

World Margarita Championship in Tucson

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The Tucson Culinary Festival is quickly approaching. Aside from delving into the dishes of prominent chef's, a few special events are also thrown into the mix at this world-class event.



On October 28, the World Margarita Championship will begin. This year, the event has also taken on a new format that is similar to that of Food TV's Iron Chef. 14 restaurants will compete, two at a time at stations on either side of the judges table. This year's panel of celebrity judges includes Barbara Fairchild - Editor in Chief of Bon Appétit Magazine, Tony Abou-Ganim aka "The Modern Mixologist," Robert Plotkin, renowned author and expert on cocktails and spirits, and Jennifer English from the Food & Wine Radio Network.

The event will be emceed by Matt Russell, and judges will provide live commentary on each drink and vote. The crowd will also vote for the people's choice. This year's finalists are: Janos, Jax Kitchen, Maynards, Pastiche, Jonathan's Cork, Risky Business, Kingfisher, Cup Café, Chad's Steakhouse, Lodge on the Desert, Elle, Feast, Papagayo, Montgomery's.

If the margarita showdown gets your adult-beverage clock ticking, on October 30th, another cocktail-based event is sure to please. Taking place at the Hotel Congress from 11 a.m. to noon, is Vodka 101, a trade seminar with Tony Ganim (this event is exclusive to member of the trade, i.e. bar managers and mixologists). Although the general public is not invited to attend, we can rest assured that our favorite restaurants in attendance will be picking up the best tips for our vodka enjoyment.

The Modern Mixologist takes attendees entertaining journey and tasting of the world's most consumed spirit. In this seminar, Tony teaches a new way to look at the category of vodka and identify not only the subtle nuances of taste and aroma, mouth-feel and finish but also to classify the spirit by its overall character. He also teaches how traditional style vodkas, those produced in Eastern Europe differ in character to those made in the West. How different raw materials, distillation and filtration methods contribute to these variations in character. By breaking down the characteristics of each individual vodka, a better appreciation and understanding into the enjoyment of this noble spirit.

To Learn More,

Tucson Culinary Festival, www.tusconculinaryfestival.com.