



Association
Mondiale de la
Gastronomie

Bailliage de Grande Bretagne

Young Sommelier of the Year Competition 2026

National Final - Friday 10th April 2026

Young Professionals Awards - 15th May 2026

International Finals - Early-Mid October 2026



After a very close National competition last year, Team GB headed to Geneva for the World Young Sommelier Competition with Erazem Ocvirk from Gleneagles representing Chaîne GB in the 2025 world finals and what a fantastic trip / experience it was.

Erazem drew from his considerable understanding and knowledge to come in 3rd overall, reinforcing the qualities, especially around his knowledge of wines and spirits our judges in UK picked up on during the Nationals.

We look forward, with great anticipation, to this year's competition and what this might deliver on the international stage later in the year!

Excellence - Generosity - Commitment

The Concours des Jeunes Sommeliers was first organised by the Chaîne des Rotisseurs in Germany in 2007 to support and promote future young sommeliers by giving them the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their skills. Competitions are held at regional, national and international levels in countries around the world.

The competition is open to sommeliers at least 21 and not yet 29 years of age at the start of the International Competition Finals in September 2026, who have a working interest in the wine and crafted beverage industry and are a citizen or legal resident of the country they are representing.

Entry is open to those for whom participating in an international competition would bring great benefit, from an educational point of view, as well as one of broadening their experience and meeting other young professionals pursuing similar careers.

The steady composure that comes with self-confidence in the face of competitive situations can only happen when specialised knowledge is buttressed by passion and a love for the subject. One of the goals of the Chaîne has been to provide encouragement and support for these young professionals.

The GB final competition will take place in **London on Friday 10th April 2026**.

The competition is composed of three sections:

Written Theory - 75 short answer questions covering wine, wine service, spirits, aperitifs, beers, liqueurs, liquor coffees, digestifs, cordials and other non-alcoholic beverages.

Blind Test - 4 wines from classic grape varieties and regions. Points being awarded on description of appearance, nose, palate and accuracy of vintage, variety, country and appellation with identifying the variety being the most important element. The Blind Tasting itself requires assessment by sight, nose and palate of wine colour, age, alcohol content, country of origin and appellation of wines. The Judges provide wines, but the identities of the wines are never revealed. The Competition format is based on the Master Sommelier Advanced Examination and the scoring is based on its deductive method.

Service Test - three stations relating to tasks from the following list: decanting and serving a bottle of red wine, Champagne/Sparkling wine service, food and wine pairing, end of meal drinks or alcoholic and non-alcoholic aperitifs preparation and service. This segment is designed to showcase a Contestant's skill and may include the decanting of red wine, glass preparation and tray use. Champagne service must display accomplished techniques involving the wine and controlled pouring as well as a gracious, gentle banter throughout with the Judge as diner-consumer. Role-playing is introduced to show poise, competence and professionalism. Contestants are asked questions during the service portion, in which complex menu elements are revealed. Pairing suggestions that should offer both old and new world alternatives are required. Follow-up questions about grape varieties, vintages, appellations and characteristics demand the professionalism and focus that would be concurrent with fine dining establishments

The competitor applying to enter the competition **must**:

- Supply a copy of their passport at time the application is submitted
- Supply a head and shoulders photograph for publication purposes
- Supply a full typewritten CV
- Be over 21 and no more than 29 years of age by the start date of the International Competition in September 2026
- Be sponsored by an active professional member of the Chaîne des Rotisseurs whose details must be provided.

The competitor must **not**:

- Have been a competitor in a national Young Sommelier Competition three times before or
- Have been a previous winner of the national Young Sommelier Competition or
- Have been a winner of the International Young Sommelier Competition

The top three placed competitors must be available to attend the Young Professionals Awards event when the order of the final three will be announced. This will take place on **Friday 15th May 2026**.

The winner of the national competition must be available to attend and compete in the International Finals **between early and mid October 2026, location to be advised**. The International Finals normally expect competitors to arrive by Wednesday to undertake visits prior to the competition which runs through to the Friday evening when the names of the top three placed winners will be announced.

Places for 2026 will be in high demand so get your application in NOW

The winner of the National Competition receives the Chaîne's Young Sommelier Gold Medal. The other top two placed finalists receive the Chaîne's Young Sommelier Silver Medal for the runner up and the Bronze Medal to the person in third place.

One candidate will also be selected, separately, to win the Gerard Basset Tasting Trophy as a result of their excellence in the blind tasting and food pairing element of the competition.

The awards for both the Chaîne's Young Chef Competition and Young Sommelier Competitions, as well as winner of the Gerard Basset Tasting Trophy, will be announced at the Young Professionals Awards event. This will be our opportunity to allow the competitors, together with their management and friends, to learn from the judges and other industry leaders, and to share their enthusiasm with the press. It will also enable us to review, with them, the standards being achieved by the next generation of sommeliers and provide some public awareness of the importance of this aspect of the Chaîne activities.

Please contact your professional members asking for any nominations, who in turn should submit full CVs to myself, Tristan Mason-Smith (echanson@chaine.co.uk) and Philip Evins (bd@chaine.co.uk) before the 6th March 2026.

Kind Regards,



Philip Evins
Bailli Délégué



Tristan Mason-Smith
Echanson