

**“EROSKI-BCC Onenak 2023 Recognition Award”**

**EROSKI AND BASQUE CULINARY CENTER RECOGNIZE PROJECTS BY GRADUATES WHO OPT FOR LOCAL PRODUCE, INNOVATION, SUSTAINABILITY AND HEALTH**

- **The chefs Carlos Casillas (Barro Restaurant), Juan Carlos García Garrido (Vandelvira Restaurant) and Maore Ruíz and Omar Escarra (Bizio) have been the awardees**
- **This recognition gives visibility to the talent of young entrepreneurs who, through their values, represent a way of doing things that is aligned with that of EROSKI and Basque Culinary Center**
- **EROSKI and Basque Culinary Center share the aim of promoting projects that transform the way to understand food and gastronomy**
- **The event brought together a hundred representatives from the agro-food industry as well as institutions, associations in the sector and mass media**

**Donostia-San Sebastian, 17 November 2023.**- [EROSKI](#) and [Basque Culinary Center](#) have recognized today three graduates from the latter, whose projects are transforming the way to understand food and gastronomy. The awards have been given today, during the “EROSKI-BCC Onenak 2023 Recognition Award” event held at Basque Culinary Center in Donostia-San Sebastian, to professionals whose entrepreneurial projects are within the sphere of sustainability, local produce, innovation or health.

This recognition brings together elements that are common to both entities: the promotion of healthy eating with a focus on local and proximity products, which, by definition, creates wealth and an impact on their environment and contributes to the commitment to both environmental as well as local sustainability. And highlights the value of the joint work carried out in supporting young talent as the driving force for change in the food and gastronomy sector.

**The protagonists**

A group of experts from Basque Culinary Center selected the three candidates amongst graduates from Bachelor’s degrees, Master’s degrees and courses for professionals. From a 360° view of gastronomy, consideration was given to different profiles that complied with the following characteristics: having their own or entrepreneurial projects focused on sustainability, local produce and health. The selected candidates this year are Carlos Casillas, Maore Ruíz, Omar Escarra and Juan Carlos García Garrido.

Carlos Casillas, after studying at the Basque Culinary Center and having the best academic record in his class, has recently received the “T de Tapas” award and has been nominated for revelation chef at Madrid Fusion. Múd Wine Bar was his first gastronomic project which, in just over a year, evolved to [Barro](#). The restaurant is situated in Ávila and its philosophy is

based on embodying, through products and producers, the gastronomic tradition of the region, in contact with 60 local producers and committed to the environment, reducing its carbon footprint through reforestation, supporting recovery, planting wine vines and ancient crops, in addition to the regeneration of organic waste. The gastronomic proposal is a showcase of the food from Avila with a tribute to the environment and the roots of the province, where wild and vegetable flavours, discard products and forgotten recipes take precedence, as part of the Barro cookbook.

Other awarded professionals are Maore Ruiz and Omar Escarra, both from the Degree in Gastronomy and Culinary Arts of the Basque Culinary Center, and founders of [Bizio](#), a company that makes ciders, juices and fermented as well as non-fermented drinks with autochthonous apples from the Basque Country. They use local organic products only, innovating to make more than just cider.

This company uses an ancient method, with no added yeast or sulphites, replacing the barrels with food-grade plastic containers. In spite of their short career, Omar and Maore have been included in the list of the 100 young talents of gastronomy.

The third awarded project is the restaurant Vandelvira, managed by Juan Carlos García Garrido, one of the eight candidates for the Revelation Chef Award of Madrid Fusion 2023. A graduate in the first class of the Degree in Gastronomy and Culinary Arts of the Basque Culinary Center, Juan Carlos, has worked in internationally renowned kitchens such as Azurmendi, Yoshihiro Narisawa in Japan or the Adriá brothers' "El Barri" group. In the year 2020, he landed in Baeza to build the new Vandelvira and take over from his parents, who have been in the hospitality business since 1991. The kitchen he manages is based on the influence and knowledge acquired in his short and intense career, adapted to Andalusian food, where cuts such as the parpatana or dishes such as the pipirrana merge with techniques from other worlds but are given a new feel, with a team below the age of 30, presenting a technical cuisine based on local produce, which is their flagship.

During the event, the graduates had the opportunity to present their projects and were also in charge of devising and executing the gastronomic experience that the guests to the event enjoyed.

### **Award ceremony**

The event brought together a hundred representatives from the agro-food value chain. From producers to distributors, including the processing industry, as well as agents related to the correct development and the visibility of the chain processes. It was also attended by administrations, mass media, associations in the sector and the most representative social organizations.

During the event, the director of the BCC, Joxe Mari Aizega, said that: *"Basque Culinary Center is proud to support the young people who are going to give a boost to the present and the future of the gastronomic sector. Our collaboration in initiatives such as the Eroski BCC Onenak Recognition Award by EROSKI, a member of our Board since 2011, accurately*



### **Press Release**

*reflects our commitment to the new generations, giving visibility to projects based on values such as sustainability, local produce and health".*

Moreover, EROSKI's CEO, Rosa Carabel, pointed out the importance of undertaking "projects that give viable responses to the uncertainties around us, something we keep working on at EROSKI. We are constantly searching for innovative solutions and promoting respect for and a favourable management of the environment, all of it with the aim of contributing to improving the society in which we operate. These are things on which EROSKI wishes to keep working hard".

### **About EROSKI**

EROSKI is the first distribution group of the cooperative type in Spain and one of the leaders in the northern Spanish market. Its commercial network, at the end of 2022, comprised 1,505 stores, including supermarkets, hypermarkets, cash & carry and *online supermarket*; in addition to petrol stations, sports shops and other non-food businesses. Likewise, it has more than 5 million Client Members and 29,000 workers, to which the group of workers from the over 600 franchised stores has to be added.

EROSKI has been part of Basque Culinary Center's Board of Trustees since it was established twelve years ago.

### **About Basque Culinary Center**

Basque Culinary Center is a unique ecosystem where training, innovation, research and entrepreneurship coexist with the aim of developing and promoting gastronomy, understood as the reasoned knowledge of what we eat and how we eat. Our mission is based on values such as passion, innovation, excellence and social commitment. Located in San Sebastian since 2011, Basque Culinary Center is a pioneering institution made up of the Faculty of Gastronomic Science and BCC Innovation, the gastronomy technology centre: an interdisciplinary research centre that does research and innovates in the design of products and services while at the same time supporting companies, new entrepreneurs and young people with significant projects.

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