

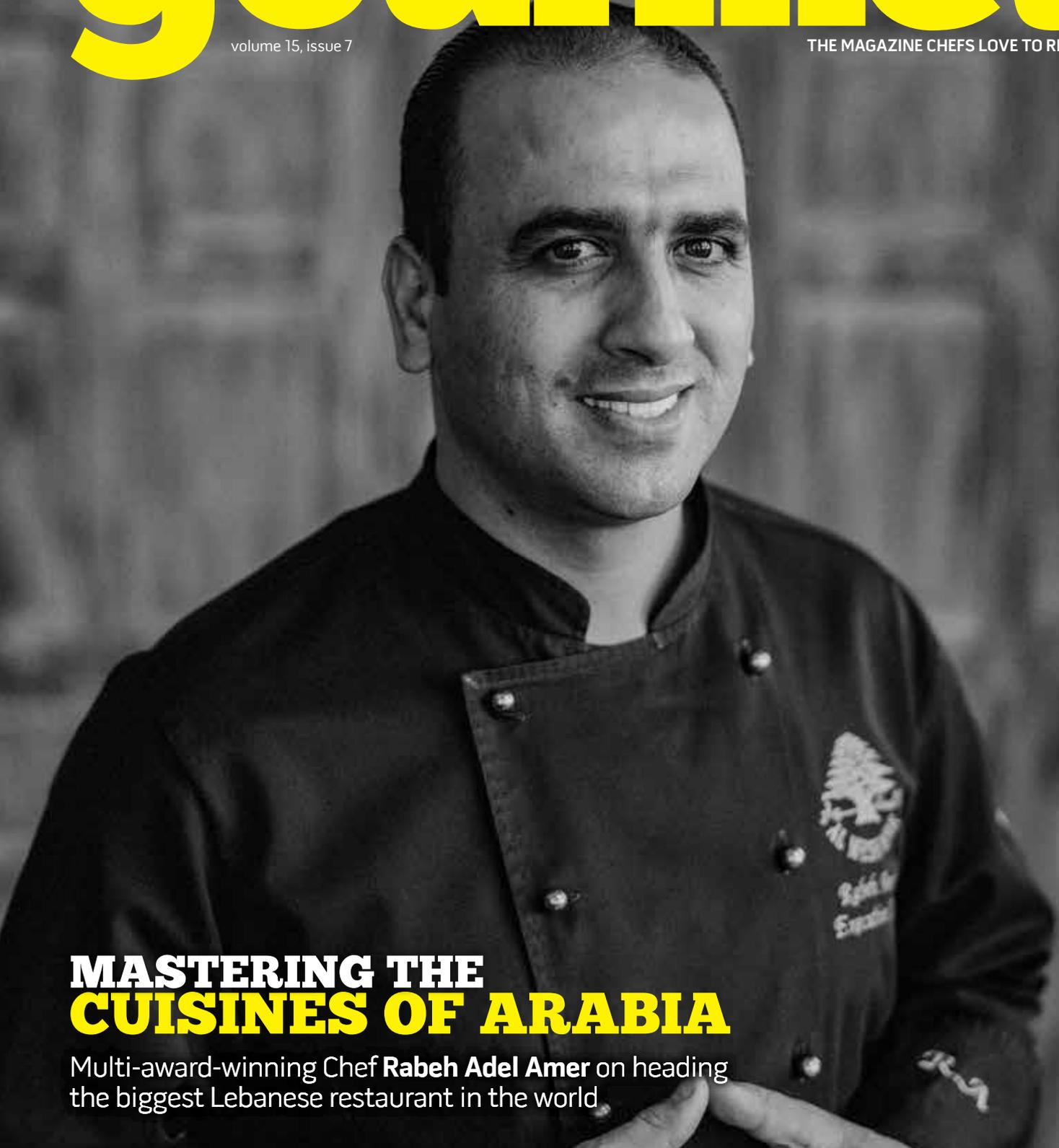
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volume 15, issue 7

THE MAGAZINE CHEFS LOVE TO READ



MASTERING THE CUISINES OF ARABIA

Multi-award-winning Chef **Rabeah Adel Amer** on heading the biggest Lebanese restaurant in the world

PASTRY MASTERY

Chef **Budi** has done it all – from selling food on the streets to baking a cake for Denzel Washington



CANADIAN ETHOS

If you flew Emirates this past decade, chances are you have already enjoyed his sweet treats



TRIPLE DELIGHT

Three fabulous teams compete for the Nestle Professional Golden Chef's Hat Award – UAE this month



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Dear fellow chefs, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the October issue of our Gulf Gourmet.

Hope you and your family are all well and in good health. Some of us are still without work, as many workplaces remain closed or certain positions have been made redundant. Wishing you all the best and hope that everyone gets back to work soon.

Your Emirates Culinary Guild is staying busy. After the very busy summer program, relaunch of the **Emirates Culinary Guild YouTube Channel**, the US Beef and USA Poultry virtual competitions, we are already working on the next project. Help us promote our You Tube Channel by getting more people to subscribe and watch our channel and our playlist. We also have videos from members and friends of the Emirates Culinary Guild. If you want us to post your video, contact us emiratesculinaryguild@gmail.com. We are happy to post them if the quality is good.

On September 15 we had a very successful Awards Event for US Beef and USA Poultry virtual competitions. Even keeping all the rules for social distancing, it was great to have so many chefs in one room again. Thank you Chef Ramulo and the entire Jumeirah Creekside Team for the perfect execution of the evening and the great meal. Read more about it in this issue. I would like to welcome our new corporate partner – Potato USA represented by GMA Marketing Management.

If you have the time to watch the webinar brought to you by Potato USA and the Emirates Culinary Guild



go to our Emirates Culinary Guild YouTube Channel and watch them. Your ECG also partnered with Host Milano for the "Risotto Quest". Great virtual competition. If you have a Risotto on your menu, you should join this virtual video competition.

We are also in the process of launching the next big one.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY USPEEC

A virtual competition with USA Poultry and US Eggs – Sweet and Savory. Contact emiratesculinaryguild@gmail.com for more details and registration. The team has also started working on Salon Culinaire 2021, stay tuned and watch this space for further plans and updates.

Please visit gulfgourmet.net to browse through previous issues of this magazine. Visit emiratesculinaryguild.net to see our upcoming events calendar. And visit www.facebook.com/wacsyoungchefs for young chefs to be in contact with over 4,000 chefs worldwide.

Please do not miss the company profile of our corporate members. We really do appreciate your support. Also do look at the Friends of the Guild pages to check all our supporters.

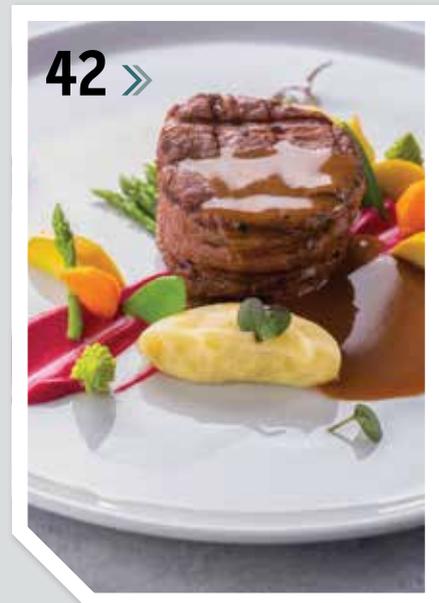
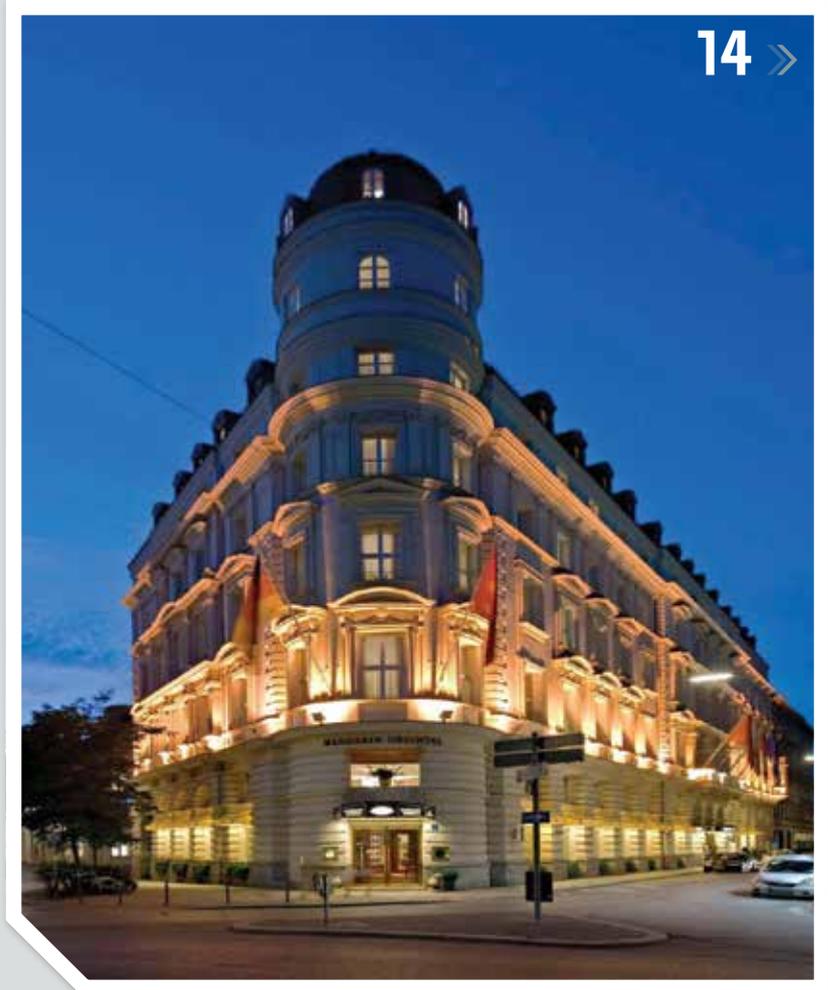
Culinary Regards,

Uwe Micheel
President, Emirates Culinary Guild
Director of Kitchens,
Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek



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READY TO BAKE

PREMIUM
FRENCH BREAD
& CROISSANTS



editor'snote

email editor@gulfgourmet.net

The stories of chefs and their struggles to get to where they are today, never ceases to amaze me. This is after nearly a decade of editing this magazine and meeting some fantastic people in the industry. The unique journey of each chef interviewed for this issue is no different.

