Galley Gourmet Challenge 2019
By Trish Stanley and Sue Swanson

The opening social event on Day 1 of this year's Cruise was the judging of Canapés for the Galley Gourmet Challenge. As usual, this event was held on the tiny beach in Refuge Bay but a receding tide helped accommodate the large number of Cruisers who came to share the canapés. There were a dozen entries which were thoroughly enjoyed by all after Judge Sue Swanson valiantly 'judged' them on her own as Judge Max Poyser was held up by lack of wind on the race from Sydney.

The Entrée, Main and Dessert sections of the Galley Gourmet Challenge were judged on the lay day in beautiful Smiths Creek. Following the entertainment of the Stand Up Paddle Board races, the GGC entrants spent the afternoon cooking and the evening awaiting the arrival of the tender bringing their judge.

Congratulations to the winners and runners up. Your recipes will be posted on the Cruising web site for all of us to enjoy.

On behalf of the Cruise Committee, I would like to thank all the entrants for making this year's event special and we hope you had a lot of fun cooking. We particularly appreciate the judges' efforts for donating their impressive skills and making to the Galley Gourmet Challenge so successful.

Judge Sue Swanson's view

So I am just watching week one of Masterchef and all I can think is that Gary, George and Matt need to come on a Squadron Cruise and see what is produced in the Galley Gourmet Competition! But on second thoughts that would do me out of my favourite job on the Cruise so maybe we won't approach Channel 10 just yet. For both Max and myself, judging the GGC was once again the highlight of a week filled with so many wonderful moments on this year's 50th Annual Cruise.

Due to the changed format of this year's Cruise to accommodate the Easter break, we went straight into judging the Canapés on Refuge beach on the first day of the Cruise which somewhat favoured the cruisers who were able to arrive at Refuge with fresh provisions and time on their hands, whilst those participating in the passage race from Sydney Harbour were hampered by the lack of wind and consequently late arrival into the Hawkesbury. Nevertheless as the sun set at Refuge, from both cruisers and racers, many generous platters of extremely creative canapés started making their way

to the beach perched precariously on the edge of tenders. This competitive cocktail party seems to have become a Cruise favourite, not just for the judges but for everyone in attendance, and as my fellow judge was rather late arriving (due to the lack of wind) it was a wonderful opportunity to gauge the opinions of all those in attendance to help make what was a fairly unanimous decision on the winner. It got me thinking that maybe we could include an official public voting element next year!

The lay day in Smiths Creek gave all competitors a fair go in the Entrée, Main course and Dessert categories of the competition. Max & I were delighted when we were approached by a couple of boats with new entries on the day. One late entry from *About Time* was inspired by the fact that they caught fresh blue swimmer crabs in Yeomans Bay the day before and in their French Bistro themed saloon served a magnificent 'Blue Swimmer Crab Linguini a la Yeoman' This truly represents the spirit of this competition. (I might add that the RMYC could take a tip from Sam on how to impress with this particular dish!) Theming seemed to be a big element this year as *Andeluna* also did a magnificent job with a complete pirate themed dinner. Much as it is hard to compare a French bistro with a Pirate ship, at the end of the day (and I might add, all bribes apart - although the judges were extremely appreciative of all accompanying alcoholic beverages served), it was the quality of the food that won the day.

It is always a pleasure to see regular competitors coming back each year with new ideas. It is also a treat when new boats to the Cruise enter this competition; they have been known not only to have great fun but also take out prizes, as demonstrated by *Andarta* this year. Maybe appropriately for the 50th Cruise, although I think only the 9th year of the Galley Gourmet Challenge, this year it was really fun to see boats who have participated in many Cruises but never participated in the GGC, enter for the first time and be completely blown away by how much fun it is to participate.

I believe over the years the Cruise has become increasingly about so much more than just racing; the diversity of activities and social events now offered over the week have really added to the camaraderie generated amongst all participants. Enjoying good food with old friends and new is such an integral part of the week for everyone, it is wonderful to see the spirit of competition as alive and well in the galleys as it is on the race course!

A huge thank you to all those who participated this year and I am only sorry we couldn't award you all a prize. A huge thank you too to the tender drivers who diligently picked us up and ferried us from boat to boat in Smiths Creek listening to us drooling over what we had just been served at each competing boat. It was with great pleasure that we were able to score a plateful of desserts from what as it turned out was the winner in that category and left some very happy tender drivers licking their fingers as they dropped us off at the end of the night.

Scroll down to see the winners

The Winners

Canapés

Winner   ANITRA V : Haloumi Sesame Bites drizzled with honey & orange
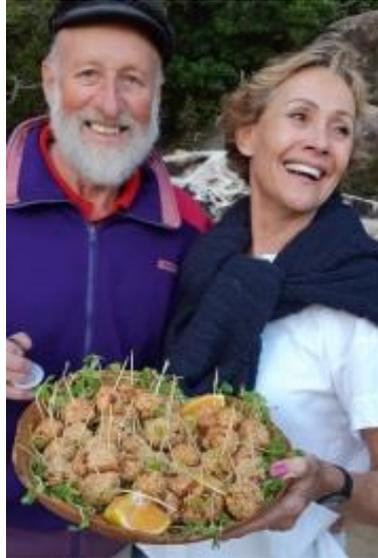
Runner Up   MIA II : Homage to Atoll Bikini

Entrée

Winner   ANDARTA :   Beetroot & gin cured salmon served with horseradish
                                   mayo, home pickled onion & witlof

Main Course

Joint Winner   ANDELUNA : Chargrilled spatchcock with wild rice & vegetable stack

Joint Winner   LIMELIGHT :   Roasted duck breast with red wine poached pear & braised
                                 broccolini

Dessert

Winner   ABOUT TIME : Waffle cones with lemon meringue or chocolate surprise

Junior Chef

Winner   Hurrica V   Vietnamese spring rolls with chilli dipping sauce