

gulf

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## gourmet

volume 15, issue 6

THE MAGAZINE CHEFS LOVE TO READ

THE COURT'S  
MARSHAL

Chef **Coetsee John Croucamp** is the newly appointed chief marshal of the Emirates Culinary Guild



## THE NEW NORMAL

What does the 'new normal' even mean? Chairman **Andy Cuthbert** gives us his thoughts



## TRIPLE DELIGHT

This month three UAE teams vie for the Nestle Professional Golden Chefs Hat Award



## ITALIAN JOB

Exclusive interview with **Marcello Vigano**, the Italian Kitchen Chef at Eataty in Dubai Mall



A hand is shown from the top, holding a silver spoon and pouring a thick, dark red sauce onto a plate of food. The plate contains several pieces of seared meat, possibly duck or beef, garnished with green herbs and lemon wedges. The background is dark and moody.

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can come  
at any anytime.**

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



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# president's station

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Dear fellow chefs, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the August-September issue of our Gulf Gourmet.

I hope everyone made it through the summer okay given this difficult time. Though some hotels and restaurants remain closed, we finally see the market picking up. We hear some restaurants have returned to doing very well, which is good news. We do understand that many of our colleagues are still at home (many with no pay or reduced pay) and waiting. Hope you all have the opportunity to return to work very soon.

**I request all of you, even if you are in a very difficult position, to please stay calm and positive. Hold on to your passion for our great profession and industry. Together, we will weather this storm. We will keep our heads held up high and rebuild our great industry together.**

Your Emirates Culinary Guild team was busy these last few months with multiple projects. First, we relaunched our YouTube channel and followed it up with a virtual competition that saw great results. See the winners in this issue. Soon after, we launched the next one in partnership with the US Meat Export Federation.

The Virtual US Beef Cooking Competition is made up of four classes for professional chefs and amateur chefs. We received a great response from across all GCC countries as it was open to nationals and residents of the GCC. See the winners of this competition as well in this issue.

On behalf of the US Beef Export



Federation and the Emirates Culinary Guild, I congratulate everyone for their great effort. We received many amazing recipes and videos and the finest 24 videos are on our **Emirates Culinary Guild You Tube Channel**. Please subscribe and watch all videos there.

The next competition is the USA Poultry Virtual Online Cooking Competition brought to us by USA Poultry and Egg Export Council and United Soybean Board.

The result and winning pictures will be in the October issue of Gulf Gourmet.

On August 15 we had a very successful Virtual Congress. We will have more details and updates in the next issue.

Please visit [gulfgourmet.net](http://gulfgourmet.net) to browse through previous issue of the magazine. Visit [emiratesculinaryguild.net](http://emiratesculinaryguild.net) to see our upcoming events calendar. And visit [www.facebook.com/wacsyoungchefs](https://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 Mischeel**

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





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### Three Golden Chef Teams Compete

*(by Nestle Professional)*

This month three teams compete for the Nestle Professional Golden Chefs Hat Award – Season 8. Chefs **Ranil Sameera** and **Shiran Warunajith Alahakoon** from Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort, Chefs **Shehan Isuranaga** and **Sudip Pandey** from Nakheel Hospitality-owned Al Furjan Club, and Chefs **Patrick V. Ramos** and **Lekhnath Thapaliya** from Emirates Flight Catering

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READY TO BAKE

**PREMIUM  
FRENCH BREAD  
& CROISSANTS**



 **Vandemoortele**

# editor'snote

email [editor@gulfgourmet.net](mailto:editor@gulfgourmet.net)

Here's a story from Canada. A chef friend of mine says this is the first time in decades he's forced to sit at home.

For someone trained to be on his feet 14 hours a day, this change is frustrating.

His wife works for another hospitality business in HR and her workload has increased. She is busy creating paperwork to terminate employment contracts at her workplace.

He says, "Just the way, those guys do not know they are going to be fired, who knows my company too might be doing the same thing to me. I am equally clueless."

I am sure many are in a similar space.

What's amazing is that amidst all this doom and gloom scenarios, we have seen some beautiful stories emerge. Stories of perseverance. I know of two Filipino chefs who have created their own dish and are selling it online to their social media followers. If I am not wrong, they are making a killing on it – probably more than their salaries? – and they have no boss to answer to. I shall try and interview at least one of them for an upcoming edition.

Then there is the great rush to catch up with technology. We have cloud



kitchens, dark kitchens, ghost kitchens and what not. Small mom and pop restaurants have started accepting online payments and tied up with their local food delivery partners.

As an Editor I keep getting press releases of new initiatives being launched, not just in the city but around the world. And I must say that the future will have a lot of

opportunities. Many of these may be different, but they are an evolution of the industry we work in.

Talking of going digital, even our competitions seem to have gone online. The Emirates Culinary Guild has an active YouTube channel where you can see these virtual competitions and some good training videos for free.

If you are free from the burden of 14-hour work shifts, now is the time to do something using the power of technology. Could it fall flat on the face? Sure, it could. But it could also become a hit. Like they say, nothing ventured nothing gained.

In this issue are two articles about how to think differently in the new normal. One is written by Andy Cuthbert, which is a must read for senior chefs and hospitality leaders. The other is written by our columnist Rohit Bassi. Their answers are simple to follow. You just need the will to do it.

That and many more great chef stories fill the pages of this issue.

Enjoy the read and until next time keep cooking with passion.

**Aquin George**  
Editor

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August - September 2020 **Gulf Gourmet**

# friends of the guild



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## newsbites

# Emirates Culinary Guild announces 3rd Virtual Cooking Competition

Partners with USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC) to launch a virtual cooking competition for all GCC nationals and residents

Emirates Culinary Guild and the USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC) are launching a virtual cooking competition for all GCC nationals and residents. There will be four categories where US Chicken and US Turkey will be used. Competitors will create either a video or their favorite recipe and a picture of the US Chicken or US Turkey dish. Competitors are encouraged to produce their country's favorite traditional dish.

Chef Uwe Micheel, President of the Emirates Culinary Guild and Culinary Adviser for Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek said he is very excited about the competition for more than one reason. "First, the culinary competition allows competitors to be a part of a learning process. Second, there are great prizes offered by our partner USA Poultry and Egg Export Council. This includes trophies, books, knives and cash prizes for the winners. A total of



40 winners in four different classes will win multiple prizes," he says.

Andy Cuthbert, Chairman of Emirates Culinary Guild and General Manager for Jumeirah Creekside Hotel; Madinat Jumeirah Conference & Events and Jumeirah Hospitality says, "The response to the US Beef competition was overwhelming and we are proud to be associated with US Beef and USA Poultry. We wish all the competitors the very best of luck in the upcoming competition and we look forward to seeing some great dishes."

Chef Uwe said that he is looking forward to seeing some great US Chicken and US Turkey Dishes. "I

hope that we will really see some Traditional Dishes from many different countries. Our competitors must be a GCC resident but can be from another country. I always enjoy seeing chefs and home cooks creating or reproducing great dishes. With the hormone-free US Chicken and US Turkey we will sure see amazing recipes."

The competition launched on August 13 and registration is open until September 2 midnight. Chef Uwe explains that all the videos will be posted on Emirates Culinary Guild's YouTube Channel. The views and the likes of the public will also be considered in the judging criteria.