Each article is a testament to the resilience and tenacity of humans to overcome all odds to not just recover from a loss but to grow by leaps and bounds based on the learnings from that period of struggle.

We have the story of an Indonesian chef who went through five years of struggle and even ended up selling food on the streets before he could become a Commis at a five-star hotel. He survived on a never give-up attitude. Today he has over ten of years of experience leading culinary teams and has been employed everywhere from Dubai to Canada to the Caribbean.

We have another chef who started watching his grandfather bake in a small village in Calgary and after years of hard work, go on to lead the pastry team for Emirates airlines. At one point he was overlooking the preparation of over 200,000 desserts a day! If you flew Emirates any time in the past 10 years you have probably eaten a dessert envisaged by him.



Thanks to the push from Nestle Professional and the Emirates Culinary Guild, we even have a section where we focus on identifying the best young chefs from hotels and restaurants around the country. We bring the stories of these young people to light and give them the opportunity to shine bright with unique recipes. They may not realize it right now, but these chefs have everything going for them to become executive chefs of the future. All they need is to ensure that they do not waver their focus from the job at hand.

As a wise person once said, people overestimate what they can achieve in a year and underestimate what they can in 10.

This issue is filled with stories that will probably make you feel as if everything is back to normal. My inbox is flooded with press releases from hotels announcing their reopening. We even have new hotels opening and chefs being recruited for high-end roles.

So, if you feel like you are still stuck, please do not lose hope. Do the best you can and the I am sure that your time is just around the corner.

The only thing that you must worry about is wearing a mask and washing hands regularly...even if you are among friends and colleagues. Your actions have a direct impact on businesses, careers and, of course, lives.

If the numbers of those contracting Covid-19 continue to increase, people will choose to stay indoors and think twice before stepping out. My 14-hour direct flight from Dubai was cancelled abruptly due to poor demand and business travel will not recover anytime soon. Our industry thrives on people going out and enjoying a break from routine, so please do your bit.

Until next time, enjoy the read and keep cooking with passion.

Aquin George
Editor

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October 2020 Gulf Gourmet

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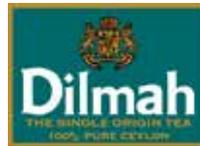




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October 2020 **Gulf Gourmet**

newsbites

UAE farm pledges commitment to animal welfare

The brand that positions itself as the UAE's first and largest locally integrated dairy company has made a public pledge to protect and ensure the wellbeing of each of its 15,000 cows.

Al Ain Farms says that they will constantly improve policies and processes across their farms in the Al Ain desert to make this happen.

They are doing this as part of their support to UAE's National Food Security Programme and National Food Security Strategy 2051. The 5-part pledge includes providing a stress-free quality living environment with companionship; ensuring a diet of premium quality feed; protecting each cow from pain, suffering, injury and disease; daily access to outdoor fields and spaces;



and training staff to treat each cow with care and compassion.

The company has built specialized houses, milking parlours, young stock sheds, open-air hay stores and

commodity barns spread across a large open-air farm. Specialized cooling systems installed across the farms keep cows free from heat exposure while they enjoy the outdoors, says a spokesperson for the company.

IHG opens Indigo in Downtown Dubai



This month, the InterContinental Hotels Group opens their first boutique lifestyle Hotel Indigo in the region. The property is located on the banks of Dubai creek, minutes away from Burj Khalifa.

The creek's story of transformation – from a trading post to the city of the future – has influenced the hotel's architectural and interior design, says their spokesperson.

Laura Eggleton, the property's general manager, says that the property combines the city's heritage with the "fresh buzz of the ever-evolving landscape through local collaborations". Not sure what it means but we are confident that guests will be treated to a great stay at the 269-room hotel that welcomes pets.

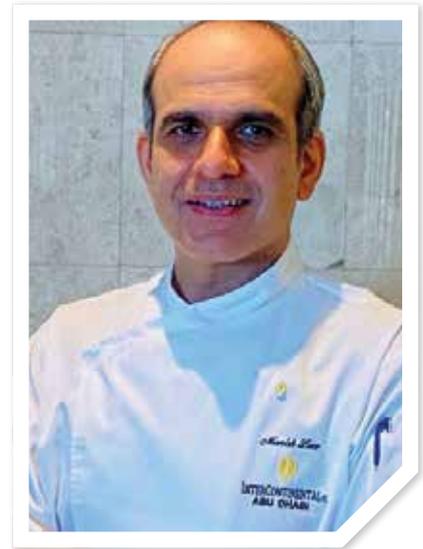
Law is Executive Chef

Manish Law has been appointed Executive Chef at the InterContinental Abu Dhabi. With more than 22 years of culinary experience, the Indian national will be responsible for overseeing all culinary operations at the hotel including Fishmarket, Byblos Sur Mer, Cho Gao Marina Walk, and Circo.

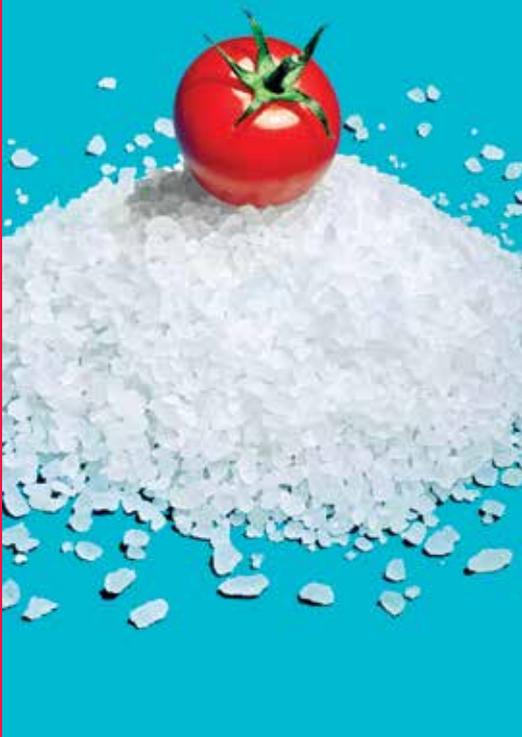
Law was previously part of the pre-opening team of Southern Sun Abu Dhabi and Sheraton Dubai Creek Hotel & Towers.

He has also held a number of executive chef positions for international hotel chains such as Taj Group, Sheraton, The Oberoi, and Pan Pacific, having worked around the world in countries including Egypt, Japan, Lebanon, South Africa, Kuwait, Singapore, and Malaysia.

You may also recognise Law from television, with the multi-talented chef making appearances on cooking show on Egyptian Nile TV and the Low Cal Show on Zee TV in South Africa.



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October 2020 **Gulf Gourmet**

Armani Hotel Dubai to host first kosher restaurant in UAE

On the heels of the Abraham Accords signed in Washington between Israel, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates comes Armani/Kaf, the first kosher-certified dining destination in the UAE, which officially opened its doors last month.

The 40-seat pop-up dinner venue on the ground floor of the award-winning Burj Khalifa and Armani Hotel Dubai specializes in kosher cuisine that complies with kashrut, Jewish dietary laws.

It will be operated under the rabbinical supervision of Rabbi Levi Y. Duchman,

rabbi of the UAE, who has certified the venue with glatt-kosher and pas Yisroel certifications from Emirates Kosher Supervising Agency, the only UAE-based kosher certifier.

At the culinary helm is Armani Hotel Dubai executive chef Fabien Fayolle. His seasonally changing menu offers a global gourmet take on kosher cuisine designed to reflect Dubai's multicultural demographic.

The menu honors signature Armani dishes with flavors and preparations from Asia and Europe to the Middle East, reports JNS.



Mandarin Oriental joins hands with The Oberoi, reopens key European properties

You heard it first here. Two of the world's most iconic luxury brands – Mandarin Oriental and The Oberoi – have announced a long-term strategic alliance that will see the two groups collaborating on various initiatives.

For now, this means members of their loyalty programmes will be recognized and offered curated experiences by both brands.

Our experience staying at The Oberoi (Ranthambore and Mumbai) as well as the Mandarin Oriental (San Francisco and Munich) were different yet exceptional. How the partnership marries each other's unique heritage and identity is unclear. That said, we are glad that two Asian brands are coming together to push the boundaries of uber-luxury escapades.

In other news, Mandarin Oriental (MO) hotels, resorts and residences has announced it is fully reopening key properties in four European cities – Munich, Milan, Paris and London.

Our own suggestion is that if you are travelling to the Bavarian capital, the best style statement you can make



in the city centre is to stay at the Mandarin Oriental Munich. Its merges timeless, sophisticated charm with a contemporary, modern design and offers personalized service that's way above anything else in the city.

You do not even have to leave the building to enjoy world-renowned Chef Nobu Matsuhisa's personal culinary favourites. The Matsuhisa Munich restaurant housed within is a must visit fine-dining destination.

Sofitel JBR reopens

From Times Square in New York to Jumeirah Beach in Dubai, we have yet to come across a Sofitel property that disappoints. With a staff that understands how to elevate the guest experience, we are glad that they have announced the opening of their Jumeirah property following a six-month hiatus.

As part of the "six-month long renovation", two new culinary experiences have been added – an all-day dining concept designed to create a French café experience and a French Brasserie that harks back to "La Belle Époque".



Chef Kjell heads Park Hyatt Dubai

Kjell Kollin has been appointed Executive Chef at Park Hyatt Dubai. The Swedish national brings over three decades of experience to the role.

In his new role, Chef Kollin – along with a team of over 100 – is responsible for looking after the culinary operations of the resort's 14 F&B venues including Noepe, Brasserie Du Park, Casa de Tapas, and Thai Kitchen.

He brings a wealth of fine-dining experience, having previously been executive chef of Beijing's Azur Restaurant by Mauro Colagreco and worked at hotels including Four Seasons Resort, Maldives, The Domain, Manama, and The Grill Restaurant, Stockholm. He has also worked in Japan, South Korea, Azerbaijan, and opened Jumeirah Zabeel Saray, Palm Jumeirah in a previous stay in the UAE.

Global F&B turnover set to double by 2024

Food & Beverage is performing better than the economic average say the organizers of Tuttofood and the long-term growth is set to be fuelled by millennials and Gen-Z.

