



**Music City Hot Chicken Festival  
Amateur Cooking Competition  
2024 Competition Information and Rules**

**DATE AND TIME: Thursday, July 4, 2024**

- 10:30 a.m. – Teams are provided access to table/station and chicken. Teams may begin prep.
- 11:30 a.m. – Cooking begins
- 12:30 p.m. – Finished chicken must be on the presentation table
- 12:30 - 1 p.m. – Judging takes place
- 1:30 p.m. – Winner is announced

**WHERE:**

East Park  
700 Woodland Street, Nashville, TN

**EACH TEAM IS PROVIDED WITH:**

One (1) 8' table with cloth  
Extension cord with power (if you need more than one plug you must bring a power strip)  
Table cloth  
Fryer  
Oil for fryer (canola)  
Four (4) chicken breasts

**WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING:**

Everything else (rubs, spices, garnishes, utensils, plates, table decor, etc.)

**CONTEST AND ELIGIBILITY**

A contestant is any individual or group that will prepare and cook an entry for the purpose of being judged. Contestants and all team members must be amateur competitors. An **amateur** is someone who cooks Hot Chicken as a hobby and not as a job. Contestants will not be considered if they work in, own, or are otherwise involved with a restaurant that makes hot chicken, including food trucks and catering businesses.

Past competitors are welcome to apply. Past competition winners can apply and be invited back to defend their title. If an applicant has won in previous years, they will be considered with all the other applicants based on qualification and availability of space.

**INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES** - The interpretation of the rules and regulations are those of the competition committee and their decisions are final.



## GENERAL CONTEST RULES

- Cooking begins at 11:30 am. Contestants will have access to their cooking stations and chicken for prep beginning at 10:30 am. Fryers will be filled and warmed to 300 degrees by 11 am.
- Finished chicken must be on the presentation table by 12:30 pm.
- Each team will have one 8-foot table with a plastic tablecloth, one deep oil fryer and frying oil. There will be power on site, but each table will only have one outlet and it will be needed for your fryer, so plan accordingly if you want to bring anything such as a blender or hotplate for your sauce.
- Each team will be supplied with four bone-in, skin-on chicken breasts. Both breasts must be completely cooked and ready for the judges.
- Teams are welcome to be as creative as they would like with their presentation, as judges will see the presentation before they sample. Sides dishes or garnishes are permitted. Additionally, teams are welcome to decorate their tables (or themselves) as they wish but remember this is a family-friendly festival.
- Only participating team members can be inside the contest area. Fans and friends need to watch from outside. Space is limited so you must keep your number of cooking participants to 4 people.
- Once all teams have checked in, you will be given your chicken should you need to marinate before the time starts. No cooking may be done at this time. The fryer does not have a temperature gauge – it automatically sets to the cooking temp. We provide you with the oil. If you want to bring your own oil, you may if it is NOT peanut oil, due to food allergies. We suggest you bring a meat thermometer to ensure that your chicken is cooked to the proper 165 degrees. The contest director will be temperature checking each submission and undercooked chicken will be immediately disqualified. The contest director will also be there to guide teams on proper food preparation (sanitation, temperature of meat, sauces, etc.) to ensure safety.
- We will have 4-5 judges that will judge on taste, heat, and presentation. Scores are weighted as follows – Taste (60%), Heat (30%), Presentation (10%). Keep in mind, judges are not necessarily judging your chicken against Prince's or any other 'legend' chicken, rather judging them against your other competitors.
- Keep in mind, this is always one of the most fun parts of the festival and, although it may be a competition, is really meant to be relaxed and enjoyable. We will be there to help solve any issues that may arise day-of.

## JUDGING

- Total judging process usually takes 30 minutes.
- Each judge will have a clipboard with a scoring sheet and should be seated by 12:30pm.



- Teams turn-in chicken breasts (with or without garnish/sides) but remember, presentation counts for 10%.
- The Contest director takes the first team entry, shows it to the judges so they can judge the presentation, then goes back to the table and cuts the submissions based on the number of judges. Then each plate is judged for flavor and spice level.