*Full list of rules and regulations on page 55.*

## ATECA Partners with Prologic First

ATECA Hotel Supplies & Technology Solutions, developed by UAE hotel experts in Uzbekistan, has signed a strategic agreement with Prologic First to support the growth of the hospitality industry in the Republic with innovative products and solutions.

Michel Noblet, Executive Chairman of ATECA Holding, says, "Technology is the key to the success of the hospitality

industry today. Our goal is to provide hotel owners and operators with the latest tools and technologies required to meet the evolving needs of the business and guests."

Prologic First, a pioneer in hybrid and on-premise hospitality technology solutions and a technology partner of choice for many leading hotels worldwide, offers comprehensive cloud solutions for the hospitality sector.





## Tuttofood Milan could be bigger in 2021

Many analysts estimate that hospitality recovery will begin this year end followed by a full-fledged relaunch next year. Tuttofood, the leading Italian exhibition for food and beverage, is preparing for this in its 2021 edition. Set to take place at Fieramilano from May 17 to 20, 2021, the event will see exhibitors and buyers travel from all over the world to Milan to focus on innovation, strategies and the future of the supply chain.

Focus on the USA, Canada and the Middle East continues with the involvement of associations and chambers of commerce; and over 550 big names have confirmed from Belgium, Germany, Greece, Ireland, The Netherlands, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Spain, the United States, Switzerland and Taiwan, as well as Italy. A new feature is an area dedicated to fresh fruit and vegetables and innovation in the IV and V ranges, which value fruit and vegetable products with high service content.

Tuttofood 2019 saw the participation of 3079 brands, 16% of which were international, from 43 countries. In 2019 it was attended by 82,551 professionals, 23% of whom from abroad, from a total of 143 countries.

## EU partners with el Grocer

With the COVID-19 pandemic accelerating consumer interest in buying safe, nutritious and high-quality ingredients online, the European Union has partnered with UAE-born grocery delivery platform el Grocer to bring ready-to-cook recipe boxes to residents in Dubai.

The partnership forms a part of the EU's 'More than Food' communications campaign and addresses increasing consumer demand for European food imports. In the first quarter of 2020, during the height of the coronavirus pandemic, EU farm exports to the GCC grew 25% compared to Q1 2019.

As more UAE consumers look to online channels to buy essential items, the

'More than Food' recipe box initiative aims to make it easy and convenient for customers to incorporate EU foods into their daily meals. According to Visa's COVID-19 CEMEA Impact Tracker, two-thirds of UAE consumers surveyed said that COVID-19 has led to their first online grocery purchase.

Working with celebrated food blogger and cookbook author Zahra Abdalla to create recipes using European ingredients sourced from importer and grocer EuroMercato, the 'More than Food' recipe boxes promise easy-to-follow cooking instructions and delicious, authentic European flavours.

The EU will look to run similar initiatives in other GCC markets.



## Anne-Laure promoted to Head Chef

**L**a Serre Bistro & Boulangerie has promoted Anne-Laure Morisset Dutel to Head Chef. Hailing from Brittany, France, Chef Anne was previously Sous Chef of the kitchen.

Commenting on her new role, Anne says, "I'm so grateful for my promotion because I've worked really hard in my role over the years and went through a lot of struggle to get where I am today. I'm so thankful to be working for a company that truly appreciates my work, my energy and the love I put into my cooking".

The French national adds, "La Serre feels like home – I love it here. Every day I bring passion to the food, kitchen and team, which ultimately I hope our guests feel when they dine with us".

With a passion born for cooking at an early age, Anne grew up in a family of chefs. She cooked with her mother regularly, watched her grandmother as a catering chef, her grandfather run his own butcher shop, her uncle run his own restaurant, and another head up a bakery. Surrounding by chefs her whole life, Anne knew she wanted to specialize in cookery as a young girl.

Anne went on to study hospitality and culinary arts at the Hotel School Yvon Bourges, before working her way up through the kitchen brigade in leading restaurants including the 3-Star Michelin Restaurant Le Louis XV – Alain Ducasse, 2-Star Michelin Restaurant Joël Robuchon, and Mandarin Oriental's Restaurant Le Café Calla, among others.



## 'Struggling foodservice brands must embrace dark kitchens'

**D**espite seeing losses in revenue, foodservice outlets have reported that deliveries in several markets are growing. Market leader McDonald's effectively doubled its deliveries in Australia, for example, to almost 10% of sales. However, without an army of franchisees, smaller, independent operators are unlikely to pull off the same feat, facing a multitude of operational and economic obstacles. For these businesses, there may be hope in dark kitchens, says GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

Ryan Whittaker, Consumer Analyst at GlobalData, says, "Consumers are understandably reticent about trying to get back to normal too quickly, but they

are still interested in the occasional indulgent meal. According to a survey by GlobalData, 34% of global consumers agreed that they expect to order restaurant deliveries more often than pre-COVID-19."

As infections and responses fluctuate by nation and region, foodservice is expected to continue to experience significant disruption. Dark kitchens, sites that exist solely to serve the delivery needs of foodservice brands, allow brands to extend their reach from relatively cheap real estate - such as industrial estates or car parks - while avoiding direct contact with customers.

Whittaker adds, "Driven by logistics-

focused aggregators such as Uber and Deliveroo – alongside more integrated companies such as Keatz or Taster – dark kitchens can allow restaurants to operate out of purpose-built, low-cost structures, often with multiple brands and operators on site. As recently as last year, these operations were shown to be attracting tech investors like SoftBank and Amazon. Ultimately, these solutions can keep costs down and extend the radius of delivery substantially for foodservice brands.

"In the absence of a vaccine and tumultuous infection rates, many brands will have to innovate delivery to stay viable. Dark kitchens present a key strategy to get hot food into the customer's hands as quickly as possible."

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

# THE NEW NORMAL?

By **Andrew Cuthbert**

**W**hat is this thing called the new normal? Here we sit 7 months into a global game changer that no one can predict when it will end, what will happen to me, my family, my friends, my job! That's not new, it's just not normal to have to ask so many questions about one's future all at once, and by so many at one time.

What I do know, "my salary is not the same" I hear you saying, I see my restaurant, my hotel, my favorite coffee shop closed, my mate's out of work, globally I hear stories that our hospitality industry will not be the same and 50% of all restaurants will remain closed.

So what can I do, what is that one thing someone can tell me to do to hang on?

As we move into continued uncertain times for all of us, now more than ever, we need to apply all what has been taught to us by our parents, teachers, mentors, great bosses, and management courses, and that is MOTIVATE.

As a kid falls-off their bike, "Get back on son, you can do it" says dad.

One plus one equals three, "No, try again little man, you can do it" says Mrs. Smith, the math teacher.

"How can I help you get to where you want to be?" says the mentor to the mentee.

"I see greatness in you" says the boss to the colleague who is struggling to find their path.

"Guide and lead by example" says the



management principle course. What are all those things? Motivation, and if there was any a time in our lifetime, it is now more than ever, that we need motivation.

The hardest part of being a leader is to let your people go, and whilst they go into uncertainty, how can you motivate them?

What are the words they want to hear from you? They want to know you understand and feel for them, they know it's not your fault, but they need to know that you're there and that you can tell them that they are a great asset to the company, you can give them support, and hopefully they can come back to you too, and once again do greatness with you.