The average of forecasts by various analysts calculated by specialist website Statista (as of August 2020 to take the impact of COVID-19 into account) on a global level the F&B sector should close 2020 with a turnover in excess of 236.5 billion dollars, significantly higher than the 155.5 billion of 2019, a 52.1% increase in fact.

Following on from this peak, the growth will continue in coming years, with the sector set for a 15.4% rise next year, reaching 272.9 billion, followed by 12.4% growth in 2022 (for an overall figure of 306.7 billion) and an 8.8% increase in 2023 (equating to 333.8 billion).

Looking ahead to 2024, the global F&B market value will be more than double what it is today, a further increase of 6.3% contributing to what is set to be a record figure of 354.76 billion dollars. This year, the five main Food & Beverage markets will be, in order, China with 152.44 billion dollars, followed by Japan that records 19.11 billion, the USA with 15.40 billion, the UK with 8.5 and finally South Korea that will approach 7.74 billion dollars.

This growth is the result of various factors. Firstly, the consumer base is widening. There are roughly 650 million consumers today (equating to less than one in ten of the Earth's inhabitants, or 8.5%), but this figure will rise to more than 1.76 billion in 2024, with a penetration rate of 22.8%, or more than one in five. Essentially, for every family unit anywhere in the world there will be at least one person who shops.

Have you subscribed to the ECG YouTube channel? What are you waiting for? **Subscribe NOW!**

HARDWORK PAYS

From selling food on the streets of Jakarta to baking a birthday cake for Denzel Washington in the West Indies, Executive Pastry Chef **Budi Setiono** has had a whirlwind career path. And his culinary story is far from over

Born and raised in Yogyakarta, on the Indonesian island of Java, Chef Budi Setiono grew up in the city known for its traditional arts and cultural heritage. This influence allowed him to bring a sense of originality and creativity to his two decades-long-career in gourmet pastry.

The 45-year-old has invested most of his professional life working outside Indonesia as the country's unofficial culinary ambassador.

The idea of delighting guests with delicious creations began as a child when he saw happy guests at his grandmother's traditional restaurant (warung). "I am really close to her and grew up around food," says Chef Budi.

Not wanting to choose a career without having explored other options, Chef Budi pursued economics but dropped out due to poor grades. His tryst with professional pastry making happened soon after when he took up his first job as a front office staff at a hotel.

He worked night shifts and trained himself in art of making pastries during the day. After his training he was recruited by a popular French patisserie Olala. His work was so good that he was invited to work in Jakarta, the capital city. Unfortunately, the Asian financial crisis of 1997 coupled with a political upheaval forced Chef Budia to lose his job.

Not one to give up, Chef Budia began cooking and selling food on the streets. He did what it took to survive.

A Danish man, a high-ranking official who worked at the United Nations, happened to pick up some street food one day. The expat got talking and was surprised by Chef Budi's cooking prowess and affable persona. "His family was looking for someone who could work at their home and cook food for them. I grabbed the opportunity," says Chef Budia.

To his luck, the family sponsored his studies at a top-tier culinary school. Two years later, he graduated and joined The Chedi Bangdung, a five-star property as a Commis.

Chef Budia may have had to struggle more than most people to become a Commis at a five-star hotel. That said, this trial by fire made him a force to reckon with. He was smarter and more knowledgeable than his peers. He says, "When Shangri-la Jakarta, one of Indonesia's most popular hotels, was looking to hire a young pastry chef, I was selected from nearly 150 candidates."

His first international stint was in Dubai at the Nad Al Sheeba Club. He was soon hired by the Chedi Muscat as Demi Chef de Partie. A few years later, he was hired by Kananaskis Mountain Lodge, Autograph Collection (it was then a Delta hotel and part of the Fairmont) in Canada where he worked for two years.

"I just sent them my CV and the job in Canada worked out for me. Canada is also where I met my ex-wife," he says.

From Canada he moved to the Caribbean to join BodyHoliday St Lucia as a Pastry Sous Chef. However, a roadside mugging incident, where he found his neck against the sharp edge of a knife, made Chef Budi reconsider his decision to live there. "I was shaken by that incident. I resigned and moved to Turks & Caicos Islands at the Regent Palm. The pay was good, but the 2008 hurricane forced me to return to Indonesia for a few months until the hotel reopened," he says.

He used the break to work at the Hard Rock Hotel in Bali. "I remember the hotel needed everyone to be fun, and I had to dye my hair blue," he says and laughs.

He returned to the Regent Palm for a year. He then worked at a neighbouring resort called Amanyara that is frequented by Hollywood celebrities looking to getaway from their daily rigor. "I was hired to be their Executive Pastry Chef and I got to meet Gwyneth Paltrow and even bake a birthday cake for Denzel Washington," he says.

In 2011 he moved back to Nad al Sheeba (where he once worked as a Commis). "It was now built into the magnificent Meydan hotel and I was delighted to return as the Executive Pastry Chef. It was yet another reminder that if God wills, everything can happen!" says Chef Budia.



Two years later he joined the Shangri-la at Sheikh Zayed Road. After a long stint of continuous successes, he says that his work here did not pan out as expected. He moved to pre-open the Waldorf Astoria in Palm Jumeirah and two years later moved to their sister-property, the Waldorf Astoria Ras al Khaimah. He then moved to the Hilton RAK Resorts and Spa, to create and dazzle guests in his role as Executive Pastry Chef.

Chef Budia says, "I've been the Executive Pastry Chef at quite a few luxury hotels. My job is to balance quality ingredients with financial prudence. I am happy I can make that balance work."

For this magazine, Chef Budia came up with a recipe just two days ago. "Given that this is for the October issue, I made an eggnog cheesecake with cranberry jelly and pumpkin ice cream to go with the fall season and Halloween."

Chef Budia has some great ideas to delight guests during this holiday season and is currently working on putting the final touches to that plan. In his free time, he says he is writing a book about his long culinary journey. As for his future plans, he laughs and says, "If you have heard my story so far, you know, I never make plans."



EGGNOG WITH PUMPKIN AND CRANBERRY

EGGNOG CHEESE MOUSSE

Yolk	3 pcs
Caster sugar	75 g
Whipping cream	200 g
Nutmeg powder	5 g
Cinnamon	3 g
Vanilla essence	1 tbsp

Method

- ◆ Heat the cream, whisk the yolk and

sugar add the spices and vanilla essence.

- ◆ Cook until it thickens.

Arla cream cheese	350 g
Caster sugar	100 g
Arla whipping cream	400 ml
Gelatin leaves	4 pcs

Method

- ◆ Mix the cream cheese and sugar with paddle attachment until smooth and the sugar completely dissolves. Add the eggnog (in room temperature) that has been prepared earlier.

- ◆ Soak the gelatin in ice water, melt them and add into cream cheese mixture.

- ◆ Lastly fold the whipped cream into cream cheese mixture.

- ◆ Prepare plastic tube, pour the mixture into it, and freeze it.

CRANBERRY GEL WRAPPER

Cranberry puree	500 g
Sugar	75 g
Water	200 ml
Agar agar	1 g
Gelatin (soak in ice water)	3 pc



Method

- ◆ Put the agar-agar, puree and sugar in water. Heat it up on a low heat until all completely dissolves. Add gelatin, pour it directly on a smooth surface tray. Ensure it is not too thick.

PUMPKIN ICE CREAM

Pumpkin puree	270 g
Whole milk	230 ml
Arla cream	340 ml
Pumpkin pie spices	1 tsp
Cinnamon powder	1 tsp

Caster sugar	100 g
Brown sugar	100 g
Xanthan gum (optional for smoother texture)	2 g
Vanilla essence	1 tbsp

Method

- ◆ Heat the cream and milk, whisk all the sugar, yolk and xanthan gum.
- ◆ Cook until it thickens. Mix the puree, spices and vanilla, pour into milk mixture.
- ◆ Stir well and cool it down, churn and freeze.

VANILLA CRUMBLE

Arla butter	100 g
All-purpose flour	220 g
Caster sugar	50 g
Vanilla essence	1 tbsp

Method

- ◆ Mix all ingredients. Bake at 170°C for 13-15 minutes.
- ◆ Cool it down and crumb it into smoother texture.
- ◆ White chocolate to make some garnish.



Nestlé
Golden
Chef's Hat
Award



There's No Stopping Them Now

Chefs **Mahendra Khulal** and **Rahul Panwar** are both 26 and grew up in the shade of the Himalayas, albeit on two sides of the India-Nepal border. Their paths crossed at the Towers Rotana hotel in Dubai. Meet this month's first of three Golden Chef's Hat Award teams

MAHENDRA KHULAL

Mahendra Khulal, 26, was studying economics when his uncle introduced him to the Towers Rotana hotel in Dubai. Originally from Nepal, Mahendra came to Dubai at 21 as a student, looking for a job in sales. Instead, he was offered an opportunity to explore the hotel industry. With no prior experience, he started off in housekeeping. "It was tough for me," he recalls. "I did that job for two years, which is when my chef noticed me."

Mahendra's family background is in

agriculture, and he himself worked on a farm back in Nepal. But the culinary world held a lot more appeal, which is why he decided to take advantage of Rotana's training program. He trained for 6-7 hours a day, every day for six months. "I was sleeping for just 4-5 hours, then [doing] a 10-hour duty followed by 6 hours training. After all this hard work, I finally made it inside the kitchen."

In just one year, he was promoted to Commis II and continued with his progress, getting certified to work in the Sushi, Western, Pizza, and Pasta

sections. "All these four years, I skipped vacation for training," he says. He is also studying at the International Center for Culinary Arts, Dubai. But the hard work pays off. In 2020, he won a bronze medal at the ExpoCulinaire in Sharjah. "I'm really happy and, whatever I expected, I am getting."

Chef Mahendra is also doing his family proud. "They talk about me to the whole village," he says, laughing. "My father is really happy."

When he is finished with training,



MAHENDRA KHULAL



RAHUL PANWAR



Mahendra wants to give back to his community.

"My plan is to have my own restaurant and some institutional training in my country," he says. "It's better to encourage our youth, those who have no idea about the kitchen, so I can pass on my knowledge to them. I'm the only chef in that village area, so I want to encourage younger people in my area."

