

**RULES, REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES**  
**of the**  
**Culinary Arts Society of Ajijic**  
Revised May 17, 2010

**I. General Requirements for Membership and Monthly Competition**

- A. A “member”, as used herein, refers to an individual who is required to present food entries for competition. Associate Member refers to a spouse, partner, family member, significant other, etc., of a member, who also is subject to all the rules, regulations, and policies of CASA, except that an associate member does not present food entries for competition.
- B. A member for 9-12 months is required to enter a minimum of four (4) acceptable entries per calendar year to maintain membership; however, a member joining April, May or June is required to enter a minimum of 3 acceptable entries, a member joining July, August, September is required to enter a minimum of 2 acceptable entries and a member joining October, November, December is required to enter a minimum of one acceptable entry to maintain membership. A member qualifying for the BING award with only three (3) entries in a calendar year need not present again that calendar year to maintain membership.
- C. Due to space constraints in the restaurant venue and setup and judging requirements, participation is limited and competition space will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis with a maximum of ten (10) competitors in each of the two (2) categories.
- D. Advance reservations are imperative and must be received prior to the cutoff time (normally, noon of the Friday before the CASA meeting).
- E. Either email or phone the membership/reservations person to indicate your intention to compete and in which category you will present. (for 2010 this is Diane Pretti, 376-766-2655, [diane\\_pretti@yahoo.com](mailto:diane_pretti@yahoo.com)) You will receive an email notification confirming or denying your request for presentation space and will be assigned a presentation space number in your selected category.
- F. Members planning to attend a monthly meeting without submitting an entry for competition, and associate members, must also notify the membership/reservations person that they will be attending a monthly meeting. Failure to do so will subject the member, associate member, or guest to an extra charge for attending without a reservation.
- G. A member may only bring the same person as a guest once in a calendar year. Notify the membership/reservations person if guests will be attending. A member bringing more than one (1) guest to a monthly competition may be required to bring a non-competing food item to share with all in attendance. An email will be sent to the member if non-competing food is required and it shall be presented in keeping with CASA standards for presentation. For 2009 and 2010, the guest restriction has been lifted and the same person may come as a guest more than once.

- H. Late reservations or switching categories after the cutoff time will not be accepted.
- I. If you can not follow through with presenting after receiving confirmation for presenting space, notify the membership/reservation person immediately.
- J. The setup team works hard every month to provide all competitors with the best possible arrangements that are equal and fair to all. All members and their guests are reminded that the monthly competitions provide an opportunity to “taste” many wonderful dishes. Please be considerate of your fellow members and take only a small portion so that there is enough for all members to taste. In all competitions, CASA strives for fairness and fun. Common sense should prevail from judges, CASA board members, and presenters.
- K. CASA obtains qualified judges (different every month), who will judge entries on taste (75%) and presentation (25%), i.e., eye appeal, professionalism, and adherence to the criteria of the month’s category.
- L. There are first-place, second-place, and third-place winners in each of the two (2) categories.
- M. A People’s Choice in each category is chosen by CASA members in a secret ballot after the members and associate members have sampled the presented entries. Guests are not eligible to vote.
- N. Except for setting up their entry in their presentation space and preparing their entry for tasting by those attending the meeting, a member shall not do anything or allow any other person to do anything, which discloses, or might reasonably disclose, the entry they presented to the judges or voting CASA members.
- O. Annual awards are based on points accumulated for each entry presented and for winning first, second, third, and People’s Choice in each category, as follows:

|                                 |          |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Presenting an acceptable entry: | 1 point  |
| Categories I and II             |          |
| First place:                    | 3 points |
| Second place:                   | 2 points |
| Third place:                    | 1 point  |
| People’s Choice:                | 1 point  |

- P. If a member receives three (3) first-place awards in a calendar year, he or she qualifies for the coveted & prestigious BING award. Subsequent presentations by that member during the year will be judged for only People’s Choice awards and points. All recipients of awards are subject to meeting eligibility requirements.

**II. Rules and Procedures for Selecting a Recipe and Preparing an Entry for Competition**

- A. An entry using a recipe that has been awarded first place in any previous CASA competition, or a recipe that is substantially the same as that of a previous CASA first-place winner, cannot be entered for any subsequent CASA competition. (See Section V, paragraph F.)
- B. Entries will be judged on taste (75%) and presentation (25%).

