



Press Release

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The Shortlist of Berlin's Culinary Best

The Berlin Master Chefs Mark a Milestone – Meet This Year's Nominees

Few initiatives have done more to reflect the evolution of Berlin's dining scene than the Berlin Master Chefs awards. From established culinary institutions to an open, experimental, and internationally influenced food culture, the program has chronicled the capital's changing restaurant landscape. In 2026, it reaches a special milestone: its 30th anniversary.

Since its inception, the awards have continued to evolve. Categories have been refined, expanded, and adapted to reflect new developments in the culinary world. One element, however, has remained unchanged: the independent jury, which each year recognizes the outstanding people and concepts shaping Berlin's dining scene. The anniversary year once again highlights Berlin's growth as a global culinary destination. This year's nominees are as international, diverse, and vibrant as the city itself – a reflection of its cosmopolitan character.

The 2026 nominees have now been selected. Awards will be presented in the categories of Berlin Master Chef 2026, Rising Star of the Year 2026, Berlin Host of the Year 2026, Berlin Scene Restaurant of the Year 2026, Berlin Kiezmeister 2026, and Berlin Bar Culture Award 2026. In line with



tradition, the seventh category, Gastronomic Innovator of the Year, will remain under wraps until the awards ceremony in November.

Dr. Stefan Franzke, CEO of Partner für Berlin: “Three decades of culinary innovation, creative excellence, and fresh inspiration are reflected in the history of the Berlin Master Chefs awards. Through this initiative, Partner für Berlin recognizes not only the industry’s spirit of innovation, but also its enduring commitment to quality, creativity, sustainability, and consistency – qualities that are essential to the restaurant culture of a global food capital like Berlin. The award winners are more than culinary trendsetters; they are ambassadors for the city itself.”

The 2026 nominees were selected from approximately 150 individuals and establishments put forward by the jury.

Berlin Master Chef 2026:

- Samuel Haas, Dae Mon
- Sarah Hallmann, Hallmann & Klee
- Daniel Remers, Barra Restaurant
- Andreas Rieger, Michelberger Hotel
- Lode van Zuylen, REMI

Rising Star of the Year for 2026:

- Johannes Gehrich, Hugos
- Adar Kaplan-Mor, Loxa
- Nadav Kundel, Saint Farah
- Danas Pozlevičius, Jolie Bistrot
- Tanadon Santanaviboon, Hanuman Thai Curry House

Berlin Host 2026:

- Antonio (Host) und Louis (Sommelier) Bragato, Il Calice
- Anne Garkisch (Host and Sommelière), Restaurant Bieberbau
- Anna Hernández Götz (Sommelière), Bar Levain
- Sebastian Höpfner (Head Sommelière), Rutz
- Isabell Wendel (Host and Sommelière), Bricole



Berlin Scene Restaurant 2026:

- Ari's
- File Asto
- Onette
- Saint Farah
- Tacos el Rey

Berlin Kiezmeister 2026:

- Augusta am Savignyplatz, Charlottenburg (also in Schöneberg)
- Bistro GriGri, Kreuzberg
- Blutwurstmanufaktur Marcus Benser, Neukölln-Rixdorf
- Tresen-Treff, Wilmersdorf
- Vom Einfachen das Gute, Wilmersdorf (also in Frohnau and Mitte)

Berlin Bar Culture 2026:

- Der Kleine August
- Ernst Cave
- Matrëshka Bar
- Rhinoçéros
- Rum Trader

This year's shortlist offers a vivid picture of Berlin's international, imaginative, and ever-evolving dining scene. In 2026, it once again stands out for fresh ideas, bold culinary signatures, and a palpable appetite for change. Bars are redefining drinking culture beyond familiar conventions, while kitchens pair high culinary standards with a relaxed, contemporary sensibility. Particularly exciting this year is the way the nominees bring their cultural roots into Berlin's kitchens, making the city's food scene as diverse as Berlin itself. This distinctive mix of influences is what shapes Berlin as a culinary destination, and what has made the Berlin Master Chefs awards one of the capital's most important culinary honors for nearly 30 years.