For the Golden Chef's Hat Award, he will be serving sea bass marinade with select Nestlé products. "It's a Japanese dish with miso paste," he explains. "This paste is special to this restaurant. For a long time they have been serving this sea bass as a main course, so I used this Miso marinade with some Maggie seasoning and some Nestlé cream and milk for mashed potato, and some almond and green tea powder. The dish is complemented by green vegetables and celeriac puree. It's really tasty," he says.

RAHUL PANWAR

Rahul Panwar, 26, also never expected to become a chef. He was going to be a hotel manager. During the second year at college, he trained at the Ananda in the Himalayas hotel in his hometown

of Narendra Nagar in India. As part of his course of study, he was required to do four months of training in every department of the hotel, including in the kitchen.

"They sent me to pastry only for a month, and I started to learn these things," he says. After the third year of studies, Rahul worked for six months at the Pirates of Grill restaurant in Gurgaon, and then he got a job at Radisson Blu in Haridwar as Commis III.

"That was my turning point, and I started to learn pastry and bakery," he says. "I was there for 7-9 months, and from there I got job at Citymax Hotel Bur Dubai, and I worked there for two years." He was then snatched up by Towers Rotana, where he now works as pastry Commis II creating desserts for all of the hotel's outlets.

"Every morning we check how many breakfasts and lunches are booked and we need to prepare for that," Chef Rahul says, describing his duties. "Before the pandemic, I was working 10 hours per day, six days a week."

This Golden Chef's Hat Award competition is Chef Rahul's first one.

He is serving a chocolate dome cake containing peanut frosting and ganache. "Inside there is chocolate sponge cake, and then a layer of this frosting, and then a cover of glaze, normally chocolate glaze." The cake will be served with yuzu ice cream and salted caramel on the side. The base for the ice cream is made of chocolate flakes mixed with dark chocolate and white chocolate.

Although Rahul is the only one in the family who did not pursue academic studies, his parents are happy. "I was not a good student," he admits. "I have two brothers, one younger and one elder. My elder brother is an engineer in Bangalore, and the younger is studying. The only one who did not study is me. Well, that's why I went for hotel management – because I didn't want to study more!"

Asked about the future, Rahul has a well-thought-out plan. In about 10-15 years, he wants to start his own business in the field of pastry and bakery. "I cannot work like this for long; up to 40 is fine, and then I will go into business. That's my plan for now. Let's see!"

Family plans are currently on the backburner. "In 4-5 years, I will get married, not now," he says.



Miso Seabass with celeriac puree, grilled avocado, potato croquettes and buttered mushroom and vegetable, yellow capsicum sauce

SEABASS MARINATION

Chillan Sea Bass	200gm each
Miso paste	80gm
Maggi seasoning	10gm
Sugar	5gm

Method

- ◆ Place a pan on medium heat
- ◆ Add miso paste, sugar and seasoning
- ◆ Mix until sugar completely dissolves.

MASHED POTATO CROQUETTES WITH ALMOND

Maggi mashed potato	100gm
Nestle cream	100ml
Fresh milk	100ml
Salt	4gm
Butter	5gm
Almond flakes	50gm

Whole Eggs	1pic
Mocha for dusting	4gm

Method

- ◆ Boil milk and cream in a pot
- ◆ Add salt and pour potato powder into the boiled milk along with the cream
- ◆ Continue whisking until it thickens
- ◆ Stir in the butter
- ◆ Make a round ball of mashed potato
- ◆ Do an egg wash
- ◆ Apply almond flakes
- ◆ Deep fry until it turns golden in colour
- ◆ Dust it with mocha

CELERIAC PUREE

Dice Celeriac	500gm
Nestle Cream	40ml
Butter	9gm
Salt	Pinch
Pepper	Pinch

Method

- ◆ Boil celeriac in milk and Nestle cream
- ◆ Season with salt and pepper.
- ◆ Put it in a blender with the butter and make a smooth puree

BUTTERED VEGETABLES WITH GRILLED AVOCADO

Asparagus	1pieces
Versatile mushroom	20gm
Cherry tomato	1pieces
Grill avocado	1/5pieces

Method

- ◆ Blanch the vegetables and place a medium pan on high heat.
- ◆ Toast all vegetables and add butter.
- ◆ Season with salt and pepper.
- ◆ Grill half an avocado.

BELL PEPPER SAUCE

Orange bell pepper	4pieces
Salt	5gm
Butter	8gm

Method

- ◆ Cut each bell pepper into two and blanch in hot boiling water. After it softens place them in ice cold water. Remove and mix in a high-speed blender. Season with salt and add the butter mix until it turns smooth and thick.



Yuzu Chocolate Peanut Cake with Chocolate Meringue stick and Yuzu Ice cream

CHOCOLATE TRIO SPONGE

Eggs	2
Nestle quik chocolate milk	100gm
Vegetable oil	50gm
Sugar	180gm
Flour	175gm
Cocoa powder	60gm
Baking powder	10gm
Baking soda	5gm
Boiled water	100gm

Method

- ◆ In a mixer, beat the eggs, chocolate milk, and vegetable oil.
- ◆ When it's mixed properly, add sugar, flour, cocoa powder, baking powder and baking soda.
- ◆ Boil the water and add to the mixture.
- ◆ Bake it in a pre-heated oven at 180°C for seven minutes

CHOCOLATE PEANUT FROSTING GARNISH

Melted butter	50gm
Cocoa powder	70gm
Sugar	150gm
Nestle quik chocolate milk	70gm
Peanut butter	180gm
Kit Kat chocolate	60gm

Method

- ◆ Mix all the ingredients in a mixer.
- ◆ Make a thin sheet and freeze it.

SALTED CARAMEL HAZELNUT

Sugar	100gm
Water	50ml
Nestle cream	25ml
Butter	20gm
Hazelnut	50gm

Method

- ◆ Mix sugar and water and make caramel. Add cream and butter. Add hazelnut.

CHOCOLATE MERINGUE STICK

Egg whites	3
------------	---

Sugar	150gm
Dark chocolate grated	75gm
Cocoa powder	5gm

Method

- ◆ Beat egg whites and sugar. Add dark chocolate and cocoa powder.

YUZU ICECREAM

Nestle cream	160gm
Glucose syrup	16gm
Yuzu pure	30gm
Yuzu zest	4gm
Nestle sweetened condensed milk	30gm

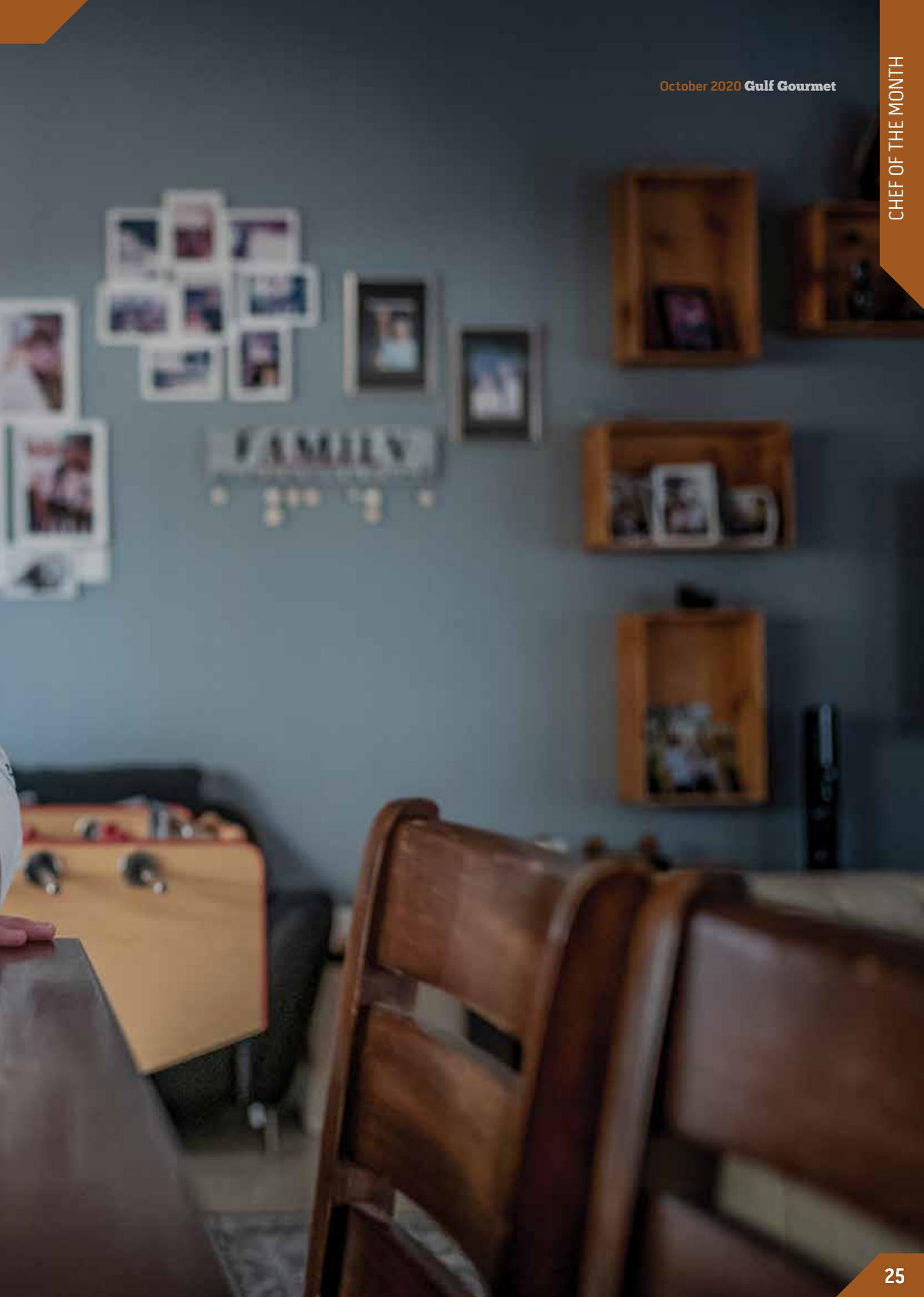
Method

- ◆ Boil cream, glucose syrup and the condensed milk together.
- ◆ When it reaches room temperature, add yuzu pure and yuzu zest
- ◆ Keep it in a chiller. When the temperature drops below 2°C, mix with a machine and freeze it.