We have all lost so many great people, people that built the company, the hotel, the restaurant, through no fault of theirs nor you as the leader or owner. These good people have worked and dedicated their lives to you, as you have to them, and if they can come back, that is the greatest motivation you can give.

Be honest with your people, talk to them, share the situation, and above all communicate with them on what's happening, even if they have been out of the business for months, on an unpaid leave or have been made redundant, don't forget them and don't let them feel cut-off. Reach out, let them know you are there, and that they are still important to you, because as a leader they made you.

Use ZOOM! It's free, nothing's better than seeing your people's faces wherever they may be around the world.

A, "how ya' doin'", goes a long way, let them know that they are still with you.

We see so many of us flung into the digital age, by force -not by choice in most cases, the young guns are all hooked up already, IG, FB, TikTok, you name it -they know how to do it. The dinosaurs are still on FB and trying to understand how to make a story on IG, but they will learn. Until this situation gripped the world, some of us had no idea what a ZOOM call was, what is TEAMS? What is AIRMEET? and the list goes on.

Youtube cooking shows, Youtube tutorials on everything that someone may find interesting to teach. This is an opportunity, this is upskilling, this is an opportunity for self-motivation through learning. Nothing gives a greater satisfaction sometimes, than achieving a certificate that has been worked hard for through practice and learning. A gold medal in a culinary competition, is given for excellence not mediocrity, a gold medal is given for the 100 meters in the Olympics because the bloke next to you ran faster than you did.

Is the motivation to do better than





the next one? Is the motivation to compete? Is the motivation to get guidance and advice from peers or leaders on how to do it better next time? Motivation of self is tough, this is what challenges us all to keep pushing ourselves and to keep us from falling into a rut and losing our focus.

Taking the opportunity to learn, practice and keep oneself centered is an important part of getting through this time. All of us need purpose, that sense of purpose and doing something important, it is from others, family, friends or strangers or yourself, a helping hand we need more than ever to be offered out to those around us.

Giving your time to help others creates opportunity, meeting likeminded people who come together to support others, even if it is packing food parcels for distribution where you meet a group of people, that in the future will become your extended network and who will remember you, and in the future may become your new boss or business partner. An opportunity!

Constant learning can only help us absorb so much from the internet, once the opportunity to put what we've learned into practice, we need to utilize and share them, and we should never stop learning.

In the culinary field, we would study cook books, we would practice by doing and doing and doing again and again, day after day learning the basics, and then we would evolve into creative cooks, able to understand the science and the relationship between different ingredients. With so much online, we can watch, practice and learn, but there is a resource at hand that is even better. That resource is the people around you who are more knowledgeable than the internet.

Young cooks need to use the other cooks around them, if there is an Indian chef that doesn't know how to make



**Many of our people are burdened like those without work, equally the same. Their burden at times challenges them as there is more work and less pay, on top of high expectations from guests**

Hummus, and an Arabic chef that doesn't know how to make Chicken Tikka Masala, then it is an opportunity lost or an opportunity waiting to happen, there is nothing better than watching a skilled cook make his national cuisine. Who better to learn from, the internet or the cook? Where you can smell, touch, feel and experience the cuisine.

Mango chutney is a condiment not an ingredient for curry sauce, I learnt that when I came into the kitchens nearly 30 years ago in the UAE from chef Sanjay and chef Dilip, they are the best resources young people have around them -for those that are lucky enough to still be employed and working and not sitting at home.

Young chefs need to realize that they can learn new skills and cook a new dish every day, until the day they stop working and they still won't have learnt it all. What a great thought on how to build your repertoire and then decide what direction your career could take.

Young chefs are the ones that need to work and learn the hardest to ensure the company's, hotel, restaurant, or coffee shop, survives – and so that



the company can bring back their workmates as soon as possible.

Many of our people are burdened like those without work, equally the same. Their burden at times challenges them as there is more work and less pay, on top of high expectations from guests. The anxiety of seeing their friends go home without a job, as they have been chosen to stay and work -all these things are very tough on people, especially to the young. Leaders must recognize this, they need to be open to this and be ready to support their people's mental well-being, as a feeling of guilt can tear people apart. Leaders, take a timeout to say "Are you ok, how ya' doin".

So what more can we do?

We need to be agile in all we do, businesses, and leaders need to be agile. We need to be open minded to new ideas, to look at the tried and tested and see how we can adapt, again a new normal? Or something we always did when faced with change and challenge?





We adapt, we change, we become different in our approach, we seek new ideas, we seek new alliances, we see how to move forward and become better. Leadership needs to engage with the people on the floor, as they have the greatest ideas since they work frontline day-in day-out with our guests and customers, they see more than what the leadership believes they see and hear, they are the eyes and ears of leadership, and when we don't listen, they don't talk anymore -which is the worst situation a leader can find themselves in, totally disengaged from those they most need in this time.

With so many great people in the employment market through closures and the current situation, we are all tempted to take advantage of this situation to find new talent or perceived better talents, this is a double edged sword, never forget the loyalty shown by your own people as you used to call them, question yourself as to why you should bring-in someone from outside instead of your own loyal people? When you bring in someone new, you need to really up your

interviewing skills and ask questions that will assure you of longevity and future loyalty of that person, they may bring a fantastic new skill set to you, but make sure they are ready to deliver 110% to you and to teach not only those around them but also yourself. Once you open your mind to them and open your organization to them and explain and communicate to your existing team, then acceptance will be from the beginning and will be the catalyst for all to learn, from this new person.

There have been so many so-called new rules put in place around the globe to try and overcome the spread of virus, my personal favorite is wash your hands!!! New normal or do as our mothers taught us? Cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze and cough? New norm or do as our mothers taught us. Social distancing or be respectful to people's space? All these are so important to protect us all, but the hardest part is not to become complacent with these measures, it is imperative that we remind ourselves of some of the basics and to respect each other in doing so. It is our responsibility

to give peace of mind to our colleagues and guests, by showing that we are disciplined, that we portray discipline of self in all we do to ensure that we all do our part to stay safe.

When we talk about luxury, we used to say luxury was time, giving people choice, going up and beyond, making memories, for me luxury now is defined by one word "Life". If I am alive it is a luxury to make memories, enjoy family, enjoy friends, enjoy health, enjoy sunrise and sunset and not go to hospital.

So what more can people do to get through this "New Normal" these "unprecedented times", have hope? Have faith? Have compassion? Have integrity? Have humility? Have dignity? Have empathy? Have time for others? Have time for self? Have discipline of self? It needs to be: Be a good person and do the very best you can for others as we all need each other, as if there is one thing that this "new normal" has done, it has affected us all.

And finally wear a mask!





# THE RELUCTANT DESSERTARIAN

When he embarked on a culinary career, he had no sweet dreams. But pastry found its soulmate. **Chef Mulyatna Sardiono**, the complex senior pastry chef at Hilton, today makes desserts that turn sweets sceptics into believers...

**H**e hated pastry. Today, he loves it. What began as an uncomfortable relationship has grown into a passionate love affair.

That passion for his craft is what makes Chef Mulyatna Sardiono our Pastry Chef of the Month. The complex senior pastry chef runs the dessert operations of Hilton Al Habtoor City, V-Hotel by Curio Collection Hilton and Habtoor Palace by LXR Hilton Dubai.

