

Winners of the inaugural F&B@Sea Awards announced



Left to right: Holly Payne, *Seatrade Cruise News* Deputy Editor; Jaime del Castillo, Campari Group Regional Manager - Americas, Cruises; Rudi Sodamin, Princess Cruises and F&B Maverick of the Year; Ken Taylor, MarkeTeam VP

The first-ever F&B@Sea Awards took place on April 11, 2024, marking a significant celebration of talent and innovation in the food and beverage sector of the cruise industry. The event, which took place at F&B@Sea, recognized the crucial impact of the food and beverage field in enhancing cruise experiences.

The ceremony was presided over by Ken Taylor, Vice President of MarkeTeam, and Holly Payne, Deputy Editor at *Seatrade Cruise News*. It covered seven award categories, with three targeting industry suppliers and four designated for cruise lines. Categories included Most Sustainable Product, Wellness Pioneer, Best Restaurant, F&B Maverick of the year, and several others. The panel of judges, selected for their dedication to culinary excellence, came from varied backgrounds such as academia, journalism, hotel management, and the wine and beverage sector, providing a comprehensive perspective on food and beverage standards.

The distinguished recipients of this year's awards were:

- Most Sustainable Product: Riverence Provisions

- Wellness Pioneer: Konscious Foods
- Trailblazing Product: AUTEK
- Best Beverage Programme: Royal Caribbean International; Icon of the Seas
- Best Restaurant: Crystal Cruises; Umi Uma
- Most Sustainable F&B Programme: Holland America Line; Food Sourcing & Food Waste Reduction
- F&B Maverick of the Year: Rudi Sodamin; Princess Cruises

The award for Best Vendor Stall Setup went to Pepsico, determined by onsite QR code voting, recognizing their outstanding stall presentation and engagement.

Chiara Giorgi, Global Brand and Event Director at Seatrade Cruise, commented, "The F&B@Sea Awards spotlight excellence and innovation, providing a global platform for industry leaders shaping the future of F&B cruising. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the 2024 winners for their remarkable achievements."

A representative from AUTEK expressed their gratitude: "We're honored and thrilled to receive the Trailblazing Product of the Year award for our ASM865A Maki Maker. AUTEK is dedicated to sharing Japanese culture through sushi, and we're delighted to introduce this culinary tradition to cruise line passengers. Our Sushi Robots enable cruise line chefs to deliver high-quality and authentic sushi experiences. Thank you for this incredible honor!"

Linken D' Souza, Senior Vice President, Food & Beverage Global Operations at Royal Caribbean International, added, "This award is a testament to Royal Caribbean's commitment to delivering the best family vacation and infusing 'adventure' in thoughtful and unexpected ways -- including the beverage program! On behalf of my colleagues shoreside and crew, thank you for recognizing the passion and hard work invested by all of us to deliver unique experiences, big and small. We're proud to have an award-winning program to show for it."

The F&B@Sea Awards trophies are made from sustainably sourced, individually unique, and completely recyclable oak wood. The F&B@Sea program was established in collaboration with major cruise lines, food and beverage professionals, and culinary experts, supported by the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA), and the industry consulting leader MarkeTeam.