

Something for Everyone at the National Festival of Breads

Eight home bakers from across the nation will come to Manhattan June 20-22 to participate in the National Festival of Breads, America's only amateur bread baking contest. The biennial contest - sponsored by the Kansas Wheat Commission, King Arthur Flour and Fleischmann's Yeast - celebrates the relationship between producer and consumer and highlights the art of baking bread at home.

The bakers will prepare their original bread recipes in miniature kitchens at the Hilton Garden Inn and Convention Center in Manhattan. One contestant will emerge as the 2013 champion and earn a prize package worth nearly \$5,000, including cash, an expense-paid trip to King Arthur Flour Baking Center in Norwich, Vermont and a year's supply of Fleischmann's Yeast.

Contestants in the 2013 National Festival of Breads include: Judi Berman-Yamada, Portland, Oregon; Elke Roby, Lincoln, Nebraska; Gloria Piantek, West Lafayette, Indiana; Marilyn Blankschien, Clintonville, Wisconsin; Merry Graham, Newhall, California; Rita Lutz, Horseshoe Bay, Texas; Jane Hinrichsen, Cottage Grove, Minnesota and Rosemary Leicht, Bethel, Ohio.

Contest finalists, sponsors and other guests will enjoy several additional activities during their stay, including a "Farm-to-Fork" tour featuring lunch at a local wheat farm and a visit to a field during wheat harvest, plus tours of a grain elevator and flour mill. The tour is designed to teach contestants about the journey taken by wheat from field, to flour mill, to grocery store shelf.

"The harvest tour is really enlightening to the contestants," says Cindy Falk, nutrition educator at the Kansas Wheat Commission, and contest coordinator. "Most of them have never been on a farm before so the Farm-to-Fork tour is a real highlight."

These activities for contestants precede the day-long Festival of Breads, which will be held June 22 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 410 South Third Street, Manhattan. A number of family-friendly activities will take place at the hotel.

"Our goal is to provide a family-friendly, inexpensive event the whole family can enjoy, and provide a wealth of information to make home baking exciting and enjoyable," Falk says. Visitors can watch the finalists prepare their recipes live in the Convention Center ballroom; peruse items at a miniature tradeshow; gain baking insight and information at several baking sessions, enjoy fresh-baked bread and take part in several activities designed for kids, including pretzel-shaping and flour milling.

Local professional and amateur bakers will help end childhood hunger, through the Share Our Strength's ["Bake Sale for No Kid Hungry"](#); meanwhile, Kansas wheat weaving artisans will show

how they make straw art. Finally, the hallways will be filled with the aroma of fresh-baked cinnamon rolls - free to taste - courtesy the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association baking trailer. Those attending the National Festival of Breads will receive \$1 discount coupons to attend the acclaimed Flint Hills Discovery Center, plus meet Willie the Wildcat, mascot of the Big 12 Champion Kansas State University Wildcats, and Mr. and Mrs. Slice. Folks can register for door prizes, which include a KitchenAid mixer and Panasonic Bread Machine.

"Military families attending will receive free baking ingredients, including flour and yeast," Falk says.

Those attending the National Festival of Breads can take part in several free educational seminars, each of which lasts about 45 minutes, beginning at 9 a.m. in the Hilton Garden Inn Ballroom. Speakers and topics include:

9 a.m.: Mardi Traskowsky, 2013 NFOB Youth Winner, "Family Italian Bread."

Mardi, who will demonstrate her family-style bread recipe at this year's Festival, has earned the top award-champion-in the first youth category competition in the National Festival of Breads. She is a Kansas 4-H member, and qualified (at the county fair) to exhibit her bread recipe at the Kansas State Fair, where she earned a purple ribbon. Her entry also was selected for display in the 4-H Foods Exhibit Showcase in 4-H Centennial Hall during the Fair. Mardi's recipe has become a family favorite with an Italian twist, and she'll be on hand to discuss how she adjusted a basic bread machine recipe as a healthy choice with an Italian twist.

10 a.m. and 1 p.m.: Paula Gray, King Arthur Flour, Inc., "Bread 101 and More! With King Arthur Flour."

Cure your yeast anxiety and make delicious bread with confidence! In this fun and informative demonstration, you'll explore the differences among wheat flours, investigate the mystery and science of how ingredients work, learn bread kneading and shaping technique tips-- and more. Master the recipe for basic bread dough to make loaves, braids, pizza, cinnamon rolls, and pretzels. Whether you're a first-time baker or experienced pro, you'll take home helpful tips, recipes, and free gifts! We'll also discuss the Life Skills Bread Baking Program® and how you can bring this free program to students in your area.

11 a.m.: Sharon Davis, Home Baking Assoc., and Diane McElroy, ACH Food Companies, "Rise to a New Level."

Ancient flat breads carry the same appeal now as thousands of years ago. Their simple ingredients, easy preparation steps, flavor, texture and versatility are winners for us all. Whether you have a little time or a lot, Diane McElroy, Fleischmann's Yeast, and Sharon Davis, Home Baking Association, will demonstrate methods to produce delicious pizzeria-style pizzas and sweet to savory flat breads on your grill or in your home oven. A "Question and Answer " session will be included!

2 p.m.: Aaron Clanton, AIB International, "Baking With Whole Grains."

This session will explore what whole grains are and why they should be incorporated into bakery products. Participants will learn the unique flavor and textures that whole grains can add to foods as well as the nutritional benefits. Key adjustments for adding more whole grain to breads will be shared.

3 p.m.: Panel Discussion featuring Fleischmann's Yeast, King Arthur Flour and Home Baking

Association, "Baking Questions and Answers"

In this session, home baking experts will be available to answer your specific baking questions. The panel will provide current information and tips to help you understand the function of bread ingredients, baking tips and techniques for successful - and enjoyable- baking.

The 2013 Grand Prize winner will be announced at a contestants' banquet the evening of June 22. One finished product from each of the eight contestants will be auctioned off in a fund-raiser for Share Our Strength's "Bake Sale for No Kid Hungry."

For more information, log onto the Festival's website, nationalfestivalofbreads.com.