‘ALL PART OF THE LEARNING PROCESS’

In his 38-year career, **Peter Boos**, Executive Pastry Chef at Emirates Flight Catering, has never missed an opportunity to challenge himself, learn, and grow. The grandson of a baker, he was the only one of 13 grandchildren to continue the family tradition. Now, he wants to pass on his knowledge, coaching junior chefs.



Peter Boos grew up surrounded by the smell of freshly baked bread. Before his family immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands in 1960, Peter's grandfather had already been running his own bakery for around 15 years, and decided to continue practising his trade at a small town in Alberta, where the family settled.

"We had a big family on my mom's side. I think there were 13 children, so it was a family business, a big business. I was growing up in the bakery," he recalls. "I actually started working there when I was 12, and I was getting paid. I would go on Wednesdays and Saturdays, which were the busy days. I was going to work at 1 or 2 am with my uncle because, by that time, my grandfather was retired."

At the age of 17, Peter already had years of experience under his belt. After finishing high school, he moved to Calgary and quickly got a job at a bakery in the city. His chef supervisor was so impressed with Peter that he offered to take him on as apprentice baker.

"I didn't even know what it was!" But it sounded good and paid good money. Thus started Peter's professional adventure with baking.

While getting trained, he was earning a certificate in Baking and Pastry Arts at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. "I was going to school and working weekends," he says. But after graduating from the program, he was ready to move on.

"After finishing my last year of school ... I handed in my resignation for a new opportunity to learn something different"—at a pastry shop in Edmonton. The shop was run by a Belgian and an Italian, "so they brought that culinary culture from there, and it was vastly different and infinitely much more than what I had learnt in the [previous] three years," Peter recalls.



I'm always a person with an open mind, you know. Any establishment you visit, any hotel you visit, any meal you eat, any book that you read—however you can learn one new thing, it is all worth it," he says, summarizing a philosophy which perfectly encapsulates him as a professional

"When it comes to pastry—bakery, science plays a key role," he says. "You follow the recipe and add ingredients step by step, according to the method, and then you come up with the result, so everything has to be very specific. I think it's tricky going into pastry."

Peter spent four years discovering the science behind making perfect pastry with a European touch, before it was time to switch gears again. He accepted a job in the catering industry at the largest convention centre in Edmonton, even though it entailed moving down the career ladder.

"When I started at the Convention Centre, I basically took a step back and was starting from scratch again, but it's all part of the learning process," he explains. "I was there for seven years," from the beginning working on mass events, including sit-down, plated dinners for 1,200 to 1,400 people.

"We did high-profile events, and one of the more memorable ones was the Figure Skating Championships in Edmonton," he recalls. "I think it was 1994 or 1995, and we had a gala dinner, so we made a fantastic dessert. I was not a pastry chef at that time; I was assistant pastry chef."

He could have stayed on and taken over as pastry chef, but Peter challenged himself yet again and became an instructor at a catering college. Shortly after that, the culinary program got shut down, which proved a blessing in disguise.

"In a couple of weeks, I was poached by



Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise—probably number two hotel in the chain as far as popularity goes. It was in Alberta, in the Rocky Mountains.”

At Fairmont, Peter started off as executive pastry chef. He says, “It was fantastic. I joined in April, so it was just before the summer season, and the summer is busy there because we get so many tourists coming from Europe and Asia. ... I was working many, many hours; sometimes I did not even go home. I’d stay overnight at the hotel and get up early the next day. It was a lot of fun.”

After about four years, boredom crept in, and Peter started to think about starting his own business, but it wasn’t meant to be. In 2002, Fairmont opened its first international property in Dubai. Peter was ready to move, but with two young children, he was not the ideal candidate. Instead, he landed a job with Oman Air.

“One of my friends called me and said, ‘Do you know anything about airline catering?’ And I said, ‘I don’t know anything about airline catering, but food is food, right? It goes to hotels, restaurants or airlines in different forms.’ I expressed my interest and sent my CV.”

At Oman Air, Peter was the head pastry chef. “My role was to organize pastry professionally, as we had separate pastry and bakery, and it was my first true international exploration,” he says.

Since the airline was a small operation at the time, Peter had a lot of time to explore the region’s cuisine and the culinary market. Over the years, he attended several editions of the Gulffood Show and visited the catering unit of Emirates airlines.

“I’m always a person with an open mind, you know. Any establishment you visit, any hotel you visit, any meal you eat, any book that you read—however you can learn one new thing, it is all worth it,” he says, summarizing a philosophy which perfectly encapsulates him as a professional.



My favorite first thing in the morning is to go to the kitchen and, before saying good morning to them, look around the products. Sometimes I find some faults, ... so then I say, ‘Good morning, what is this!?’

Peter’s curiosity and drive finally led him to Emirates. When an opening appeared in 2007, he had already learned all there was to learn at Oman Air, so he did not hesitate. Emirates has kept him busy ever since, which is probably the secret to his long relationship with the Dubai-headquartered airline. He has now worked there for 13 years.

“Yeah, Emirates is uniquely different because there is no time to get bored! I think we were doing around 50,000 meals a day before Covid-19. Our busiest day, I think, was January 2 or January 3 of this year. We did just over 225,000 meals in a single day—and that’s just for Emirates airline, not the other airlines we supply to.”

One of Peter’s first tasks was to replace outsourced baked goods with in-house production. “We did this change in the first couple of months and, at the same time, we were opening a new unit, so that was a challenge,” he says.

At the time, Emirates was expanding quite aggressively, adding 10-12 new destinations a year. “The growth was crazy amazing.”

To keep up, Peter knew he needed to focus on innovation and automation. He loves discovering sophisticated new desserts worthy of 4- or 5-star hotels and trying to figure out how to adapt them to mass production for the airline without compromising on the quality or look, while conforming to airline-specific restrictions.

His other obsession is staying fit and making healthy desserts.

“Sugar is evil! Even though I’m a pastry guy—sugar, butter, cream and all of these stuffs—to be honest, I stay off from sugar as much as possible,” he admits. “I’ve started looking at how can I play with ingredients to create a method for less fat and less sugar and start cultivating a more healthy culture.”

So, what’s next for chef Boos?

“You know, I’ve worked in a small, family bakery and a large production bakery. I’ve worked in a small pastry shop and a large pastry operation; in a 5-star hotel, a city property, in small airline catering, and in large airline catering. To be honest, to share this knowledge will be probably the thing I’ll be most happy with.”

But Peter doesn’t believe in classroom instruction as much as in hands-on coaching.

“My favorite first thing in the morning is to go to the kitchen and, before saying good morning to them, look around the products. Sometimes I find some faults, ... so then I say, ‘Good morning, what is this!?’,” he says, laughing.

“You know, it’s part of junior growth, to look and recognize what is wrong and how to fix it! And that’s how I grew up in this industry. So I say, ‘OK, make it again today and show me.’ And he makes it the very same day and it’s fine!”

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TREASURES FROM THE PALM

Dukes the Palm hotel's Egyptian Chef **Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed Bayoumi** and Indian Chef **Virendra Singh Bisht** work tirelessly behind the scenes to create two dishes that are authentic, unconventional, yet rooted in simplicity

Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed Bayoumi

When Ahmed decided to become a chef, he had no idea that his career choice would be something he would have to fight to fulfill. "After my parents passed away, I ran away because I couldn't further my career in Egypt," he says.

Initially interested in hotel tourism management, Ahmed developed a liking

towards the kitchen after working on a graduate project while studying at Fayoum University, Egypt. Considering himself a self-starter and a proactive person, Ahmed started working in different hotels like The Nile Ritz Carlton Hotel to build up his skills before venturing to another city like Dubai.

When asked about why he chose Dubai, Ahmed says he always wanted

to experience life in a vibrant city like Dubai. Being multilingual and fluent in languages like Arabic and German, Ahmed felt it was better to move to a multicultural ethos where he could meet lots of people to practice his speaking skills in all these different languages.

Ahmed's specialty lies in Arabic cuisine and after moving to Dubai, he did go through a steep learning curve.

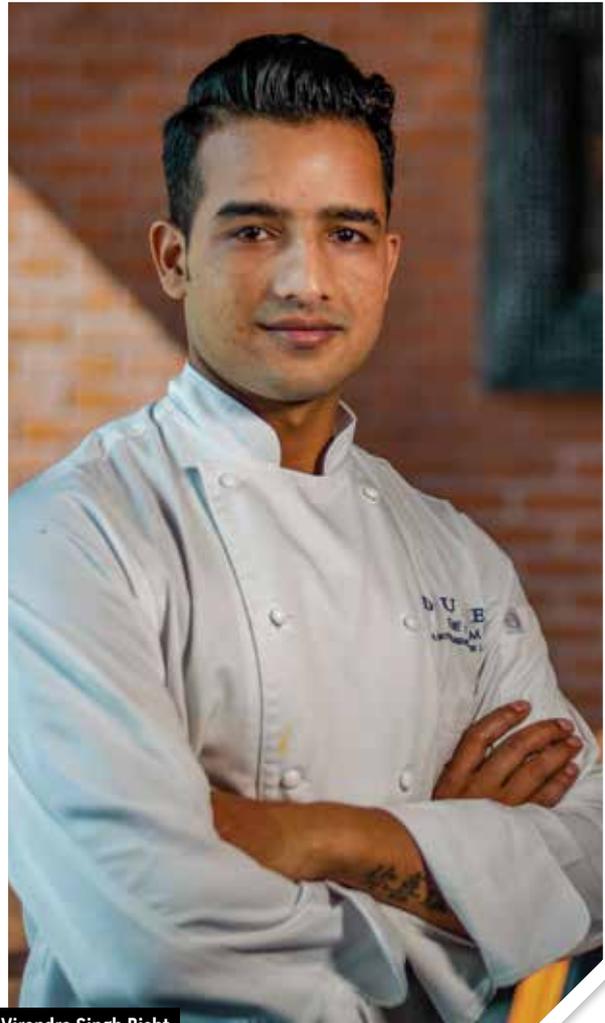


**Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed Bayoumi**

Fortunately, waiting for him on the other side were accolades like the gold and silver medals for Arabic Mezze at multiple Salon Culinaires. With both cold kitchen and pastry experience under his belt, Ahmed is motivated to become a well-rounded chef experimenting with different dishes to put out on a plate.

Being the perfectionist that he is, Ahmed believes presentation is key when it comes to being a pastry chef. "We add fresh fruits like dragonfruit to dishes to make it more attractive. Even with a basic chocolate mousse glaze, I add raspberries and hazelnut to give it a better shape."

