



THE WORLD'S 50 BEST RESTAURANTS LIVE AWARDS PROGRAMME WILL RETURN IN PHYSICAL FORM ON 5TH OCTOBER 2021 IN ANTWERP, FLANDERS

Prestigious annual restaurant ranking and global gastronomic gathering continues to play critical role in supporting recovery of the restaurant sector

27 April, 2021 – The World's 50 Best Restaurants 2021 awards, sponsored by S. Pellegrino & Acqua Panna, will be hosted in the city of Antwerp in Flanders – the Flemish-speaking northern region of Belgium – on Tuesday, 5th October.

Returning after a year's hiatus in 2020 due to the global pandemic – during which 50 Best devoted its resources to its fund-raising 50 Best for Recovery project – an extensive event programme hosted in Flanders will culminate in the awards ceremony in Antwerp, representing a key milestone in the ongoing revival of the restaurant sector.

The new 2021 ranking, unveiled as part of the gala ceremony, will take into account recent and ongoing travel limitations and dining restrictions by combining the votes cast in both early 2020 and 2021 (*see Voting Changes, below*). All live events will be prepared with the safety and health security of attendees as the foremost priority and will be subject to international travel protocols and government guidelines. Visitors will, however, have the opportunity to experience the premium produce, superb restaurants and cutting-edge ethos of Flanders, one of Europe's culinary and cultural hotspots.

William Drew, Director of Content for The World's 50 Best Restaurants, says: "We are very excited about hosting this important gastronomic event in Flanders in early October and remain optimistic that the ongoing vaccine rollout will enable as many people as possible to join us safely in Antwerp. The event programme will allow the global gastronomic community to reconnect in person, share experiences, celebrate resilience and brilliance, and ultimately help boost the restaurant sector when it needs our support most."

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The 50 Best organisation's role in promoting restaurants and showcasing culinary talent is more important than ever – and it believes that it can best support the recovery of the hospitality sector by inspiring diners to seek out exciting gastronomic experiences once again, whether near or far.

Stefano Bolognese, Sanpellegrino International Business Unit Director, says: "It is now evident that the pandemic's effects on the restaurant industry are impacting not only the present business, but its future, triggering deep changes in the sector that will bring long-lasting consequences. But crises also herald unexpected opportunities. The future of gastronomy depends on collective intelligence, sharing of experiences and boldness. So, we are particularly excited to collaborate with this important gastronomic event that will allow the global gastronomic community to reconnect in person and have the opportunity to promote restaurants and showcase culinary talents to help shape the future of the sector."

Key events in Antwerp, Flanders will also be broadcast to a global audience, including chefs, restaurateurs, media and food lovers who are not able to attend in person. This 'hybrid' format will ensure that no one misses out on the return of occasions such as thought-leadership forum #50BestTalks, interview opportunities and, of course, the awards ceremony and countdown itself.

The live event programme will be centred around the cultural city of Antwerp, famous for its art and architecture, as well as fashion, design and jewellery. Koen Kennis, Antwerp's Vice Mayor for Tourism, says: "In our city, an enormous number of master chefs work in a small area. We are proud of chefs like Sergio Herman, Seppe Nobels or Nick Bril who, just like Antwerp, are atypical in their work. There is also plenty of emerging talent. We will immerse the visiting 50 Best chefs and international media in a historic setting with gastronomy at a global level – and we will undoubtedly see some of them afterwards, because Antwerp always whets one's appetite for more."

Zuhal Demir, Flemish Minister of Tourism, says: "The hunger to enjoy the best of what our Flemish gastronomy has to offer has never been more relevant than now. There's a healthy appetite to revive our highly prized hospitality sector, held in high esteem by our Flemish chefs and culinary craftsmen, who certainly deserve international recognition. That is why I am delighted that The World's 50 Best Restaurants awards – which was postponed in 2020 – will still take place in Antwerp, the culinary centre of our region, in 2021. As the Flemish Minister for Tourism I warmly welcome everyone with an affinity for sublime gastronomy – at a safe distance from each other, but more connected than ever before."





Champions of Change

The October event programme will be preceded by a number of special awards, announced from June through September, including a brand-new initiative called Champions of Change. Presented in association with S.Pellegrino & Acqua Panna, Champions of Change highlights a small number of unsung heroes who have used the extraordinary events of the last year as a springboard for positive action. It provides a substantial monetary donation to each of the recipients' causes and supports long-term progress in the restaurant and food sphere, whether through helping others, developing inspirational blueprints or creating a healthier planet.