When Chef Mulyatna grudgingly signed up for the pastry course at the Bandung Tourism Institute of Higher Education in Indonesia, little had he known back then that it would become his ticket to rich international experiences. "I wanted to be in the hot kitchen," recalls the 38-year-old chef. "But there were limited seats and competition was immense. My choices were to waste a year waiting for the next admissions to the kitchen or accept enrolment in the pastry kitchen."

We can thank some great teachers from Switzerland for sparking Chef Mulyatna's interest in pastry. Passing on their love of desserts to him, they painstakingly showed him what a creative pursuit it is to make pastry. In the fifteen years since he graduated, he has been spreading their message and happy smiles all around.

In his current role, Chef Mulyatna designs the menu, trains the staff and implements ideas across the properties he handles. He has 30 chefs under him, running the pastry kitchen, bakery,

banquet and a 'chocolate room'. "I also regularly review the operations and see if everything is working as planned."

Admittedly, opportunities came rather easily to Chef Mulyatna. Soon after passing out from culinary school, he lucked out in getting a job in Dubai for the pre-opening of the Kempinski Hotel MoE. "There were some 15 of us from my batch who applied for jobs there. I was the only one selected. It was very exciting!" Joining as a second commis at Kempinski, he went on to become chef de partie at the Intercontinental Hotel and Resort-Al Ain in just four years. Further promotions flew fast and furious, with sous chef and then pastry chef designations at the Dallayou French pastry cake shop in Qatar. "I had promised myself that I will become a pastry chef within five years of my career. I did it!" Attention to detail and extra hours put in to develop a strong knowledge of the basics eventually paid off. "At Dallayou, I learnt under a French chef. He taught me a lot about bringing sophistication to taste."

In the beginning of 2011, Chef Mulyatna left the Middle East briefly to join the pre-opening team of Donoma, an American restaurant in Singapore. But before the year ended, he was back, this time as assistant executive pastry chef at the Bellevue Group in Jeddah. It was there that the Indonesian chef first reached his goal of being an executive pastry chef. "The culture there was very different to anything I had experienced before. The Bellevue Group had this huge cake shop

and we also handled pastry for three restaurants with a team of 26 people."

Later, when the culinary director of the property moved to Dubai, he brought Chef Mulyatna back to the city with him. As cluster pastry chef at the JA Resort and Hotel, the Indonesia chef managed pastry for a-la carte, buffet and banqueting operations. "We even did some big annual events. I was there for five years and there was never a dull moment." In June last year, Chef Mulyatna embarked on his current role.

As an experienced professional, he understands the value of hard work. Today, chefs have so many tools – from the Internet to apps such as YouTube and Instagram to easy availability of cookbooks – at their disposal to learn. "While it's always good to use whatever tools you have access to, you shouldn't shy away from experimenting with original ideas. That's what sets one chef apart from the other." Even if you use readymade products, do learn how to make them from scratch if needed, he advises aspiring chefs.

Originality is what makes a chef successful – be it in the regular professional kitchen or in business. Chef Mulyatna hopes to bring his creativity to its pinnacle by running his own business someday. "The trick is to give people what they haven't seen before. And that's not possible without creativity and years of learning." That said, he believes it's simplicity that finds the biggest takers. "Complicated dishes suit only some



palates. Simple and easy-to-consume, that's my idea of a delicious dessert."

A concept that he is tossing around in his head is a 'chocolate room' with an open kitchen. "A kitchen where people can see how desserts are prepared, right from the roasting of the chocolate bean. Wouldn't that be thrilling to watch!"

For now though, it's time for

experiments and brainstorming. At home, there's enough room for that. Chef Mulyatna has four children - two daughters and two sons. The oldest is seven and the youngest is six months old. "My older children already like cooking. So, sometimes we cook together and post the pictures on Instagram," he smiles fondly when speaking of his family. His wife also used to be a pastry chef but she gave

up her career to care for their children. "Someone had to be there for them full-time and I am grateful to her for making that difficult choice."

As a culinnaire, does he have any secret ingredients to enhance the flavours of his creations? "Passion and skills. You can create the best dishes if you have these two." Love your job and it will love you back. That's the secret!

## SUMMER CONCERT

### MANGO MOUSSE

|                    |        |
|--------------------|--------|
| Mango puree        | 1000 g |
| Sugar              | 200 g  |
| Gelatin sheet      | 30 g   |
| Arla Whipped cream | 1000 g |

#### Method

- ♦ Warm the mango puree with sugar. Then add the gelatin soaked in cold water (5 minutes in cold water) to the mango mix. Cool down and add the whipped cream. Pour into the mold. Add frozen compote and almond jaconde.

### MANGO COMPOTE

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| Mango | 250 g |
| Lime  | 10 g  |
| Sugar | 10 g  |

|            |       |
|------------|-------|
| Pectin     | 3 g   |
| Mango cube | 250 g |

#### Method

- ♦ Peel the mango and add lime juice. Mix sugar and pectin. Bring to boil again. After cold mix with an immersion blender, then add mango cube. Put into mold and freeze it.

### JOCONDE SPONGE

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Icing sugar   | 360 g |
| Almond powder | 360 g |
| Flour         | 96 g  |
| Butter melted | 70 g  |
| Eggs          | 500 g |
| Egg white     | 650 g |
| Sugar         | 160 g |

#### Method

- ♦ Beat together icing sugar, almond

powder, flour and eggs for 10 minutes. Pour butter in the mix. Make soft meringue with the egg white and sugar. Fold gently the meringue in the mix. Pour the mix in baking tray. 2 tray at 1050 g each. Bake at 230°C for 8 minutes.

### CREAM CHEESE MOUSSE

|                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Arla Pro Cream cheese | 280 g |
| Mascarpone cheese     | 400 g |
| Powder sugar          | 90 g  |
| Gelatin               | 17 g  |
| Yolks                 | 102 g |
| Sugar                 | 226 g |
| Water                 | 90 g  |
| Vanilla beans         | 3 ea. |
| Arla Whipped cream    | 680 g |

#### Method

- ♦ Warm the mascarpone and cream cheese





with vanilla bean and powder sugar. Then add Gelatin to it. Make Italian meringue with yolks, water and sugar. Then add it to the mascarpone mix. Fold the whipped cream into the mix.

#### ORANGE JAM

|         |       |
|---------|-------|
| Orange  | 200 g |
| Sugar   | 200 g |
| Glucose | 35 g  |

#### Method

- ◆ Boil the orange till soft and remove the water. Repeat three times.
- ◆ Add new water, sugar and glucose. Blend with immersion blender and simmer till bubbles.

#### PASSION JELLY

|               |       |
|---------------|-------|
| Sugar         | 130 g |
| Passion puree | 190 g |

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Gelatin sheets | 2 pcs |
|----------------|-------|

#### Method

- ◆ Boil sugar, water and passion puree. Add the gelatin and the grain of passion.
- ◆ Pour in a container and keep in fridge

#### CRISPY BASED

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Feuillentine    | 500 g |
| Almond flakes   | 150 g |
| Cocoa butter    | 50 g  |
| White chocolate | 375 g |

#### Method

- ◆ Mix all together in bain-marie, flat in silicon mat and freeze till set.

