



## **Team CANADA to pull out of the 2021 Bocuse d'Or competition in Lyon, France**

*Organizers to refocus their competitive spirit to help restore the Canadian restaurant industry amid coronavirus pandemic*

Toronto, February 1, 2021 — Bocuse d'Or Team Canada is saddened to announce that despite qualifying for the championships, they will not be participating in the upcoming Bocuse d'Or Finale, set to take place June 2021 in Lyon, France. This difficult decision was reached after careful consideration and with the health and safety of the team, of our country, and of our global community as the top priority.

Bocuse d'Or Team Canada, comprised of contender Chef Samuel Sirois, coaches Chef Alvin Leung and Chef Gilles Herzog and commis Alexy Jetté, has worked tirelessly and passionately for the past two years in the hopes of stepping onto the podium for the first time. However, travelling during this turbulent time as we navigate a global health crisis poses risks that the team cannot justify based on the government's safety guidelines. As a father, husband and teacher, Chef Sirois understands the grave importance of prioritizing the health of his family and community. While many countries have already begun administering the COVID-19 vaccine, it remains essential that we work to stop the spread so as to support hospitals, healthcare workers as well as the frontline workers around the globe.

"As leaders in the Canadian foodservice industry, we believe that at this time, we need to embody the philosophy behind the competition in supporting and strengthening our industry and by shining the spotlight on our gastronomy here at home," explains Thomas Delannoy, President of Bocuse d'Or Team Canada. "It is our responsibility to give back to those who have supported us including chefs, farmers, local producers and brands, especially with the foodservice and hospitality industries being among the most profoundly affected by the pandemic."

Though the team is disappointed to not have the opportunity to pursue their dream at this time, the Canadian restaurant industry has more pressing concerns than competing and that is where the team intends on focusing their efforts. The pandemic has had devastating effects from coast to coast with more than 10,000 restaurants having closed, and it's projected that an additional 50% of restaurants will cease operations within the next six months.

The team is working with restaurant industry leaders including sponsors, supporters and public institutions to quickly put in place strategies that will enable our local and national gastronomy to thrive. "Our Canadian Bocuse d'Or family is comprised of more than 500 of the best chefs in the country. Now is the time to put our competitive spirit aside to work together to restore and stabilize our industry in order to ensure its long-term viability and our collective success," says Delannoy on the importance of coming together as a community during these trying times.

## About Bocuse d'Or

Founded in 1987 by legendary French chefs, Paul Bocuse and Albert Romain, Bocuse d'Or's mission was to create a competition that would bring the greatest chefs out from behind closed doors and onto the limelight.

In Canada, we believe that competing at the famous Bocuse d'Or is a team effort. As the World Cup of cookery talents, the biennial event is the most prestigious culinary competition in the world. Only the most exquisite chefs get a coveted "golden ticket" to represent their countries in a battle against 23 other contenders. It is not only a unique chance to showcase techniques and food mastery, but an opportunity to also shine the spotlight on local flavours by incorporating them into the competition's dishes that will be seen and tasted by the cream-of-the-crop on the world stage.

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To schedule an interview with Samuel Sirois or President Thomas Delannoy, or to get more information or high-res photos, please contact The PR Department Inc at 416.535.3939 or at [medias@prdepartment.ca](mailto:medias@prdepartment.ca).