50 Best for Recovery 2021: Opportunity for Change

In 2020, 50 Best pivoted from publishing its annual ranking and hosting live events to focus on fund-raising and supporting the hospitality sector through its 50 Best for Recovery programme, which included raising \$1.29m with the support of its partners, including S.Pellegrino and Acqua Panna. 50 Best for Recovery distributed grants to more than 200 restaurants and bars and donated to a series of non-profits organisations in the food and drink sector.

The World's 50 Best Restaurants 2021 events, including Champions of Change, will form a key pillar in the organisation's evolving 50 Best for Recovery initiative, which will also see it revisit a selection of grant recipients to highlight their stories. This year brings opportunities for positive change as the sector rebuilds and remodels itself with a greater focus on inclusivity and long-term sustainability.

50 Best will use its global platform to highlight even more great restaurants and bars worldwide – through its 50 Best lists, special awards, unranked collections and content series – as well as showcase individuals shaping the future of gastronomy through its new [50 Next](#) list, which debuted on 20th April 2021. 50 Best will take the opportunity in 2021 and beyond to amplify diverse voices and positive messages, foster progressive discussion and cross-border collaboration, and encourage greater gastronomic discovery and exploration.

Voting Changes: how the 2021 list was created

The annual restaurants list is created from the votes of The World's 50 Best Restaurants Academy, an influential group of more than 1,000 leaders made up of food writers and critics, chefs,





restaurateurs and international culinary experts, with a 50/50 gender balance. Each Academy member usually votes for 10 restaurants, with at least four of these from outside their home region.

To counter the restrictions on international travel and limited dining opportunities of the last year, the 2021 list will be created from a combination of votes cast in January 2020 (which have never been published) and a 'voting refresh' which took place in March 2021. Each voter had the chance to update their 2020 selections based only on restaurant experiences in their own region in the 14 months since the previous voting round, reflecting the increased importance of local dining.

The 2021 list will therefore be created from a combination of wider pre-pandemic experiences and, where possible, contemporary local updates. Any establishments that have closed permanently or changed their fundamental concept since the voting will be removed from the ranking, though still acknowledged and celebrated as part of The World's 50 Best Restaurants awards event.

50 Best works with professional services consultancy Deloitte as its official independent adjudication partner to help protect the integrity and authenticity of the voting process and the resulting list of The World's 50 Best Restaurants 2021. See more details on The World's 50 Best Restaurants voting process [here](#).

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For media centre registration and access, please visit
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About The World's 50 Best Restaurants

Since 2002, The World's 50 Best Restaurants has reflected the diversity of the world's culinary landscape. The annual list of the world's most prestigious restaurants provides a snapshot of some of the best destinations for unique culinary experiences, in addition to being a barometer for and a pioneer of global gastronomic trends.

The 50 Best family also includes Latin America's 50 Best Restaurants, Asia's 50 Best Restaurants, The World's 50 Best Bars, Asia's 50 Best Bars and the #50BestTalks and 50 Best Explores series, all of which are owned and run by William Reed Business Media. 50 Best aims to bring together communities across the hospitality sector to foster collaboration, inclusivity, diversity and discovery and help drive positive change.

About the host destination: Flanders

Flanders is a small region where everything from delicious food to wonderful music takes craftsmanship to new levels. Artistic cities such as Antwerp, Bruges, Brussels, Ghent, Leuven and Mechelen are home to culinary delights, delicious chocolate and an endless variety of local and artisanal beers. You'll find cutting-edge design and fashion that's ahead of its time side by side with architecture that's up to a thousand years old. Its Flemish Masters were experts in their craft, such as Jan van Eyck, who revolutionised oil painting techniques. Prepare for an experience: Flanders wants to share its secrets, its delights and its magnificence with all.

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About the host city: Antwerp

Antwerp has a rich culinary tradition, where food and drink are elevated to true art forms. Its natives love to eat and drink in the vast array of restaurants, cafés and bars that the city houses. The multi-cultural cuisines that for centuries have found their way to Antwerp thanks to the city's port and its immigrants combined with local specialities have created a gastronomy with a fascinating and varied palate of flavours. And while Antwerp might be famed as the world diamond capital, as an icon for fashion and as an international port city, it can certainly hold its own against other cities when it comes to gastronomy. www.visitantwerp.be

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About the main sponsor and founding donor: S.Pellegrino & Acqua Panna

S.Pellegrino and Acqua Panna are the main partners of The World's 50 Best Restaurants and 50 Best for Recovery. S.Pellegrino and Acqua Panna are the leading natural mineral waters in the fine dining world. Together they interpret Italian style worldwide as a synthesis of excellence, pleasure and well-being.





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