

Winning Opens the Door of Opportunities

How Did All of This Start?

For many years, cooking contests have offered a chance for homemakers or amateur cooks to win prizes and become “pseudo celebrities” in the consumer products’ world. Many of the winning recipes were embraced by families, who welcomed them to become part of their own recipe favorites. Companies benefited by selling more of their products. Think Peanut Blossom Cookies, Green Bean Casserole, or the Tunnel of Fudge Cake. They all entered our life through cooking contests. Some of these contests also influenced home cooks to become chefs and author their own cookbooks.

The popularity of these contests influenced the passion for creating recipes and winning valuable prizes for them.

Enter Social Media and Television Networks

With social media and television networks entering the culinary world, they offered companies an even bigger audience. After the Japanese Iron Chef program was featured on Food Network, the full potential of reality cooking shows was realized and each season, another show joined the Networks.

Why Are They So Popular?

Reality food shows have evolved into a stepping stone for young talented men and women, who are offered the opportunity to highlight their talent and expand their expertise. With enough enthusiasm and passion, they can shorten their career climb if they are able to follow a “win or learn” philosophy and accept climbing a very competitive success ladder.

Tom Colicchio, a host on Top Chef, calls it “a trial of fire.” Participating in these shows takes integrity, vision, and grit according to Colicchio and produces passionate culinary leaders. These shows have also raised the status of cooks, bakers, and grillers to a higher career level.

The Top Shows

Top Chef that premiered in 2006 on Bravo features chefs that compete against other chefs in various culinary challenges and became a foodie favorite. The contestants are judged by professional chefs with one person eliminated after each episode. Its success has given birth to other spinoff programs like Top Chef Masters with award-winning chefs, Top Chef Just Desserts, and even Top Chef Junior, scheduled to premiere in October 2017.

Some other successful network shows include Master Chef, Hell’s Kitchen, Iron Chef, Iron Chef America, the Next Iron Chef, Chopped, and The Next Food Network Star. Reality cooking competitions serve up some of the best viewing on TV, allowing one to see innovative solutions to various culinary challenges.

For More Information See: Top Chef the Cookbook, Melcher Media, 2008

<https://www.thoughtco.com/top-five-reality-cooking-competitions-2874462>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/30/cooking-competitions-reality-tv-best-worst_n_4177117.html