



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | July 28, 2026

Chef Tre Wilcox Launches Monday Night Chef SmackDown, Bringing DFW's Culinary Heavyweights Into a Live Mystery-Basket Battle

Five-night series begins September 21 at TRE Cooking Concepts in Plano, pairing 10 standout chefs in head-to-head, 45-minute competitions before guest judges and a live audience.

PLANO, Texas — TRE Cooking Concepts today announced the launch of **Monday Night Chef SmackDown**, a five event live culinary competition series hosted by award-winning chef and television personality Tre Wilcox. Beginning Monday, September 21, 2026, the series will transform Wilcox's intimate Plano event venue into a high-energy "Kitchen Stadium," where two accomplished Dallas-Fort Worth chefs will race the clock, respond to a mystery basket and present their best work to a guest judging panel — with the audience close enough to see every decision, adjustment and final plate.

Unlike a traditional cooking demonstration, Monday Night Chef SmackDown is built as culinary theater: professional chefs, unfamiliar ingredients, real-time pressure and no second takes. Each 45-minute battle places technique, instinct, creativity and execution at center stage, giving guests a rare look at how elite chefs think when the menu has not been written for them.

The series also expands the night beyond the competition. VIP and General Admission experiences are designed to include complimentary TRE Cooking Concepts bites, signature cocktail programming, interactive vendors, a photo booth and a lively BYOB-friendly atmosphere. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; competition begins at 7:00 p.m.

"I want viewers to walk away with a 'can do' feeling in the kitchen." — *Chef Tre Wilcox*

That philosophy has long shaped Wilcox's work. His name also serves as the framework for his culinary approach — Techniques, Recipes and Execution — and Monday Night Chef SmackDown gives audiences a front-row view of all three under pressure.

THE 2026-2027 CHEF MATCHUPS

DATE	CHEF / RESTAURANT	VS. CHEF / RESTAURANT
September 21, 2026	Ben McCracken Armor Brewing Company — Allen	Henry Johnson Palladino's — Dallas
October 19, 2026	Tom Fleming Crossroads Diner — Plano	Justin Samsill Barcelona Wine Bar — Dallas
November 16, 2026	Rodman Shields Milkshake Concepts — Frisco	Nick Paladino Meridian — Dallas
December 21, 2026	Albert 'Rocky' Lavalais IV DNoir Cajun Cuisine — Van Alstyne	Israel Fearon Hardwood Hospitality Group — Dallas
January 18, 2027	Ryan Oruch Seabreeze Fish Market & Grill / The Wilfred — Plano	Aaron Valimonte Saint Ann Restaurant & Bar — Dallas

MONDAY NIGHT CHEF SMACKDOWN

May the best chef win.



Every matchup brings a different culinary point of view and a new set of unknowns. Across five Monday nights, the series will spotlight the depth, range and personality of the region's restaurant community while giving participating chefs a stage built for bold choices and memorable performances.

A FORMAT DESIGNED FOR AUDIENCE ENERGY — AND MEDIA ACCESS

The venue's state-of-the-art demonstration kitchen and television-studio atmosphere make the competition highly visual, fast-moving and easy to experience from the room. Media are invited to attend, interview Chef Tre Wilcox and competing chefs, capture live competition footage, cover sponsor and vendor activations, and arrange advance or on-site segments, subject to availability and credential approval.

EVENT INFORMATION

Event: Monday Night Chef SmackDown

Venue: TRE Cooking Concepts

Address: 8200 Preston Road, Suite 135, Plano, TX 75024

Doors: 6:00 p.m.

Competition: 6:30 p.m.

Admission: VIP and General Admission experiences

Tickets and complete event information:

trewilcox.com/monday-night-chef-smackdown-2026/

MEDIA CONTACT

Chef Tre Wilcox

TRE Cooking Concepts

214-296-2168

tre4food@gmail.com

Instagram: @trecookingconcepts

Media interviews, promotional opportunities and on-site coverage are welcome. Advance credential requests are appreciated.

ABOUT CHEF TRE WILCOX



Chef Tre Wilcox is an award-winning chef, television personality, educator and founder of TRE Cooking Concepts. A self-trained chef who rose through the professional kitchen ranks, Wilcox earned a five-star review as chef de cuisine at Abacus by age 29. He is a two-time James Beard Foundation Rising Star Chef nominee, was named Best Chef by The Dallas Morning News, appeared on Bravo's Top Chef and Top Chef All-Stars, and competed on Food Network's Iron Chef America as part of Kent Rathbun's winning team against Bobby Flay. His work has also been featured in publications including Gourmet, Modern Luxury and Food & Wine.

ABOUT TRE COOKING CONCEPTS

Established in 2016, TRE Cooking Concepts is a chef-led culinary event venue in Plano, Texas, created to place guests inside the action. The venue combines state-of-the-art demonstration kitchens with the energy of a network television studio and hosts team-building cooking competitions, private cooking classes, catering experiences and special culinary events. Through hands-on formats and polished hospitality, TRE Cooking Concepts makes professional culinary technique accessible, entertaining and memorable.

EDITORIAL AND BROADCAST ANGLES

- Inside DFW's new live chef-battle series and the rise of experiential culinary entertainment
- Meet the 10 chefs representing restaurants and hospitality groups across North Texas
- Behind the mystery basket: how professional chefs make high-stakes decisions in real time • Chef Tre Wilcox on building a "Kitchen Stadium" experience for a live local audience ###