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SA chef turns up the heat

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Apprentice Amity Lobb, 20, is this year's SA finalist in the national Nestle Golden Chef's Hat Award. Picture Dean Martin

Patrick McDonald

Exploring the limitless potential of basic ingredients has inspired this year's South Australian finalist in the annual Nestle Golden Chef's Hat Award.

Amity Lobb, 20, impressed judges with her two-course menu, to score a gold rating at the recent regional heat.

She will be among 12 chefs

from across Australia and New Zealand to compete in the grand final in Sydney on September 11-12, with the winner to be announced at an industry awards dinner the next day.

"I was drawn to cooking by the endless possibilities," Ms Lobb said.

"When you can take a few simple ingredients and turn it into something special for

people to enjoy is what motivates me."

Ms Lobb, who is a third-year apprentice at TAFE Regency and works as a chef at Adelaide Oval, said she couldn't wait to meet "other like-minded chefs" at the grand final: "Making connections like that is so important in the industry."

Her competition menu included a main course of

reverse-seared sous vide pork with instant mash gnocchi and creamy black garlic mushroom sauce, and a dessert with brandy-soaked carrot cake, goat's cheese, walnut meringue, white chocolate, lemon myrtle mousse.

The Golden Chef's Hat Award has been running for 60 years now, attracting more than 7500 participants.