



27th Annual Worlds of Flavor® Session Preview

Here's a sneak peek at some of the incredible sessions we're cooking up for the 27th edition of the Worlds of Flavor® International Conference and Festival. More sessions are coming daily so check back often! Get ready for three days of insightful conversations, incredible food, and unparalleled networking.

Flavors in Translation: Navigating Old Worlds, New Ideas

The 2025 Worlds of Flavor Conference and Festival opens with an exploration of how culinary heritage and modern creativity intersect across the Mediterranean's diverse cultures with lessons for foodservice operators across the industry. Our presenters will explore the spiritual and cultural dimensions of food within sacred spaces around the world, and reinterpret Turkish traditions through a contemporary, cross-cultural lens. They'll showcase how old-world traditions offer endless inspiration in contemporary menu development and set the stage for a conference that celebrates the Mediterranean not just as a place, but as a dynamic idea – where ancient techniques, bold flavors, and forward-thinking innovation converge to shape the future of global foodservice.

Presenters: **Jody Eddy** (Cookbook Author and Recipe Developer; Braga, Portugal)
Civan Er (Chef-Restaurateur, Yeni Lokanta and Yeni; Istanbul, Turkey, and London, UK)
Presenter to be added!

Roots and Revival: Lesser-Known Mediterranean Wines for the Modern Table

This immersive tasting session explores the rich history of Mediterranean winemaking – from ancient trade routes to modern revival – spotlighting rare, underappreciated varietals from the cradle of Western viticulture. Discover how these unique wines express their terroir and cultural heritage, telling stories of survival, adaptation, and identity shaped by centuries of trade, conquest, and climate. Rooted in tradition and terroir, these wines offer chefs a fresh perspective on pairing, plating, and storytelling.

Presenters: **Scott Stroemer** (Bar Director, Galit and Café Yaya; Chicago, IL)
Tim Buzinski '97 (Assistant Professor, Wine Studies, CIA; Hyde Park, NY)

Ashes and Embers: Live Fire Cooking from Istanbul to the Levant

Join these chefs as they explore the rich history of live fire cooking across the Eastern Mediterranean. From Anatolian wood-fired dishes to Levantine hearth cooking, this session blends ancient techniques with modern culinary artistry – where fire becomes a tool for storytelling, heritage, unforgettable flavor, and unique dining experiences. Learn techniques and tools for adapting traditional fire cooking to modern restaurant kitchens.

Presenters: **Civan Er** (Chef-Restaurateur, Yeni Lokanta and Yeni; Istanbul, Turkey, and London, UK)
Rose Previte (Cookbook Author and Chef-Restaurateur, Maydān, Washington, DC)



The Greek Table: Hidden Traditions and the Chefs Who Carry Them Forward

In this dynamic culinary demonstration, chefs will explore the rich tapestry of regional Greek cuisine – from the sun-drenched flavors of Messinia and Crete to the vibrant culinary traditions of Thessaloniki and Athens – while also highlighting the profound influences of the Eastern Mediterranean, particularly Turkey. The session will delve into how these regional identities shape contemporary Greek cooking, offering insights into the chefs' personal journeys in balancing tradition and innovation within their restaurants and with their customers, as well as illuminate the often-overlooked home cooking traditions that define the plant-forward Greek kitchen, showcasing emblematic dishes and techniques that speak to the heart of Greece's culinary heritage.

Presenters: **Stavriani Zervakakou** (Chef and Founder, Aspasia Restaurant Mani; Stavri, Greece)
 Manolis Papoutsakis (Chef and Co-Owner, Pharaoh; Athens, Greece)

Bitter Flavors, Bold Futures: A Culinary Dialogue from Sicily to Sardinia

This intimate tasting and conversation explores the cultural depth of bitter flavors in Sicilian and Sardinian cuisine, from bitter almonds in traditional cookies and wild greens and citrus pith in modern reinterpretations in Sicilian food ways, to how herbs, myrtle, and aged cheeses among other ingredients, shape a distinct island identity in Sardinia. Guests will be guided through the symbolic and sensory role of bitterness and understand how young chefs reimagining tradition are using it as a lens to explore authenticity, memory, and innovation in Mediterranean food culture. This session offers food service operators inspiration for flavor innovation and a deeper understanding of how modern Mediterranean trends can elevate contemporary menus.

Presenters: **Antonio Campo** (Chef Consultant; Palermo, Italy)
 Fabrizia Lanza (Executive Director, Anna Tasca Lanza Cooking School; Sicily, Italy)
 Phil Crispo (Chef Instructor, The Culinary Institute of America; Hyde Park, NY)

Fermenting the Future: Koji for Flavor, Function, and Flexibility in Mediterranean Concepts and Beyond

Explore how this ancient Japanese ferment is transforming modern foodservice through its ability to boost umami, reduce sodium, and support both gluten-free and plant-forward menu development, here in Mediterranean-influenced recipes. Koji is more than just a natural flavor enhancer – it's a versatile tool for operational efficiency and health-forward cooking across a variety of cuisines. This session is ideal for foodservice operators seeking to innovate within tradition while meeting the evolving expectations of today's diners.

Presenters: **Paul Leibrandt** (Chef-Owner, Crumpet Consulting; New York, NY)
 Presenter to be added!

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Among the forthcoming sessions:

- Fast casual and menu concept development
- Spice blending and the Middle Eastern pantry
- Italian cuisine and its influence in the UK and the U.S.
- How to cook with olive oil for flavor and health, with perspectives from California, Greece, and Spain
- Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Moroccan, Portuguese, Persian, Syrian, and Jordanian foodways, flavors, recipes, and culinary techniques and much more!

Sessions are subject to change.