

In advance of the S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants Awards 2011 two exceptional awards announced

Anne-Sophie Pic (Maison Pic) wins first ever Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef Award

Legendary Spanish chef Juan Mari Arzak to be recognised with a Lifetime Achievement Award

The S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants Awards today announced the results of two major categories ahead of the awards ceremony on Monday 18th April in London. Aside from the announcement of the World's Best Restaurant itself, the Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef and the Lifetime Achievement Award will be the most eagerly anticipated announcements from the prestigious annual list.

The Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef is a brand new award for 2011 and has been voted for by the 837 voters comprising the Electrolux World's 50 Best Restaurants Academy. Made up of voters from around the globe, the Electrolux World's 50 Best Academy is divided into 27 regions, each with a panel of 31 of the most renowned food critics, journalists, chefs and restaurateurs, headed by an influential, highly experienced chair person. The Lifetime Achievement Award is chosen by the Academy's chair people.

Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef 2011

The Academy is delighted to name France's Ann-Sophie Pic from Maison Pic as the first ever winner of the Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef 2011. She was chosen from an impressive shortlist that included Nadia Santini from Dal Pescatore, Italy and Elena Arzak from Arzak in northern Spain.

Anne-Sophie Pic made headlines in 2007 when she became only the fourth woman in history to hold a third Michelin star for her restaurant Maison Pic, in Valence, France. Having taken over from her distinguished father and grandfather in the kitchen, and at just 41 years old, she is one of the most distinguished chefs in France today. Mother to a young son, Anne Sophie studied extensively in the US and Japan before returning to Valence to devote herself to the family restaurant.

Lifetime Achievement Award 2011

The celebrated Spanish chef Juan Mari Arzak of restaurant Arzak is announced as the 2011 winner of the 'Lifetime Achievement Award', which will also be presented at the S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants Awards ceremony.

The Spanish chef is the third generation of his family to have occupied the site of restaurant Arzak in San Sebastian since 1897. Since taking over the restaurant in 1966, he has received continuous praise for having turned Arzak into a point of reference in both national and international gastronomy. Of those who champion their particular countries of birth on the plate, Juan Mari Arzak ranks as a pioneer. Arzak is a stalwart champion not just of his city but indeed, of Basque cuisine as a whole. His efforts to promote the culinary legacy of the Basque region eventually led to what many now refer to as "New Basque Cuisine". To this day, Arzak remains a family affair with Juan Mari working with his talented daughter Elena at his side.

In accepting this award, Juan Mari Arzak joins a prestigious group of chefs. Past winners of the S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants Lifetime Achievement Award include Joël Robuchon, Gualtiero Marchesi, Paul Bocuse, Albert and Michel Roux, Eckart Witzigmann and Alice Waters.

William Drew, Editor of Restaurant magazine, which organises the awards, said: "To announce good news to two of the world's great chefs, Anne-Sophie Pic and Juan Mari Arzak, is a huge pleasure for me, the team at Restaurant magazine and the Electrolux World's 50 Best Restaurants Academy. Both awards - Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef and the Lifetime Achievement Award - recognise those who have reached the top in what must be one of the world's toughest trades. We wish both Anne Sophie and Juan Mari continued success."

Stephane Gerschel, Director of International Communications at Veuve Clicquot, said: "We are delighted to announce Anne-Sophie Pic as this year's winner of the World's Best Female Chef. Anne-Sophie Pic's achievements at Maison Pic exemplify what the Veuve Clicquot World's Best Female Chef award set out to identify. She is known for her commitment to innovation and creativity whilst observing and honouring the traditions of the restaurant set up by her grandfather. As in Madame Clicquot's case 200 years ago, Anne-Sophie Pic also sets the standard for women in the creative culinary arts and Veuve Clicquot would like to congratulate her on this fantastic accomplishment."

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Notes to editors:

Restaurant magazine is the UK's leading publication for restaurateurs and chefs, and has been running The World's 50 Best Restaurants since 2002. Restaurant magazine is solely responsible for organising the awards, collating the votes and producing the list.

S.Pellegrino, international trademark of Sanpellegrino S.p.A., is title sponsor of the awards. 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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