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Shark Bay seafood takes honours as 2015 WA Signature Dish.

An enthusiastic crowd of foodies and other bon vivants, including a famous international restaurateur and WA-based celebrity chef and renowned food critic Matt Preston watched four amateur chefs stretch their culinary skills to the limit in the cook-off to produce this year's WA Signature Dish.

The West Australian Newspaper's food writer Rob Broadfield compered the tense kitchen struggle held on the main stage of the Margaret River Gourmet Escape village sprawling over the verdant lawns of the Leeuwin Estate winery.

But in the end there could be only one – and the finish of the hour-long extravaganza, saw Jerolina Rankin from the Gascoyne take honours with her fantastic Gascoyne seafood broth featuring Shark Bay prawns, blue swimmer crab, mackerel and zucchini noodles in a light spicy stock that featured home-made prawn and chilli oil.

Western Australian Fishing Industry Council (WAFIC) Chief Executive Officer John Harrison was delighted, declaring he was “cock-o-hoop” at the result.

“WAFIC took the decision to be a major sponsor of the 2015 WA Signature Dish campaign to promote the wonderful seafood that is harvested by professional fishers around the State's 12,000km coastline,” Mr Harrison said.

“It was gratifying to see that three of the four regions featured in the competition – the Gascoyne, Kimberley and Swan and surrounds regions – offered seafood ingredients that formed the basis of the dishes competing for honours in the finals.

“It was even more satisfying to see that seafood from one of those regions win the competition in front of a crowd that included international chefs. There is no better way to showcase WA's wonderful seafood (and other products).”

Mr Harrison said the quality of WA's seafood was acknowledged domestically and internationally, but it was still exciting to see it used to create special dishes. He congratulated the other chefs for the creativity they demonstrated during the WA Signature Dish campaign.

The final chefs and dishes:

- Rachel Hartshorn from the Peel region with a Harvey Beef eye fillet, bush tomato, native thyme and peppercorn with red wine jus.
- Matt Cook from the Swan Valley and surrounds with a lemon-myrtle marron laksa-inspired curry.

- Arylene Westlake-Jennings from the Kimberley with Cone Bay barramundi and green mango and mizuna salad.
- (Winner) Jerolina Rankin from the Gascoyne with a Gascoyne seafood broth.

The four finalists worked with mentor chefs Chris Taylor (Fraser's), Peter Manifis (Incontro), Kiren Mainwaring (Co-op Dining) and Jason Hutchen (Redmanna Waterfront Restaurant) to perfect their dishes before the finale. For full details visit <http://www.wasignaturedish.com.au>

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