- C. Only members can prepare and present an entry for monthly competition and only in one (1) category per month. Associate members may NOT present.
- D. No other person or associate member may help with the preparation or presentation of the entry.
- E. The CASA board has removed the restriction on commercially prepared items, if they are included as one of many ingredients in a recipe. For example, the use of pre-packaged egg roll wrappers, puff pastry or phyllo dough, to which recipe ingredients are added, is acceptable. Likewise, commercially available ingredients such as tomato puree, mayonnaise, steak sauce, sour cream, canned soup, canned fruits, dry pastas, or whipped cream substitute are acceptable. If you are unsure if your entry meets all criteria, contact a Board member prior to the competition.
- F. The categories are selected by the CASA Board before the calendar year begins and may be found on the website or in the CASA monthly newsletter.
- G. Entries submitted for competition must be in the spirit of the designated category. Only one (1) dish per category is allowed. Samplers i.e.: more than one version of the same recipe is not allowed. An entry should be enough food to provide a sample for approximately fifty to sixty (50-60) people on the day of competition. (This usually equates to a serving size of twelve (12) portions.
- H. The space available for each entrant on the competition table is approximately 18" wide (marked by purple ribbons on the linen), and 28" deep. All allowable presentation elements MUST be contained within these limits.
- I. No decorations in your entry space or on your presentation will be allowed. The food itself must have only edible elements and normal garnishes for your dish. **NO FLOWERS ARE PERMITTED.** You are limited to your presentation platter/pot/bowl/plate, your own serving utensil (or the provided serving spoon), a smaller presentation plate (optional), a heating element (if necessary - not provided), and separate containers for condiments or sauces. A member having elements deemed beyond the above guidelines will be asked to remove said elements prior to judging.
- J. Use of the venue's kitchen facilities, utilities, or equipment is not allowed.

### **III. Rules and Procedures for the Day of Competition**

- A. When presenting you should arrive for set-up between 3:15 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- B. The monthly program and the competitive judging begin promptly at 4:00 pm. A presenter arriving late will be disqualified.
- C. Have your name, the name of your dish, and your category and presentation space number written down to hand to the attendant at the front door.
- D. You will be assigned a number when you reserve your space to present; you will find your numbered space on the competition table.
- E. You must stay within your competition space even while setting up and must avoid placing anything in the spaces on either side of your entry, as other members will be setting up also.
- F. Chairs behind the presentation table and space underneath the table may be used for temporary storage.

- G. Electrical hookups will be available if your entry requires a chafing dish or hot plate (not provided).
- H. Competitors must be solely responsible for the setting up their entry at the presentation table without any assistance from another member, guest, or person, and be away from the judging area by 3:55 p.m. –no exceptions
- I. No other person or associate member may help you with the preparation or presentation of your entry; however, you may have help transporting and/or carrying your entry into the facility but must not allow said helper to remain at the judging table.
- J. The presenting member must be in attendance until the conclusion of the day's judging and program. No "drop offs" are allowed.

#### **IV. Requirements for Competition Winners**

- A. All winning recipes will be published in the following month's CASA newsletter. The first, second, third and peoples' choice winners shall email their winning recipes to the newsletter editor within five (5) days of winning.

#### **V. Sanctions and Penalties**

- A. Any entry submitted for judging that is determined at the time to not meet requirements will be disqualified. The entry will remain on the judging table but the judges will be instructed not to consider it and votes in the People's Choice category will not be counted. Subsequently, the Board will privately notify the member presenting the disqualified entry the reason for the disqualification. The Board's decision on the matter is final.
- B. Conduct by a member, or any other person, during set up for judging, or during judging, that is contrary to CASA rules and requirements could result in the affected entry being disqualified.
- C. Incidental or inadvertent infractions that can be corrected and thereby not reasonably affect the judging will not result in disqualification.
- D. During setup on the day of competition, should a presenting member be notified of an incidental or inadvertent infraction and fail to take immediate steps to remedy said infraction, then their entry shall be disqualified.
- E. Should the Board reprimand a member or associate member three (3) times, for failure to comply with CASA Rules, Requirements and Policies, or to compete in the spirit of friendly competition as set forth in the Mission Statement, then the member or associate member will be asked to resign from CASA or will be removed from the membership rolls by the Board.
- F. The Board has the authority anytime to disqualify an entry that uses a recipe that has been awarded first place in a previous CASA competition, or that is substantially the same recipe as that of a previous CASA first-place winner and to remove points earned with said recipe if annual awards have not yet been presented.

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