Four years down the road and working as a Chef de Partie at Dukes the Palm, Ahmed's future plans include saving up enough money to move to the UK to complete his diploma in Culinary Arts for Chefs, something which he always aspired to do.

**Virendra Singh Bisht**

Virendra Singh Bisht

"I put my own stamp on traditional dishes, creating new and unconventional combinations," says Chef Virendra Singh Bisht, who's currently working as a Demi Chef de Partie at the 14th West Steakhouse at Dukes the Palm. Hailing from India, Virendra is known for his unique dishes with unconventional ingredients. His secret — Asian spices!

Virendra's interest to create something new on a plate started when he used to cook at home from a very young age. Inspired by his uncle who was also a chef, Virendra started his apprenticeship training in 2011 and found himself working at the Hyatt Regency and Crowne Plaza specializing in Asian and Italian cuisines.

"People are here to learn. Mistakes can happen anywhere, even in the kitchen, and people make mistakes, even executive chefs," says an optimistic

Virender, who wants to make cooking a lifelong learning. He first came to Dubai in 2016 and was recruited to work at the Hilton Garden Inn. Considering himself a curious soul, Virendra always dreamt of working in the grill section. That's why he asked his executive chef for the opportunity to learn more about meat. "Grilling is an art and it is much more than just roasting meat over fire," he says.

His dream finally came true when he joined Dukes the Palm and got the chance to work at the steakhouse! Learning to find the correct type and cut of meat along with the perfect sauces, Virendra believes that it's only about experience when it comes to being a skilled grill chef.

While perfecting the art of making scrumptious grilled meat, Virendra hopes to open his own steakhouse in New Zealand someday.



Chocolate and Hazelnut Mousse

BISCUIT

Butter, at room temp	125 g
Salt	2 g
Powdered sugar	80 g
Almond meal	30 g
Eggs (1)	50 g
Vanilla paste	3 g
All-purpose flour	210 g

PRALINÉ

Hazelnuts, toasted	300 g
Sugar	200 g

HAZELNUT MOUSSE

Gelatin sheets	6 g
Milk	200 g
Hazelnuts, toasted	90 g
Praliné	120 g
White chocolate	130 g
Heavy cream, hot	200 g
Heavy cream, cold	200 g

LEMON CURD

Lemon juice	70 g
Lemon zests	5 g
Sugar	100 g
Eggs (2)	100 g
Butter, cubed	100 g
Gelatin sheets	4 g

MILK CHOCOLATE SHELL

Milk chocolate	300 g
Cocoa butter	100 g
Hazelnut crumbs	60 g

STRAWBERRY GLAZE

Water	195 g
Glucose	300 g
Sugar	300 g
Condensed milk	215 g
White Chocolate	325 g

Strawberry Puree	100
Gelatin	27 g

Directions

BISCUITE

- ◆ In a Kitchen Aid, mix cream, butter and salt – add sugar and almond meal; blend to smooth. Add the egg and vanilla and blend well. Add flour and process until combined. Wrap up the pastry and chill for a couple of hours or until firm. Work the chilled pastry over a floured work surface until it turns supple but still cool. Cut the dough into disc and bake at 180°C for 12 minutes.

CHOCOLATE COATING

- ◆ Melt the chocolate and add the hazelnut crunch and coat the biscuit disc.

PRALINÉ

- ◆ Toast nuts in a 350°F/280°C oven for about 12 minutes. Cook sugar to a caramelized stage and toss in nuts. Transfer caramelized nuts onto a silicone baking mat to cool. In a running food processor, blend caramelized nuts with a pinch of salt until it turns to paste. Set aside. Praliné can be stored for months in a cool area or refrigerator.

HAZELNUT MOUSSE

- ◆ Soak gelatin in cold water to soften and drain. Heat up milk and throw in hazelnuts; bring to boil and blend. Pass through a sieve and press down to extract as much hazelnut milk. Save solids for later use. Bring back hazelnut milk to the saucepan, add half of the heavy cream and bring to boil. Pour hot liquid in the chocolate and blend. Add gelatin and blend. Add praline and the

second half of the cool heavy cream. Blend well and refrigerate overnight. Whip the chilled hazelnut ganache to soft peaks. Fill up pastry rings or three 3.14"/8cm diameter x 0.80"/2cm height silicone molds and freeze for 4 hours or more. Save leftover mousse for later use. Un-mold the frozen hazelnut mousse; cut in half and freeze.

LEMON CURD

- ◆ Soak gelatin in cold water to soften and drain. In a saucepan, bring to quick boil lemon juice, zest, sugar and eggs whisking constantly. Turn off the heat and whisk in the melted gelatin. Allow the lemon mixture to cool to 140°F/60°C then throw in the cubed butter and blend with an immersion blender, and chill.

GLAZE

- ◆ Heat water, sugar, strawberry puree and glucose. Allow to cool a bit before adding the condensed milk, white chocolate and gelatin. Red food colouring can be added to get a darker red.

PLATING

- ◆ Place milk chocolate plate on a flat and cool surface. Pipe out dots of lemon curds, candied orange cubes, edible flowers, micro mint and small red fruits cut in half such as raspberries and blueberries; keep refrigerated for up to an hour. Meanwhile, carefully place a glazed hazelnut mousse (thawed) inside the pastry ring, glue with some marzipan, or tempered chocolate to stay. Carefully, place the decorated chocolate plate onto the hazelnut mousse and garnish with fruit and serve.



Saffron Poached Cod

INGREDIENTS

Cod Fillet	600gm
Crispy potato noodles	200gm

FOR THE RAGOUT

Green pea	100gm
Carrot	30gm
Onion Red	20gm
Celery Stick	30gm
Garlic Cloves	10gm
Malt Vinegar	20ml

FOR THE PICKLE

Heirloom Tomato Diced	100gm
Chopped Parsley	5gm
Chopped Tarragon	5gm
Tarragon Vinegar	20ml
Red Onion	5gm
Garlic Cloves	1 pc
Olive Oil	5ml

FOR THE JELLY

yellow tomato	100gm
Saffron	1 pinch
Lemon Juice	1 lemon

Gelatine	1/2 leaf
Cream	50ml

FOR THE PANNA COTTA

Lobater Trimmings	100gm
Cream	100ml
Gelatine	2 leaves
Lemon Juice	to taste
Confit Garlic	2 cloves
Shallots	10gm

FOR THE SAFFRON STOCK

Fish Stock	300ml
Saffron	2gm
Lemon Juice	1 lemon
Lemon Grass	1 pc
Bay Leaf	2 leaves
Chimichuri puree	20gm
Maldon Salt	for all
Trout caviar	20gm

Method:

- ◆ In a Shallow pan bring to a boil the fish stock, bay leaf, thyme, saffron and lemon grass. Set a side and leave to infuse for 1 hour before straining.

- ◆ Use a mandolin to grate the potato into noodles. Dust with flour and deep fry till crispy at a low temperature.
- ◆ For the heirloom pickle dice the heirloom tomatoes, add the garlic, onions, mix with the tarragon vinegar and the herbs, leave over night and finish with salt and olive oil.
- ◆ In a pan sauté onion, garlic on a low heat followed by the yellow tomato. Leave covered to cook for 5-10 minutes. Add the cream and blend to a smooth paste. Mix in the gelatin while still warm and strain to avoid any lumps.
- ◆ To make the ragout saute red onions, garlic, carrot, celery till soft and tender. Add the green peas and cook till soft. Finish with salt and malt vinegar.
- ◆ saute the shallots and lobster till light red and lightly cooked. Add the garlic and reduce the cream by 1 quarter. Finish with salt, lemon juice and chives. Add the gelatine and allow to set.

THE MASTER OF ARABIC CUISINES

Multi-award-winning chef **Rabeh Adel Amer**, Executive Chef at Al Meshwar restaurant chain, tells us what it's like to head the biggest Lebanese restaurant in the world, how he got there at the age of 38, and what's his next dream



Chef Rabeh Adel Amer comes from a small village in southern Syria, known for its apples and grape vines. The town sits in a picturesque location on the top of a mountain. "It's very green and nice, and we have four seasons in a year," he says.

Now, as Executive Chef at Al Meshwar restaurant chain, he is in-charge of the biggest Lebanese restaurant in the world, with 3,500 seats and three levels, as well as another location in Fujairah.

The building is so impressive that every guest who comes to the restaurant asks for a tour," Rabeh says. "It's really like a museum!"

"When first saw this location, I said, this is not restaurant! We have a running operation that is similar to two large hotels! ... And I said to myself, if at my age – I'm now 38 – I cannot take this challenge, then when can I take it?"

Everything served at the restaurant is just like traditional homemade food, with separate preparation areas for all types of food, in conformity with the ISO 22000 standard.

"It's not easy to handle 160 chefs in the kitchen, but I like this challenge," he adds. "I must confess that in the beginning I did struggle a bit. When I started, I had a team coming in from Syria and Lebanon, ... so in the first three months I was working 18 hours a day. I was delivering a very strong training to my team in terms of hygiene and standard recipes for the day-to-day running of the kitchen."

The much-anticipated opening came in January and, without any social media promotion, the restaurant was full of guests on opening day. But as COVID-19 hit in March, it had to be shut down after only two months. "We started again in the middle of May," Rabeh says, and from June, the business started to recover. "In the end, we succeeded, and everything is because of the fantastic team I have."



I must confess that in the beginning I did struggle a bit. When I started, I had a team coming in from Syria and Lebanon, ... so in the first three months I was working 18 hours a day.

But how does one become the executive chef of a massive, hugely successful restaurant in Dubai at a young age of 38?

The career choice itself was fairly easy. "I was going to be either in the military or a chef," but working in a kitchen is also "like military service," Rabeh says jokingly. The final nudge came from one of his brothers, also a chef. "I saw him how he works in the kitchen and how he was giving tasks to his staff, and I thought I could be a good chef."

Rabeh has two sisters and seven brothers. When they were of school age, his elder brothers used to get summer jobs in Lebanon to save money for education, so they would not have to take money from the father. Teenage Rabeh followed in their footsteps.

"When I was 13 years old, I went to Lebanon and I worked in a small cafeteria. I helped with sandwiches and I liked this job," Rabeh recalls. That's when he first saw European TV programs with celebrity chefs. "I liked these things. I went every year to a different place, to different restaurants for work, especially in Beirut."