#### CHERRY SORBET

|              |       |
|--------------|-------|
| Cherry puree | 1 lit |
| Dextrose     | 50 g  |
| Glucose      | 50 g  |
| Stabilizer   | 20 g  |

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| Sugar | 100 g |
|-------|-------|

#### Method

- ◆ Boil all ingredients together and freezer for 24 hours. And put in paco jet machine before serving.

#### STRAWBERRY GEL

|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| Strawberry puree | 510 g |
| Agar2            | 5 g   |
| Sugar            | 85 g  |

#### Assembly

- ◆ Cut Raspberry Jelly in a round shape with a hole in the center. Place the crispy based cream cheesecake and mango mousse cake on top. Pipe strawberry jelly on left side of the plate. Place Cherry sorbet kernel on the other side. Decorate with some flowers, mint leaves and a chocolate stick.

# ADDING FLAVOUR TO TRADITIONAL ITALIAN CUISINE

Chef **Marcello Vigano** leads the kitchen team at Dubai Mall's popular Eataly. He talks about how he got here and what makes him tick

**M**arcello Vigano is a true blooded Italian. Born in the city of Seregno in the province of Monza and Brianza, the 37-year-old is now the kitchen chef at Eataly in Dubai mall.

Eataly is an internationally successful Italian marketplace (food mall) concept created by Oscar Farinetti and currently led by Andrea Guerra. Both of whom are uber successful businessmen.

Unlike them, Chef Marcello is an artist. He loves to create art on a plate to tantalize your palette. He says, in his quintessential Italian style, "My day is busy and tight. It starts early and begins with contacting suppliers followed by a briefing session with my team. If there is an issue that needs fixing, we fix it."

Chefs who head kitchens find little time to cook. In Chef Marcello's case, he does it to find solace from the day to day grind. "I cook to relax. I try creating new plated dishes and new menus that showcase my talent.

"In this job, the learning is never over. Nobody really invents new dishes. It is about finding ideas that involve food and creating something unique. I do not like to say a creation is all mine because for any plate to shine, a team of people work on perfecting the recipe," he says.

Chef Marcello does believe that creativity is not lost at Eataly, because it is unlike



**When you team  
sees you work  
alongside them  
and they learn from  
you, they respect  
you more**

other franchise concepts. "Here you are part of a big family with many shops around you. We do invent and think out of the box." The only limitation is that their focus is traditional Italian cuisine and to preserve centuries-old traditions.

"There are rules for sauce, plate, pizza and pasta that has worked for centuries. You can innovative a little but at the end tomato sauce is tomato sauce and carbonara sauce is carbonara sauce," says Chef Marcello.

Being in the UAE has not impacted the quality of Italian food served to patrons. "We have quite a few suppliers that bring products from Italy. Cheese, flour, tomatoes and vegetables, we get fresh, high quality Italian ingredients here. There are also great local products. We evaluate what works best and guest feedback is the best way to measure it."

Chef Marcello manages a team of 40 that

work in shifts through the day. After all, Eataly Dubai Mall is in one of the highest footfall traffic areas in the region.

"My sous chef checks and controls operations in my absence. My entire team is made up of some really good guys. Sometimes they make me crazy," he says and laughs.

Does he make them crazy too? "For me quality and respect for people are important. If that does not happen, then yes."

Chef Marcello likes to work with his team and teaching them the finer nuances of Italian cooking. "When you team sees you work alongside them and they learn from you, they respect you more."

The journey to becoming a chef is an interesting one for Chef Marcello. He says, "My family has always been involved with food. We never owned a restaurant or worked as chefs. But my grandfather did not let that stop him for cooking for his family or participating in culinary shows on television or even cooking for 400 people during large Italian festivals."

Lending his grandpa a helping hand was a young Chef Marcello. His dad too was equally in love with cooking food.

"I think their passion passed on to me. And I became the first professional chef in my family," he says.





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He did a five-year course in a hotel school and at first decided to try technical restaurant service. In a few months he realized that cooking and plating was more his thing.

"I did try something in academics too but that too was not for me. So, I focused more on cooking in traditional restaurants close to my place.

While schools teach you the basics, it is only from working in traditionally successful restaurants that you learn the secret recipes.

He remembers his early days working at La Canonica, a place frequented by celebrities including Berlusconi and Valentino Rossi as it was close to the F1 grand prix track in Monza.

"I was young and doing everything in the kitchen from cleaning and washing to slowly cooking the basics."

Two years later he had his first experience working abroad in Bermuda. "To be honest, my friend wanted to go. I didn't even know where the island was. I said OK let's do it."

Luckily for Chef Marchello, this stint further cemented his knowledge of recreating Italian cuisine on a foreign land. He worked at a British company but for an Italian restaurant with an Italian chef named Stefano Ligori.

Given Bermuda's proximity to the US, a lot of American influence made it to the dishes. "We were using a lot of fresh fish, lobsters and fresh produce available there. I loved the job and stayed there for five years," he says.

He returned to Italy and began working for a small hotel in the northern territory during the seasonal summers and winters.

A few years later he got a call from Chef Stefano in Bermuda. "He wanted me to come to Dubai," he says. This was great news for Chef Marchello as he



**You can do your menu, your plate, going to the market and buying what's fresh and available without worrying about cost or marketing**

had been trying for a job in Dubai but found no luck.

Thanks to this call, Chef Marchello began working in Dubai as a Sous Chef at a Movenpick property (now Oaks Ibn Battuta Gate Dubai) and managed operations in Chef Stefano's absence.

Chef Marchello worked there for nearly five years. He would try new dishes like Michelin star restaurants. The place was a hotspot for Italians too.

"They would come purely for Chef Stefano, that is how talented he was. After I joined, guests began trusting me too and it felt great to see them come even on the days when my chef was not there. This was a good confidence boost for me," he says.

Five years later he left for the Address Montgomerie Golf Club but soon after found his current employer Eataly.

"Chef Hadi has been my superior mentor here and I am proud of my team and I have achieved here," he says of the place where he's been nearly three years.

When we ask him about his career plans, he says, "I'm happy where I am as I know there's a lot more that I can offer. I feel appreciated here and see opportunity for growth, so I am not thinking of moving."

That said, long-term he would like to own a restaurant. "Something traditional, something small. You can do your menu, your plate, going to the market and buying what's fresh and available without worrying about cost or marketing," he says.

Last month, his wife Naureen and he became proud parents of a baby girl, whom they named Emily. Unfortunately, at the time of going to Press, he is yet to meet his wife and daughter as travel to her home country is restricted due to the pandemic.

"My daughter looks so beautiful. I miss them a lot," he says. Hopefully by the time you are reading this, the cute family are all together again.

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# THE COURT'S MARSHAL

A desire to create culinary magic took **Chef Coetsee John Croucamp** from a small town in South Africa to the hallowed halls of Dubai. The newly-appointed chief marshal of the Emirates Culinary Guild talks about beginning the next leg of his illustrious journey...





**T**he shoes are large. Large enough to be a challenge to fill. But if there's anyone up to the task, it's Chef Coetsee John Croucamp.

Probably why the Emirates Culinary Guild (ECG) called upon him to succeed Chef Michel Miraton as the chief marshal. In his decade as the ECG chief marshal, Chef Michel coached marshals in upholding the highest standards for culinary competitions, including prestigious formats such as the Salon Culinaire, La Cuisine du SIAL and East Coast Salon Culinaire.

