On Monday, August 30th, Temecula Creek Inn will host and present Oak Grove Center’s 14th Annual So-Cal Chef Open. The event has grown in popularity and reputation with several past Chefs having been featured in lifestyle magazines, television and receiving coverage from influential food critics and bloggers. Past winners include Chef Rosie O’Connor, owner of Provecho Grill and appeared on multiple television commercials and shows including Food Network’s Supermarket Stakeout and the Cooking Channel’s Farmer’s Market Flip.

Showcasing their culinary expertise, Chefs compete for two awards: The Pinnacle Award and People’s Choice. The Pinnacle Award is voted on through a blind tasting scoring system by culinary experts: Celebrity Chef Judges, Food Critics, and Influencers. This year the Celebrity Judges are Chef Rosie, Lead Judge, Steven Moore, aka Trendy Chef, Wing Lam, Josh Kopelman and Justin Mabunay.

Rosie is the Executive Chef and Owner of Provecho Grill and appeared on Food Network’s Supermarket Stakeout, as well as the Cooking Channel’s Farmer’s Market. She’s currently the only past winner to earn both the People’s Choice & Pinnacle Winner awards. Steven Moore, aka Trendy Chef, is a past winner of Food Network’s Supermarket Stakeout with guest judge Bobby Flay. Restauranteur, speaker, philanthropist and surfer, Wing Lam, who serves as CEO of Wahoo’s Fish Taco and co-founded the global franchise brand in 1988 with his brothers, will round out this impressive team. 2020 Pinnacle Award winner, Chef Justin Mabunay, from local favorite, Urbn Market Fusion will join along with Josh Kopelman from Infamous Food & Drink will be round off the judging panel.

The People’s Choice Top Chef is determined by event patrons casting their vote that evening. The evening features both award presentations.

Competing this year are two-time winner Executive Chef Matthew Steffen with Cork Fire Kitchen, local favorite Chef Dylan Soro with Soro’s Mediterranean Grill, 2020 People’s Choice Top Chef Winner Chef Armando Cota with Avensole Winery, and local celebrity Chef Hany Ali with Europa Village. Many of the Chefs competing have extensive culinary experience training under Celebrity Chefs including Wolfgang Puck and have extensive pallets being trained in Egypt, Europe, and Spain.

Immediately following the 19th Annual Oak Grove Center’s Golf Classic, the So-Cal Chef Open is an annual fundraiser that supports Oak Grove Center’s Culinary Arts Vocational Program.  This program provides at-risk and special needs youth experience and employable skills to help them transition into independent adulthood successfully. Tickets are $40 per person online, <https://oakgrovecenter.org/events/chefopen/> or are $55 at the door, space permitting. The event attracts over 350 patrons and is expected to sell out early. Ticket holders enjoy tapas-style tastings from competing Chefs, wine, beer, and music in the beautiful outside Temecula Creek Inn venue. Golf Classic packages, including sponsorships and foursomes are also available at <https://oakgrovecenter.org/events/golf/>. So-Cal Chef Open tickets are included in the golf packages.