki
Silver	Shaun Presland	45 years old, male Kisume Executive Chef	Australia	Kinpira Chicken with Balsamic Teriyaki
Bronze	Songkran Comnew	35 years old, male Osaka Style Restaurant: Nananohana Chef	Thailand	“Lotus root chrysanthemum flower bun” (in thick seaweed sauce)





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Shaun Presland from Australia (far left) won the Silver Prize for his original dish “Kinpira Chicken with Balsamic Teriyaki” (middle left); Songkran Comnew from Thailand (middle right) won the Bronze Prize for his original dish ““Lotus root chrysanthemum flower bun” (in thick seaweed sauce)” (far right).

The Washoku World Challenge is a Japanese cooking contest for international chefs that seek to discover outstanding chefs engaged in the creation of Japanese cuisine in countries and regions around the world and promote the global appeal of this fine culinary culture. The 23 dishes that passed the initial screening, the dishes of the ten competitors who progressed to the final round, scenes of the final round and judging (videos), etc. can be viewed at the following URL.

The official web site: <http://washoku-worldchallenge.jp/2016/>

Official Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WashokuWorldChallenge/>



Representative of the host, State Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ken Saito (pictured standing on the right of the prize winners); Chairman of the Washoku World Challenge Executive Committee and Chairman of the National Council for Promotion of the Export of Agricultural and Marine Products Yuzaburo Mogi (pictured standing on the left of the prize winners); and Chairman



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of the Judging Committee Kihachi Kumagai (pictured standing on the right of Minister Saito) together with the other four members of the Judging Committee and the three prize-winning chefs.

The finalists who competed with the prize-winners in the final round are as follows. (Honorifics omitted)

Name	Profile	Nationality	Dish
Bryan S. Emperor	48 years old, male Five Gold Inc. Chef consultant	United States of America	King Salmon Ishiyaki with Winter Vegetables and Miso Butter
Joe Kimura	30 years old, male Oiran Madhus Head Chef and Owner	Scotland	“Saba no misoni” with apple, ginger, and winter vegetable
Josh DeChellis	43 years old, male Il Buco Alimentari Executive Chef	United States of America	Boiled Daikon with Winter Yellowtail
Meegama Gurunnaselage Don Malith Wejikoon	31 years old, male Ikoi Tei/Hilton Colombo Japanese Demi Chef de Partie	Sri Lanka	Break me and eat! Kimpira in potato
Neo Guo Qing	34 years old, male Fat Cow Restaurant Sous-chef	Singapore	Kan Buri Tataki To Fuyu Irizake
Pircu Ionut	26 years old, male Tokyo Japanese Restaurant Kitchen S. Head Chef	Romania	Sake Saikioyaki with Nasu Dengaku, Enoki mushrooms and Apple & mustard Vinaigrette
Tsai Ming Gu	41 years old, male Senwa Cuisine Executive Chef	Taiwan	Japanese mini-eggplant and turban shell in spicy yuzu kosho cream



From left: Bryan S. Emperor from the United States, Joe Kimura from Scotland, Josh DeChellis from the United States, Meegama Gurunnaselage Don Malith Wejikoon from Sri Lanka, Neo Guo Qing from Singapore, Pircu Ionut from Romania, and Tsai Ming Gu from Taiwan



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■ Washoku World Challenge Executive Committee officers (honorifics omitted)

Chairman	Yuzaburo Mogi	Honorary CEO & chairman of the board of Kikkoman
Final round judges	Kihachi Kumagai	Chief advisor to Ivy Company
	Yukio Hattori	President and principal of Hattori Nutrition College
	Masayoshi Kazato	Chairman of the World Sushi Skills Institute and president of Sakaiezushi
	Dominique Corby	Owner of Maison de MINAMI Par Dominique Corby
	Yoshihisa Akiyama	Executive chef of Mutsukari

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