Chef Coetsee's day job – as chef de cuisine at Sofitel Dubai Wafi – has prepared him well. In his current position, he is responsible for not only identifying the right talent for his operations but also deploying recruits in the areas most suited to their abilities. Besides, he strives to innovate continually, bringing the operations up to speed with latest trends and techniques as well as redesigning products and services to ensure sustainability, be it through technology and responsible waste management or through use of organic ingredients and healthy foods.

With his solid foundation, Chef Coetsee is more than ready to meet the challenge. After all, he has built expertise in the hospitality industry over a decade and a half.

You can say that the love of food and hospitality runs in his blood. "I come from a family that expresses love for its members through cooking," says the South African-born chef. "My mother spent most of her free time cooking delicious meals for the family. My parents' genuine love and care, which came through in their cooking, inspired me to become a chef."

Chef Coetsee admits his family gave him the strong roots he needed to test his wings. "We are a very close-knit family.



## **I started with mundane, repetitive tasks – chopping vegetables, whisking batter, cleaning fish, swabbing chillers... Sometimes, I spent hours doing these boring tasks**

I was raised in a small town called Uitenhage in Eastern Cape, South Africa. My first name 'Coetsee' was my mother's maiden name and my second name 'John' was my paternal grandfather's name." With two male siblings, the house was always buzzing with activity. "My father was a lecturer and my mother is the managing director of a retirement community. Today, my older brother is the production manager at a citrus farm and the youngest is a software engineer."

As a child, Chef Coetsee faced no parental pressure to choose this or that as a profession. But his story practically wrote itself. "In my childhood, I used to volunteer to do commis work for school and church events whenever my parents were involved. Also, my grandfather was a pastry chef who taught me to bake a sponge cake when I was just eleven. So when I completed high school, the decision to study catering came naturally." Enrolling at the university in Port Elizabeth, he spent four years learning the rules of the professional kitchen.

After completing his education, Chef Coetsee was lucky enough to find opportunities to travel around in South Africa and work across formats - hotels, restaurants, game farms and private golf clubs. That didn't mean the first few years were easy. "I started with

mundane, repetitive tasks – chopping vegetables, whisking batter, cleaning fish, swabbing chillers... Sometimes, I spent hours doing these boring tasks. Back then, they felt pointless but today, I realise that they were lessons in endurance and perseverance."

What was even tougher to handle, was homesickness. As someone very attached to his family, Chef Coetsee constantly struggled with being away from them. The feelings of homesickness would intensify when there were special family occasions like birthdays, weddings and festivals.

But not only did he survive, he thrived. "My first job as a chef was in a small town called Plettenburg Bay, where I was a commis chef. After three weeks of doing routine chores and watching the methods and techniques of my head chef, I got a chance to ready the dinner service." Learning from seniors and contemporaries alike, Chef Coetsee was subsequently promoted to junior chef de partie for two kitchens. Later, he moved to Fynbos Golf and Country Estate in the Western Cape as chef-in-charge for the pre-opening. "In this crucial role, I was responsible for creating the menus for the restaurant as well as for events and weddings. Plus, I was in a decision-making role for the kitchen team."

When Chef Coetsee moved as chef de partie to Pumba game lodge in Addo in Eastern Cape, he learned valuable lessons in careful planning because the deliveries were made just once a week. In 2011, he further enhanced his profile by joining the 12 Apostles Hotel and Spa, an award-winning hotel in Cape Town. "I started as chef de partie and was promoted to sous chef a few years later, training under two extremely skilled chefs. We used to pull 36-hour shifts when the restaurant operations were highly demanding and the senior chefs never left our side." Recognising his dedication and hard work, the hotel management invited Chef Coetsee to a sponsored New Year celebration party in







London. However, the chef had to pass up the exciting opportunity as he made his international debut with a job at the iconic Raffles Dubai in April 2014.

"As the sous chef of the main kitchen of Raffles Dubai, I was responsible for everything from in-room dining to banqueting events. The six years I spent there not only helped me to develop my professional skills but also my personality." In February this year, he left Raffles Dubai to join the pre-opening team for Sofitel Dubai Wafi as chef de cuisine of the main kitchen.

At the moment, Chef Coetsee is in the process of finalizing menus and ensuring the selection of the right ingredients to set high quality standards, which are of supreme importance to him. "From taste to temperature to display, presentation and hygiene, we want to ensure high standards." Shaped like an obelisk,



**I started marshalling at various competitions in the UAE in 2018. In my new role, I have to ensure that all other marshals are scheduled correctly for competitions and know the rules well**

Sofitel Dubai Wafi celebrates French art and Egyptian heritage in a modern setting. The hotel has 595 rooms, suites and serviced residences with luxurious

spa and high-end dining facilities including Brasserie Boulud, Taiko bar and the Nine British gastropub.

At the same time, Chef Coetsee is excited about his new journey at the ECG. The youngest ever chief marshal of the guild, he has already been a senior member for the past six years. "I started marshalling at various competitions in the UAE in 2018. In my new role, I have to ensure that all other marshals are scheduled correctly for competitions and know the rules well. I also have to appoint them to stations where their individual skills are best utilised." Marshals assist participating chefs by ensuring that they have everything they need and are aware of the time pressures. They also take the finished plates to the judges.

No newbie to competitions, Chef Coetsee understands the stresses



that participating chefs face. "I started competing when I started working in Dubai in 2014. I was very nervous during my first competition. I had no idea what to expect despite all the training. I had an hour to make the dishes from scratch. It was a thrilling experience and I won a bronze and a silver." Taking into account the judges' feedback, he believes in improvising continuously. "I started competing regularly and the first gold medal I got was in the beef category. Slowly, I started getting more involved in the guild and volunteered as a marshal." Chef Coetsee is also a member of the prestigious World Association of Chefs' Societies (WACS).

For those looking to replicate his success, he has a few words of advice. Like most successful chefs, the 35-year-old advocates learning the basics well. "Don't try to run before you can walk by cooking advanced dishes with complex methods

and techniques. Once you master the basics, it forms the foundation of your skill and over time, complex methods of cooking will come naturally to you." He believes in mastering the prep techniques and tools, mainly the knife. "Having impressive knife skills is vital. You need to know how to do different types of cuts such as julienne, baton and brunoise dicing. You should also be able to complete tasks quickly and efficiently." The ability to listen and learn from team members and seniors is important. "Discipline and punctuality are not just for the army. They are also for chefs. And don't be afraid to ask questions. That's how you learn."

Chef Coetsee is a big fan of starting and ending his day at the mise en place, where dishes and ingredients are prepped. "If you master your mise en place through continuous planning and organizing, the service will run smoothly.

Make it a habit to get your mise en place sorted when you first get in and when you leave." Good relationships, not just with team members but also with self, are imperative to creating an atmosphere of growth. "Take care of your health and also help team members whenever possible."

Chef Coetsee draws strength from his family when he deals with the challenges of a career in hospitality. "My wife is my biggest supporter and she has been with me every step of the way throughout my culinary journey. We have an African grey parrot that fulfils the role of a kid for now," he laughs.

Someday, the chef hopes to open a gastronomic deli lab, where foodies can enjoy fresh breads, muffins, scones, preserves and other delights. "It will be a family-friendly place where you can enjoy home-cooked soul food. Everything there will be freshly made, including pastries, meat loaves, sausages, cured and dried meats, self-brewed beverages, pickled jams, cheese, olives and sweets. My dream is to franchise it."