In 2001, he started working at a Sofitel hotel in Doha alongside his brother, who

supported and taught him. "In a few months, I got a promotion to demi chef."

After two years, Rabeh decided to move to Dubai. "I came to Dubai with really good knowledge," he says. "I had learned lots of things from Turkish cuisine and Arabic cuisine. I started to work as a bakery chef at Marina, which is now JBR. ... It's a chain of Lebanese restaurants. I worked there for almost three years and I left that restaurant as chef assistant."

He then worked as chef assistant at the Al Sham Hotel for two years, before joining the Al Aarrab restaurant as head chef, and settling there for 10 years.

"[When] I started with that company there was only one restaurant, and after five years we had 13 branches." So, apart from serving food, Chef Rabeh's job was also to check on all 13 branches.

In 2016, a new opportunity presented itself at Radisson Blu Deira.

"I was Executive Arabic Chef and we opened Aseelah, as you know, the first fully Emirati fine-dining restaurant in a five-star hotel, and we did a great job. I was in-charge of the oriental kitchen and the Arabic oriental banquet for four years."

At Radisson, Rabeh was working alongside Chef Uwe, who became his mentor.

"He told me, if you are organized in everything, at the end you will be successful. If you support your team, and work well with your team, and motivate people ... you will be successful."

Chef Rabeh has taken that advice to heart and tries to apply it in his work at Al Meshwar, where 70 per cent of his staff of 160 are young people.

"You have to be strong and flexible at the same time," he believes. "You have to be strong but very fair. When people make mistakes, I teach them. ... Last week, one of the staff made some mistake, and the chef in-charge



الملك
AL MESHWAR
Rabeeh Amer
Executive Chef



started shouting at him. I told him, wait, OK, show him how to fix it, show him the right way."

"You have to be able to show your staff, [and] if any of them have a problem, they come to you because they feel you are fair," he adds.

Things have changed for the better since Rabeah was a young chef himself and had to learn from his own mistakes. "When I started in this industry, I was struggling. It was not easy to find someone who can hold your hand and say, 'Come cut this like this.' It's not easy to find a chef to teach you everything with passion!"

He still remembers a traumatic incident from his time in Qatar, involving burnt oil and frozen French fries.

"At that time, nobody was teaching how to fix the problem, but now it's different.



This year I created a program entirely on apples: how to use apple in a salad, a main course, a dessert. It's a TV show; you can see it on YouTube, too. We shot this program at Radisson

Now, in the hospitality industry, lots of rules have been changed. You come to a restaurant and you find a sticker everywhere. That's why, as I told you, I learned from my mistakes. So, before I

opened the kitchen, I had an orientation for my team and taught them about each machine separately."

The importance of supporting young chefs is also a lesson Rabeah learned from his mentor.

"Now I give my full time to my team; this is what I learned from chef Uwe," he says. "It's our time now ... to support young chefs."

What advice does Rabeah have for aspiring chefs?

"First, they must pick a goal, then have a plan and then execute the plan. After that, they should check to see whether they have found success. But for each young chef, they have to put their signature on each plate they serve."

Another important ingredient of success



المشوار
AL MESHWAR
Rabeih Amer
Executive Chef

MA

is being versatile and trying out different things. Rabeh, aside from working as a chef, has leveled up his English, worked in TV production, and completed a judge seminar from Worldchefs.

As the winner of 17 gold medals, one silver medal and around 20 trophies in various culinary competitions himself, Rabeh knows what he's talking about.

TV production has proven to be rewarding as well. "This year I created a program

entirely on apples: how to use apple in a salad, a main course, a dessert. It's a TV show; you can see it on YouTube, too. We shot this program at Radisson."

Chef Rabeh's plan is to open his own restaurant in about four years.

"I want Arabic food with a modern style. Not a huge restaurant, but I want to serve a really high-end clientele."

He admits that devotion to work eats

away family time. Chef Rabeh has three children with his wife, Olfat. The youngest daughter, Dana, is only two. "Every day I receive a message from them: 'Daddy, what time will you come, daddy, you are late!'"

His wife, who is a make-up artist, has taken on the brunt of running the house. "She is amazing," and a very good chef, too, Rabeh says. In 2017, the couple collaborated on a UNICEF project, a book for Syrian children.

"My wife is really great and fantastic. She is always supporting me and sometimes when I'm tired, I say sorry to her because during holidays we work more, on the weekends we work more, and she always understands this and says, 'you are doing a fantastic job and you are famous.' But I'm famous because of her."

After we finished our interview, Chef Rabeh reached out to share some sad personal news: his father passed away on September 23, 2020. "He was a father who always pushed us to work from the heart and help anyone who needs help, and he was very proud of me. Rest in peace, Father."



First, they must pick a goal, then have a plan and then execute the plan. After that, they should check to see whether they have found success. But for each young chef, they have to put their signature on each plate they serve







Nestlé
Golden
Chef's Hat
Award



Bringing their A-game

Love of cooking and youthful energy come together in Chefs **Chandana Kumara** and **Ramah Abou Karam**, who are this month's third team competing for the Golden Chef's Hat Award. Both chefs work under the wings of Executive Chef Rabeh Adel Amer at the Al Meshwar restaurant in Dubai

CHANDANA KUMARA

Sri Lankan Chandana Kumara is the only non-Arabic speaking chef at the Lebanese restaurant Al Meshwar in Dubai, but it does not stop him from working wonders in the kitchen as Pastry and Bakery Chef. He was poached by Chef Rabeh after winning a gold medal for best bakery display at the East Coast Salon Culinaire and Cocktail

Competition 2019 in Fujairah. "Executive Chef Rabeh was in that competition too and asked me to work with him, so I joined here as head baker," Chandana says.

Chandana first came to Dubai in 2011, armed with six years of experience as a baker in Sri Lanka. It all started when one of his friends asked Chandana to come

and work with him. "It was a big bakery in Sri Lanka," he says. "I didn't have any idea about bakery and pastry, but I worked there for three months and I was so happy ... and that's why I started to be interested." He ended up working there for six years. "I think that bakery is 150 years old, and it was a department store with has 300 branches."



**CHANDANA KUMARA**

But before joining Al Meshwar in December 2019, Chandana worked in many different places and many different countries. At first, he got a job at a Lebanese restaurant in Karama. "After that I went back to Sri Lanka, and from there I got a job in Malaysia for one month, in a small bakery shop," he recalls. That was followed by another one-month stint in Singapore, but since Chandana could not get a visa in Singapore or Malaysia, he decided to return to Dubai.

"I came to Dubai and I worked at Dum Dum Donuterrie in Jumairah as a baker for two years." When that shop closed down, Chandana landed at the Voco Dubai hotel (formerly Nassima Royal Hotel). Then came the competition and the chance meeting with Chef Rabeh. "I'm enjoying my job. I'm so happy, really," he says of his current position at Al Meshwar.

For the Golden Chefs Hat Award, he made an Apricot chocolate mousse and coconut and mango panna cotta, custard donut and lemon. "It's all pastry, and there are many techniques inside the dish."

Chandana is one of four children and he is the only chef in the family. "My father passed away, so I have my mother and two sisters and one young brother."

His dream is to one day work as pastry chef in Germany.

RAMAH ABU KARAM

Ramah Abu Karam is 22 and works as a Commis at Al Meshwar. Having started out as a helper, he got promoted to his current position in less than a year.

"He is very interested, he is learning very fast, and he puts in nearly 14-15 hours a day," Chef Rabeh says of Ramah, impressed with the young chef's stamina and ambition. "When he is done with his work in one section, then he starts another job in another section."

Ramah is also involved with Worldchefs as he is a member of the Syrian Culinary Guild. "As you know, we are looking for young chefs, and Ramah is interested in competitions and always asking me about that," Chef Rabeh adds.

The respect is mutual. "When I came to know Chef Rabeh is in this restaurant, I was excited to join and follow his career path," Ramah says.

Becoming a chef was not an obvious career choice for Ramah, who initially studied mechanics in Syria. "During those days I worked at a restaurant to earn money for my expenses, and I liked this industry," he

**RAMAH ABU KARAM**

says. "It was a small Syrian restaurant. I was working in the cold kitchen as an assistant."

When he decided to seriously pursue cooking, he joined his uncle's restaurant. "I worked in his small restaurant in my village – I'm from a small village in Suwayda. Following that I did a three-month course and learnt the basics before coming to Dubai." The first restaurant he landed a job was Al Meshwar.

For the Golden Chefs Hat Award, Ramah has prepared beef tenderloin with beetroot puree and mashed potatoes. This is not his first competition.

"During the lockdown we had a small online competition for a butter brand. He made a video and won," says Chef Rabeh.

Despite his young age, chef Ramah shoulders a lot of responsibility beyond his work life. His father lost his job in Lebanon forcing Ramah to support his family. "My father was in Lebanon for four years, and you know what is happening in Syria. I am the eldest and I have one brother and one sister. It's a small family, but father is away and me too!"

These hardships, however, does not stop Ramah from hoping to run his own restaurant chain someday.



BEEF TENDERLOIN STEAK

FOR STEAK

Beef tenderloin	180 g
Salt	2g
Black pepper	2g
Thyme	5g
Nestle Demi-Glace sauce	50g

Method

- ◆ Grill the meat to a medium level. Add salt, pepper and thyme leaves

FOR MASHED POTATO

Maggi potato powder	100 g
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Salt	To taste
White pepper powder	To taste
Fresh cream	20 g

Method

- ◆ Boil the water and add potato powder with salt, pepper and cream.

FOR PUREE

Beetroot	50 g
Garlic	5g
Salt pepper	To taste
Butter	5g
Fresh cream	5g

Method

- ◆ Boil the beetroot and level and cut it.

Heat a pan and add butter and garlic. Add the boiled beetroot pieces and mash well with a hand-electric mixer. Drain, add cream and bring it back to the fire again.

VEGETABLES

Brookline	15g
Snow beans	10g
Asparagus	20g
Zucchini	20g
Carrots	20 g

Method

- ◆ Cut the vegetables and blanch in water. Add a little oil and salt and pepper to taste.