Tina Hüttl, Jury Chair, says: "I see this year's Berlin Master Chefs shortlist much as I would the recommendations in leading restaurant guides, newspaper dining sections, and city magazines - with



one important difference: these are genuine insider tips. We on the jury are not PR strategists or influencers. We are journalists, food critics, and experts who know this city, understand its character, and have followed its culinary evolution for years. In our discussions, we always try to see the city through the eyes of a guest. Where would we send someone who wants to experience Berlin in all its diversity? Which bar, which restaurant, which host best captures the city today? Those were the questions at the heart of our deliberations. And we continue to be surprised and delighted by how varied, vibrant, and dynamic our final top-five selections are.”

Dr. Stefan Elfenbein, Jury Chair: “Soft-boiled eggs with mustard sauce at a classic Berlin bar in one of the city’s newest hot spots; a breath of fresh air at Hugos high above the InterContinental; octopus with Tyrolean bacon alongside spectacular art at DaeMon on Monbijouplatz – the range of experiences represented in this year’s nominations is extraordinary. The jury has made its choices: Berlin’s 30 best across six categories have been selected. We discussed and voted on around 150 recommendations this year. Once again, Berlin’s true hosts have distinguished themselves through their unwavering commitment to quality, enjoyment, and genuine hospitality. They deserve enormous thanks. What stands out this year is the growing prominence of culinary influences that, until recently, might have seemed unexpected at the very top of Berlin’s dining scene. The jury considered 26 candidates for Berlin Master Chef and 23 for Rising Star of the Year, including Silvio Pfeuffer at Matthias, Jonas Merold at Merold, and the team at Eins44 – perhaps their moment will come next year. But 2026 is ultimately a year for exceptional new talent, including chefs such as Tanadon Santanaviboon and Nadav Kundel, whose cooking draws on the flavors of Thailand, the Middle East, and the Baltic region. Berlin’s food scene has long been shaped by newcomers, experimentation, fusion, and great street food. Now, a new generation is bringing the culinary traditions of their home countries to the city at an outstanding level. It is a development to be embraced with the openness and cosmopolitan spirit that make Berlin what it is.”

The expert jury for the Berlin Master Chefs 2025 includes the following members:

- Dr. Stefan Elfenbein, Jury Chair and correspondent for Der Feinschmecker and Business Traveller
- Tina Hüttl, Jury Chair, Berliner Zeitung
- Felix Denk, Tagesspiegel Food and Lifestyle Editor
- Prof. Dr. Dieter Großklaus, Honorary President, “Chaîne des Rôtisseurs”
- Lorraine Haist, freelance journalist and contributor to various newspapers and magazines
- Stefanie Hofeditz, freelance journalist
- Alexandra Laubrinus, Managing Partner, Berlin Food Week
- Clemens Niedenthal, Culinary Editor, TipBerlin



- Nikolas Rechenberg, Gourmetwelten
- Annika Schönstädt, freelance writer
- Dr. Erwin Seitz, freelance journalist, author, and food critic

The winners of the 2026 Berlin Master Chefs awards will be announced at the gala ceremony on November 7, 2026. A chronicle of all past recipients, dating back to the awards' launch in 1997, is available online. For more information about the Berlin Master Chefs program and its history, visit: www.berliner-meisterkoeche.de. Follow the Berlin Master Chefs on Instagram at [@berlinermeisterkoeche](https://www.instagram.com/berlinermeisterkoeche).

Berlin Master Chefs

Since 1994, Partner für Berlin, the city's marketing organization, has worked to promote Berlin and strengthen its position as a place to live, visit, and do business. Its work includes developing, supporting, and delivering initiatives that benefit both the city and Berlin as a business location. Through the Berlin Master Chefs brand, Partner für Berlin showcases the capital's high-quality restaurant culture and the diversity of its hospitality scene - both an important economic driver and a key part of Berlin's appeal. A thriving culinary scene and a thriving city go hand in hand. Since 1997, the Berlin Master Chefs awards have honored outstanding culinary professionals and innovative dining concepts in a range of categories. Previous recipients include Nicholas Hahn, Max Strohe, Sarah Hallmann, The Duc Ngo, Sebastian Frank, Sonja Frühsammer, Tim Raue and Cookie Heinz Gindullis.