But that will have to wait. For, the marshals need their new chief now!



**If you master your mise en place through continuous planning and organizing, the service will run smoothly. Make it a habit to get your mise en place sorted when you first get in and when you leave**





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# THE HIGH FLIERS

They cater to the gastronomic needs of Emirates Airlines' passengers. But this time around, Chefs **Patrick V. Ramos** and **Lekhnath Thapaliya** will strive to impress the palates of the Golden Chef's Hat Award judges. Meet the dazzling duo from Emirates Flight Catering...

## PATRICK V. RAMOS

You're never too young to challenge the world. Even though he's only 22, Chef Patrick V. Ramos knows this well. He's out to challenge other culinaires with his talent.

The commis II chef at Emirates Flight Catering (EKFC) has just started his career. But that has not stopped him from taking on more experienced chefs at the Golden Chef's Hat Award competition.

At EKFC, he is a part of the team that handles pastry for first class and business class passengers of Emirates

Airlines. "We ready plates for passengers to and from Europe, about 600-800 plates. The department handles some 5,000 plates," explains the chef.

Sounds like quite a task but Chef Patrick understands the value of hard work. Of course, when you enjoy what you do, none of it feels like work.

Born and raised in the Kaizen city in the Philippines, Chef Patrick owes his passion for food to his grandmother. "She is an excellent cook and when I was just 13, she would insist that I cook with her for the family," he smiles

fondly at the memory. Initially, his interest lay in the hot kitchen. So that's what he chose in culinary school. At the university, there was a society that trained students for international competitions. The Lyceum of the Philippines University Les Jeunes Chefs Organization sparked Chef Patrick's interest in pastry. "In the beginning, I was helping senior students with making showpieces that had to be carried to Hong Kong and Singapore. Over the three years that I was a member there, I saw all the creativity and attention to detail that goes into pastry and I was hooked." His offering



PATRICK V. RAMOS



LEKHNATH THAPALIYA

for the Nestle competition? A mousse dish with orange compote.

Bringing together different flavours for desserts is difficult. That's where a pastry chef's skills really come through, believes Chef Patrick. "When you see those amazing desserts on Instagram, you wonder how they chefs did it. It's fascinating!"

He came to Dubai in search of international exposure and richer professional experiences. The interest in competitions is also in line with this goal. "This is my third competition. I have participated in SIAL in Abu Dhabi and the Salon Culinaire." Having won a bronze and a silver medal, "the next goal is a gold".

A family-oriented person, he is grateful that his parents also live in Dubai and he goes home to them everyday. But Chef Patrick admits to missing his sisters, who are still studying in the Philippines. "I have a twin sister and I miss having her here."

On future plans, Chef Patrick is mature enough to admit he's too young for them. "All I know is that I want to keep improving myself. The rest will follow in good time."

Thumbs up to that!

## LEKHNATH THAPALIYA

Even before he started his culinary journey, Chef Lekhnath Thapaliya was no stranger to hospitality. As a child, he helped his mother run a small restaurant after school hours.

Little wonder then that today, there is no place that feels as comfortable to him as a professional kitchen. The 27-year-old demi chef de partie is a part of the Asian kitchen team at EKFC.

Hailing from Nepal, Chef Lekhnath was raised in an environment where food was more than just fuel for the body. "My mother has been running a small seafood restaurant and bar in my home town



for almost 30 years now. That's where I learnt to cook," he says. Few 11-year-olds spend their free time roasting meat in charcoal grills and making noodles. But that's what Chef Lekhnath and his sister counted as hobbies.

Later, when a neighbour went to India to work at a big hotel, the first seeds of professional curiosity were sown. "I was already considering hotel management as a career. So I signed up and then trained at the Phat Kath restaurant in Kathmandu." In 2012, he got an opportunity to join the Gusto Italian restaurant at the Al Siraaj Doha Inn Hotel in Qatar. "It was a nice learning experience. I was there for nearly three years and then I went back briefly to Nepal." An earthquake had just shattered the country and Chef Lekhnath struggled to find a job.

Then he managed to return to the Middle East with a position at PF Chang's in Dubai. Within a year, he moved to Atelier M restaurant at Pier 7 in Marina for a couple of years. After a short stint at the Shangri-la Hotel's Oni restaurant, he joined EKFC in 2018.

Recalling his first day there, Chef Lekhnath narrates the story of how he burnt his hand. "I didn't tell anyone and just wore gloves, so my seniors don't see it. I was in a lot of pain but I didn't leave. When the chefs found out later, they appreciated my work ethic." Understandably, that set the right tone for teamwork.

Back to the Golden Chefs Hat Award competition, he's making an almond and honey corn-crust, soy-marinated sea bass dish served with parsnip puree, lemon confit, pumpkin barley risotto, seasonal vegetables, carrot lemon foam and fennel dust. "It has a nice sweet and salty flavour. I am hoping the judges like it." This is his third competition, the first being SIAL in Abu Dhabi.

Over the long term, Chef Lekhnath plans to settle in Australia with his wife. The couple doesn't have children yet. "I have a lot of friends in Melbourne and I would like to be close to them. So let's see how it goes."

Baby steps to big dreams. That's the way it goes.



## Almond, honey corn crust, soy marinated sea bass with parsnip puree and lemon confit, pumpkin barley risotto and bercy sauce, seasonal vegetable foam with carrot lemon foam and fennel dust

(Serves 4)

### FISH MARINATION

|                              |      |
|------------------------------|------|
| Chillan Sea Bass             | 400g |
| Seasoning Soy Sauce (Nestle) | 20g  |
| Brown Sugar                  | 20g  |

#### Method

- ♦ Clean the fish, fillet and portion it, Marinate it with marinating sauce, pan fry it and cook in an oven at 180°C for 6 minutes. Remove, put the crush (see below), and cook again in the oven for the same amount of time and at the same temperature.

### ALMOND FISH CRUSH

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Honey Corn Flakes (Nestle) | 40gm |
| Toasted Bread Crumbs       | 16gm |
| Salt                       | S-Q  |
| Pepper                     | S-Q  |
| Almond Flacks              | 8gm  |

#### Method

- ♦ Toast breadcrumbs in a pan until light brown and blend it with honey corn flakes, salt, pepper, thyme, and toasted almond flakes.

### BERCY SAUCE

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Fish Stock                 | 80ml |
| Chopped Shallots           | 32gm |
| Chopped Garlic             | 12gm |
| Thyme                      | 4gm  |
| Butter                     | 30gm |
| Cream (Nestle)             | 40gm |
| Coconut Milk Power (Maggi) | 20gm |
| Lemon Juice                | 20ml |
| Salt                       | S-Q  |
| Chives                     | S-Q  |

#### Method

- ♦ Reduce fish stock and in another pan sauté shallots and garlic with butter. Put the fish stock, add thyme and blend it. Cook with coconut milk, cream lemon juice and salt; finish with chives.

