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Press Release

Curtains down on Spice Route Culinary Competition

*Four-day celebration of flavours and friendship winds down
with glittering awards, valedictory ceremony*

Kochi, Sept 26: The French duo of Didier Corlou and Le Minh Manh took home the prize for the best international chef team as the first-of-its-kind Spice Route Culinary Festival winded down here on Monday.

The Egyptian team of chefs Yasser Ramadan and Mariem Magdy were adjudged first runners-up with the team from Thailand, Chef Songpol Vithanwata and Chef Jareuk Sriaroon, rounding out the list of winners.

Over the course of a valedictory function presided over by Prof. K.V. Thomas, Honourable MP – Ernakulam and Chairman, Public Accounts Committee, the 17 teams from 15 Spice Route countries that participated in the four-day festival of flavours and friendship were honoured with mementos and thunderous applause.

No less was the ovation received by the top teams in the ‘Kerala Chef’ competition. Chef Prakash Sundaran of Kochi received the top prize in the finals for culinary professionals with chefs Ashok Eapen of Thiruvananthapuram and Siyad C.A. from Ernakulam placing second and third. In the amateurs category, Sanjay Sunny from Kannur took the top slot with Lisa Joji from Aluva and Saida Abdul Salam, of Kochi, coming in as first and second runners-up respectively.

Congratulating Kerala Tourism, UNESCO, and the Union Tourism Ministry, on successfully organising the festival, Prof. Thomas said, “I am delighted that the inaugural edition of this unique culinary festival has been organised in my constituency. I believe that tourism development should be with the development of the people and community.”

“We want the diplomatic members of the Spice Route countries and other stakeholders to join and come up with unique projects that will be useful for the youth and the wider community,” said Mr Shigeru Aoyagi, UNESCO Director and Representative to Bhutan, India, Sri Lanka and Maldives, who distributed the prizes in the international competition.

The evening function saw addresses by Ernakulam District Collector Shri K. Mohammed Y. Safirulla, French Consul General Mr. Janvier Kamiyama and Ms Petra Smulders, First Secretary, Netherlands Embassy, among other luminary attendees.



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“The whole idea for the Spice Route Culinary Festival came to our mind after showcasing the Muziris Heritage Project. The Spice Route, an innovative initiative by UNESCO and Kerala Tourism, was the second stage of the Muziris Project,” said Kerala Tourism Director Shri U.V. Jose, who delivered the welcome address and summarised the festival.

The winners in the international cooking competition received a 15-night holiday voucher with two airline return tickets each, with the first and second runners up receiving 10-night and seven-night vouchers respectively.

The winners in both the professional and amateur finals in the Kerala Chef competition received cash prizes of Rs 25,000 for first place, Rs 15,000 for second place and Rs 10,000 for third place.

All participants in both competitions received mementos and certificates.

Also in attendance were Ms Moe Chiba, Head of the Culture Unit, UNESCO New Delhi, Shri. Abraham George, President, Kerala Travel Mart Society, Shri L.V. Kumar, Principal, International Hospitality Management and Catering Technology, and Shri Jacob Mathan, Director, Food Craft Institute.

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