

The Judges Solution

The term “mixed up” is cluing anagrams. The contestant’s name, Ana, is also meant to evoke “anagram.” (It’s not necessarily a hint word, but something fun for solvers to notice once they’ve solved the puzzle.)

Each of the judges’ comments (on the left) includes one word that must be anagrammed. These words anagram into ingredients, which correspond to dishes (on the right).

- “A delightfully **rustic** dessert!”
“Rustic” anagrams to “citrus” - The word “citrus” can be found in “**Episode 5**: Cake with citrus compote”
- “Tasted like you used **cheap** ingredients.”
“Cheap” anagrams to “peach” - The word “peach” can be found in “**Episode 7**: Peach cobbler”
- “It’s **plainer** than your usual dishes.”
“Plainer” anagrams to “praline” - The word “praline” can be found in “**Episode 4**: Almond praline”
- “You were **fretful**, but it turned out delicious!”
“Fretful” anagrams to “truffle” - The word “truffle” can be found in “**Episode 1**: Chocolate truffle”
- “You can’t **blame** this one on the time limit.”
“Blame” anagrams to “melba” - The word “melba” can be found in “**Episode 6**: Melba toast topped with pâté”
- “You decided to go with the **flow** this time.”
“Flow” anagrams to “fowl” - The word “fowl” can be found in “**Episode 2**: Guinea fowl pie”
- “This is one for the **ages**!”
“Ages” anagrams to “sage” - The word “sage” can be found in “**Episode 3**: Potato and sage tart”

The word “index” in the preamble text refers to indexing. Solvers must use the corresponding episode number to index the judges’ comments. For example, look at the 5th letter of comment #1, since episode #5 corresponds to judges’ comment #1.

The indexed letters are highlighted:

1. “Such **b**uttery layers – a delightfully rustic dessert!”
2. “Seemed **l**ike you used cheap ingredients.”
3. “So **v**ery bland – plainer than your usual dishes.”
4. “**N**o need to be fretful – it turned out delicious!”

5. “You didn’t finish – and don’t try to blame this one on the time limit.”

6. “Deciding to go with the flow this time paid off.”

7. “Very delicious – truly one for the ages!”

This spells out **BLENDER**, which is the solution to the puzzle (i.e., what Ana needs for the last signature challenge). “Blender” also evokes mixing things around, like letters being anagrammed.