NESTLE WONDERLAND

(Nestle apricot chocolate mousse, coconut and mango panna cotta, vanilla custard donut with lemon mint mango compot)

MANGO COCONUT PANNA COTTA DOCELLO PANNA COTTA

Docello panna cotta mix	50g
Cream	100g
Milk	200g
Gelatin	2pcs

Method

- ◆ Heat milk and cream. Remove just before boiling point. Whisk in panna cotta powder and gelatin. Return to heat for 2 minutes without boiling.

MANGO JELLY

Mango puree	100g
Sugar	20g
Agar Agar	03g

Method

- ◆ Boil all the ingredients together until 75°C then put in to the mould.

COCONUT VANILLA CRUMBLE

Flour	50g
Maggi Coconut milk powder	50g
Sugar	50g
Melted Butter	15g

Method

- ◆ Mix all ingredients except butter using a handwhisk. Slowly add in melted butter to the dry ingredients. Mix well and bake until goldencolor (180°C)

GARNISH

Roasted Coconut	2pcs
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Method

- ◆ Peel two fresh coconuts and roast for 5 minutes (180°C)

APRICOT CHOCOLATE MOUSSE DOCELLO CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

Docello Chocolate Mousse	50g
Milk (cold)	100g

Method

- ◆ Mix the ingredients in a mixer. Two minutes at low speed and 5 minutes at a high speed.

CRUNCHY LAYER

Kit Kat crumble	30g
Dark Chocolate	100g
Milk chocolate	100g
Cocoa Butter	10g



Method

- ◆ Melt the dark chocolate and Milk chocolate (53%) then add melted cocoa butter. Mix well. Then add the KitKat crumble.

APRICOT JELLY

Apricot Puree	125g
Sugar	20g
Fresh Apricot	50g
Cubs Gelatin	2pcs
Water	25

Method

- ◆ Boil the apricot puree and sugar. Add fresh apricot cubs and melted gelatin. Mix well then keep until it cools down.

DARK GLAZZE

Cream	250g
Water	350g
Sugar	350g
Cocoa powder	150g
Gelatin	25g

Method

- ◆ Boil water and sugar then add cream and boil again. Add cocoa powder and mix well. Remove from the heat and mix gelatin before letting it cool down.

DEVIL SPONGE

Egg	60g
Sugar	223g
Oil	85g
Yogurt	217g
Vanilla	3g
Flour	125g
Baking soda	05g

Cocoa Powder	60g
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Method

- ◆ Beat the egg and sugar until light. Add oil and mix for 2 minutes. Add yogurt and vanilla and mix well. Add all dry ingredients and mix for a minute. Spread the mixture on a baking mould and bake at 180°C for 9 minutes.

CUSTARD DOUGHNUTS DOUGHNUT

Flour	200g
Salt	04g
Yeast	06g
Improver	2g
Suga	26g
Egg	2pcs
Butter	30g
Milk	50g
Vanilla	3g

Method

- ◆ Mix all the ingredients together until it binds well. Rest the dough for 15 min and sheet the dough until 3mm thickness. Cut out the shape of doughnut and keep it in the proofer for 45 minutes. After that, deep fry until golden colour.

CUSTARD

Egg yolks	115g
Sugar	50g
Vanilla	05g
Milk	125g
Cooking cream	125g
Nestle Condensed Milk	50g

Corn flour	50g
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GARNISH

Snow sugar	2g
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Method

- ◆ Egg yolks, corn flour and cinnamon powder mix and keep separate.
- ◆ Boil the milk, cream, sugar and condensed milk. Add egg yolks mixture and mix until thick. Remove from the heat and mix until it cools down.

LEMON MINT ,RASPBERRY, MANGO COMPORT

Lemon juice	10g
Mango puree	50g
Corn flour	10g
Mango cubs	15g

GARNISH

Fresh raspberry	1 pcs
Mint leaves	1 pcs

Method

- ◆ Boil the lemon juice and mango puree then add corn flour and mix 1 min after that remove the heat and mix with mango cubs

APRICOT SAUCE

Apricot Puree	70g
Sugar	20g
Corn Flour	10g

Method

- ◆ Boil the apricot puree and sugar after the boil add cornflour and mix 1min then remove the heat and keep cool down

CHEFS DINE OUT

Dukes The Palm, a Royal Hideaway Hotel partnered with LaLiga to host the first edition of the Spanish Extravaganza Festival in the UAE last month. The annual global event is the brainchild of Ferran Adria, former Head Chef at the three Michelin star elBulli restaurant in Spain.

The event featured culinary creations from four of Spain's celebrity Michelin chefs – Juanlu Fernandez, Fernando del Cerro, Ager Urigüen and Paella Masterchef David Montero.

Many of our senior chefs turned up for the event one night and here's an exclusive photo by our Photo Editor **Amaresh Bhaskaran** from that evening.







WEBINAR ON POTATOES

The Emirates Culinary Guild along with its newly inducted corporate partner Potatoes USA, recently organized a webinar called 'The Possibilities with U.S. Potatoes - The Fresh Edition'. Guild President Chef Uwe Micheel and Chairman Andy Cuthbert were part of the series organized to promote high quality American potatoes in the Middle East and Africa region. Here are images from the event.







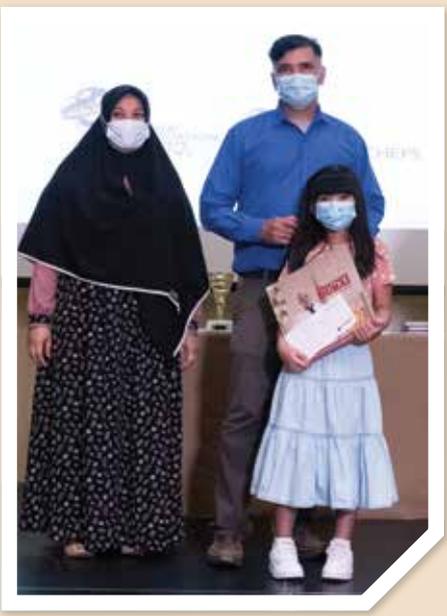
MEET THE WINNERS

The Emirates Culinary Guild's newly revived YouTube channel took off to a great start with the two virtual competitions in association with US Beef and US Poultry. The winners across all levels of cooks – ranging from amateurs to professionals – were felicitated recently at an event in Dubai. Here are images from the awards presentation ceremony.



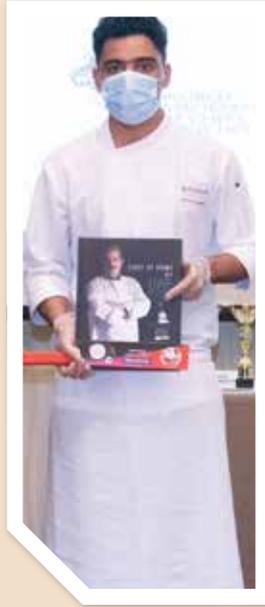
















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Web Address:	Email:	
Telephone Office:	Professional Title:	
Fax Office:	Type of Membership Required: (Please tick one)	
Tel. Home:	Corporate <input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Renewal <input type="checkbox"/>
Fax Home:	Senior <input type="checkbox"/>	Junior <input type="checkbox"/>
Email:		

Declaration to be Signed by all Applicants

I wish to join the Emirates Culinary Guild. I have read the ECG Constitution and By-laws. I agree to be bound by the requirements of the constitution. If elected, I promise to support the Guild and its endeavors, to the best of my abilities.

Signed:.....

Proposed By:

Sig:.....

Seconded By:

Sig:.....

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Remarks:

Payment received?		
Certificate Given.	Pin Given.	Medal & Collar Given
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Fees:

Young Member: Junior members will receive a certificate.

Senior Members: Above the rank of chef de partie (or senior chef de partie on executive chef's recommendation).

Dhs.350/=joining. Includes certificate; member-pin, member medal and ECG ceremonial collar. Dhs.

150/=per year thereafter.

Affiliate Member: Dhs.350.00 for the first year. Dhs.300 per year thereafter.

Corporate Member Dhs. 20,000 per year

Crisis Or No Crisis Ace Your Communication

"Effective Communication is a key factor in the success of your product" — Jesse James Garrett

The current global health crisis is presenting many food business operators and chefs as well with the unique challenge on how to remain relevant. This makes clear and effective communication all the more crucial now.

The reason companies have chosen digital platforms as the next best option to face-to-face meetings is because such communications can be conducted under a company's policies and guidelines. They are also permanent, recorded, and easily searchable.

While you may be figuring out what normal looks like right now for your business or job, you need to assess your communication strategies. If you feel nervous or hesitant to communicate and wish you had the skills and could ace all your talks, make sure to enrol in the best business training programs to prepare yourself for what lies ahead.

Here are some of the important things you can learn in communication skills training.

Importance of context

Have you ever said something that was meant to be funny, but the listener misunderstood it and responded



Learn the art of thinking before you respond to avoid any miscommunication to your customer. Think for a second and confirm if the reply is appropriate and clear. Speaking clearly and within the context is important for the listener to understand the meaning of your message.

Know your listener

For both external and internal communication, it is essential to consider your listener. If the communication is focused on a certain segment of your audience, you should use an appropriate message and provide the right amount of content for that audience. Before you begin the conversation or start speaking, be sure you understand who you are talking to.

Training helps you swiftly notice if your counterpart is getting disinterested by your presentation. This way, you will be able to instantly adjust and have their attention back.

Body Language

The great thing about digital

communication like video conferencing is that you can form a connection with people through dynamic face-to-face interactions even if you are miles away. Even though you are not present physically, you still have to pay attention to your body language. You need to sit-up straight, arm yourself with confidence, and strike a power pose.

There are several key techniques and tips you can learn from training to ensure the message your body is sending is in alignment with the message you want to convey.

As we face the challenges and stresses around COVID-19 and the lockdown, we need to remember that communication is still crucial.

Even though many business aspects have come to a halt, communication is still continuing one way or another. In a time of crisis, effective communication is the one thing that can make or break a business as well as careers.

Rohit Bassi is the founder of 'ROI Talks' and works across industries to help employees outperform themselves. You can contact him on roi@roitalks.com



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A hand is shown from the top left, holding a silver spoon and pouring a thick, dark brown sauce onto a plate of food. The plate is dark and contains several pieces of meat, possibly steak, garnished with green herbs and lemon slices. The background is dark, making the food and the pouring action stand out.

**Inspiration
can come
at any anytime.**

**The trick
is to be near
a kitchen
when it does.**



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