



Gullah Taste of Gullah Rice Cookoff

Official Contest Rules – 2025

Purpose

The **Gullah Taste of Gullah Rice Cookoff** celebrates the history, significance, and cultural impact of rice cultivation in South Carolina. It honors the essential role of the Gullah community in shaping rice farming in the United States and beyond, while furthering the mission of the Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc. to preserve and promote Gullah culture.

About

Rice, known as “Carolina Gold,” was once the money crop of the colonial South. The Gullah Geechee people, whose roots trace back to West Africa (especially Sierra Leone), brought with them the agricultural expertise that shaped rice production in America. Today, rice remains a staple of Gullah households. This Cookoff invites contestants to showcase their culinary skills by preparing rice dishes that reflect both tradition and creativity.

Eligibility

- **Adults:** 18 years and older.
- **Youth (Da’ Chillin’s Cookoff):** 17 years and younger. Youth under 13 must be accompanied by a non-cooking adult chaperone.
- Family members of Anita Singleton Prather and appointed judges, plus staff, cast, or crew of Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc. are not eligible.

Entry & Fees

- **Adults:** \$85 per entry
- **Youth:** \$40 per entry
- **Deadline:** November 30, 2025, 11:59 p.m.
- All contestants must pre-register and pay the entry fee in full to participate.

Rules of Engagement

1. All rice for judging must be cooked **onsite** on the day of the event at the Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce (711 Bladen Street, 2nd Floor). Prepared stock may be brought, but the rice itself must be cooked independently onsite.
2. Contestants must also prepare **200, 2 oz. rice samples** for People’s Choice judging. These may be prepared in advance. Containers will be provided, and samples will be served anonymously to the public.

3. **Prep Kitchen:** Opens at 8:30 a.m. and closes at 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 6, 2025. All samples (judges' and People's Choice) must be ready for collection at noon for transport to the Waterfront.
4. Public tasting and voting will occur between **1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.** Winners will be announced during the festival's closing hour between **3:00 – 4:00 p.m.**
5. Each contestant will be provided one (1) skirted table, one (1) chair, table covering, and water. Contestants must bring their own cooking apparatus (no fire-operated equipment permitted).
6. Contestants must bring all necessary supplies to keep food safe and stations sanitary, including a food thermometer, gloves, and sanitizer. All rice dishes must be held at appropriate temperatures per Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) guidelines. **Food safety first!**
7. Each contestant will be given a form to identify the dish being prepared, as well as containers for plating samples for judging.
8. ONLY rice dishes entered in the competition may be served at contestant stations.
9. Participation in the Cookoff does **not** qualify as a food vendor license. Contestants wishing to sell food must register separately as vendors.

Da' Chillin's Rice Cookoff (Youth Division)

- Youth cooks must prepare their dishes independently, with adults providing **supervision only** (e.g., moving heavy items, ensuring fire/heat safety).
- Adults may not taste, stir, or advise on seasoning/cooking decisions. All recipe choices must be the youth's own.

Judging Criteria

For all awards other than the People's Choice awards, dishes will be scored on a 50-point scale:

- Crumb – 10 points
- Texture – 10 points
- Taste – 10 points
- Flavor – 10 points
- Consistency – 10 points

Awards & Scoring

Award	Adults	Youth
1 st Place	\$3,000	\$500
2 nd Place	\$2,000	\$300
3 rd Place	\$1,000	\$200
People's Choice	\$500	\$100

- Score sheets will be tallied by the Competition Committee.
- Highest points = 1st place; second highest = 2nd place; third highest = 3rd place.
- People's Choice is based on public tokens collected.
- All judging is final. Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc. reserves the sole right to make all contest-related decisions, including disqualification.

Liability & Risk Agreement

- Contestants enter voluntarily and assume all risks, including potential injury, illness, or property loss.
- Contestants agree to indemnify and hold harmless Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc., its staff, vendors, sponsors, and affiliates from all claims arising from participation.
- Contestants grant Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc. full rights to use their name, voice, likeness, and dish for promotional purposes without further compensation.

Acknowledgement of Rules & Risks

I certify that the information provided is correct and that I have read and agree to the rules of the **Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.'s Taste of Gullah Rice Cookoff**. I understand and accept the risks of participation and grant permission for use of my name, likeness, and dish in promotions.

Name of Contestant:** _____

Contestant Signature: _____

Date: _____

(If participant is under 18, parent/guardian must sign below.)

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

******Contestants should bring government issued proof of age to Cookoff for verification.