### PARSNIP POMME PUREE

|                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Green Peas                  | 40gm |
| Potato Powder (Maggi)       | 80gm |
| Butter                      | 40gm |
| Cream (Nestle)              | 40gm |
| Coconut Milk Powder (Maggi) | 32gm |



|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Salt            | S-Q  |
| Vegetable Stock | 40ml |

#### Method

- ♦ Boil peas in vegetable stock and strain it. Boil vegetable stock and put potato powder. Cook until it thickens and blend cooked peas with remaining boiled veg stock from boiling peas. Blend until smooth and mix with potato puree. Cook with coconut milk, cooking cream and butter. Finish with salt.

### BLACK LEMON CONFIT

|           |      |
|-----------|------|
| Lemon     | 20ml |
| Olive Oil | 80ml |
| Thyme     | 8gm  |
| Salt      | S-Q  |
| Squid Ink | S-Q  |

#### Method

- ♦ Cut lemon into very thin slices and cook in olive oil with thyme for about 30 minutes on slow heat until soft. Strain oil and blend with salt, and add squid ink to make it soft and silky puree.

### SEASONAL VEGETABLES

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Baby carrot            | 40gm |
| Asparagus              | 32gm |
| Edamame                | 32gm |
| Shimeji Mushroom White | 36gm |
| Baby Red Chard         | 16gm |
| Peas Sprout            | 20gm |
| Salt                   | S-Q  |
| Butter                 | 20gm |

#### Method

- ♦ Toss butter and vegetable on a hot pan until it is cooked. Add seasoning and

chard and peas sprout (do not cook) as a garnish.

### PUMPKIN BARLEY RISOTTO

|                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Barley                      | 80gm |
| Shallots                    | 32gm |
| Garlic                      | 20gm |
| Pumpkin Dice                | 32gm |
| Pumpkin Seeds               | 20gm |
| Cream (Nestle)              | 40gm |
| Coconut Milk Powder (Maggi) | 40gm |
| Butter                      | 20gm |
| Salt                        | S-Q  |
| Pepper                      | S-Q  |
| Vegetable Stock             | 40ml |
| Grated Parmesan             | 32gm |

#### Method

- ♦ Boil barley with vegetable stock and salt until it is 80% cooked. Strain it. In another pan sauté garlic, shallots and diced pumpkin with butter. Add the barley, pumpkin seeds and cook with coconut milk and cream. Finish with salt, pepper and parmesan.

### FENNEL DUST

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Toasted Fennel Dust | 12gm |
|---------------------|------|

#### Method

- ♦ Toast the fennel until it releases its aroma and blend it into fine powder.

### CARROT LEMON FOAM

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Carrot, lemon juice | 40ml |
| Lecite              | 4gm  |

#### Method

- ♦ Carrot lemon juice and lecite, blend it until it turns to foam.



## Orange Chocolate Mousse with Orange Consommé, Milo Crumble, Pistachio Sponge and Milo Foam (Serves 4)

### ORANGE CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| Docello Chocolate Mousse | 300gm |
| Nestle Fresh Milk        | 600gm |
| Galantine Sheets         | 15gm  |
| Orange Supremes          | 100gm |
| Sugar                    | 90gm  |
| Glucose                  | 50gm  |
| Orange Juice             | 50gm  |

#### Method

- ♦ For orange compote insert:
- ♦ In a saucepan, bring sugar, glucose and orange juice to a boil.
- ♦ Wait for it to get thick then add the supremes. Pour into desired mould then freeze.

#### For Docello Mousse

- ♦ Mix Docello mousse powder with cold milk until no lumps are visible.
- ♦ Place mixture in a stand mixer and mix with whisk attachment for low then high after 2 mins. After mixing to medium peak, pour into desired mould. Place frozen compote inside the mousse.

### MILO CRUMBLES

|             |       |
|-------------|-------|
| Butter      | 100gm |
| Icing Sugar | 100gm |
| Flour       | 100gm |
| Milo Powder | 40gm  |

#### Method

- ♦ Preheat oven to 10°C
- ♦ Mix butter and sugar with paddle attachment until no traces of sugar is visible. Add flour and Milo powder slowly.
- ♦ Remove from bowl and make a thin spread on a tray.
- ♦ Bake in the oven for 15 mins or until cooked. Remove from oven and leave in a cooling rack. Place in a mixer with paddle attachment and mix until you can create crumbs.

### PISTACHIO MICRO SPONGE

|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| Pistachio Powder | 200ml |
| Egg Whites       | 180ml |
| Flour            | 30gm  |
| Salt             | 5gm   |

#### Method

- ♦ Mix all ingredients in a bowl and then strain.
- ♦ Put mixture in a zipper bag with 3 gas cartridges then shake vigorously. Pierce bottom of plastic cups and fill less than

half of the cup. Cook in the microwave for 1 minute. Freeze always. Re-heat before using.

### MILO FORM

|             |       |
|-------------|-------|
| Nestle Milk | 200ml |
| Milo Powder | 20gm  |
| Sugar       | 50gm  |
| Pectin      | 10gm  |

#### Method

- ♦ Mix pectin and percent of sugar. In a saucepan, bring milk, milo and remaining sugar to a smoking point.
- ♦ Add pectin then continue stirring until it boils. Blend with hand blender to create foam. Scoop using a spoon then put on plate.

### ORANGE CONSOMMÉ

|                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Orange Juice          | 300ml |
| Fresh Orange Supremes | 100gm |
| Honey                 | 80gm  |
| Basil leaves          | 40gm  |
| Ginger Powder         | 10gm  |

#### Method

- ♦ In a saucepan, bring all ingredients to a boil, simmer down for around 4 minutes.
- ♦ Using a fine sieve or a cheese cloth then strain the consommé.
- ♦ Chill until ready to use.



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# DIFFERENT STROKES

One believes in perfection and the other, in innovative disruption. But together, they make a formidable team. Chefs **Shehan Isuranaga** and **Sudip Pandey** from Nakheel Hospitality-owned Al Furjan Club have a delectable interplay of contrasts ready for the Golden Chef's Hat Award this month...

## SHEHAN ISURANAGA

Armed with a never-say-die attitude, Chef Shehan Isuranaga firmly believes that fortune favours those who try, try, try till they succeed.

The Sri Lankan chef, who is a commis chef at the Nakheel Hospitality-owned Al Furjan Club, is making a second attempt to win the Golden Chef's Hat Award. Learning from past mistakes, Chef Shehan has spent the year refining his skills through various feedback loops from seniors. "I wanted to be a lot more creative this time around. Last time, I made a salmon dish. This time, it's a beef dish," says the 28-year-old chef. He's no stranger to hard work. Putting in 14 hours a day, he's doing everything he can to put up a show that blows the judges' minds.

But more on the dish later.

First, let's get to know our participant better.

Born and raised in Sri Lanka, Chef Shehan began his culinary journey in 2010 at the Grand Oriental Hotel in Colombo. The foundation is quite strong. In his first job, he learnt the basics of hot and pastry kitchen as well as how to make carvings and decoration. "It was all-round training," says the chef. A year and a half later, Chef Shehan joined the Mount Lavinia Hotel, a job that trained him well in kitchen organization and operation skills. "Other than food preparation, I also got lessons in hygiene management there."

The year 2015 brought new opportunities. Chef Shehan left the Sri Lankan shores for the UAE, joining Nathalie's Café in Dubai. While the café was a small one, it gave the chef a taste of the international circuit. Three years later, he entered the big league with a position at the Maison de Juliette French restaurant in La Mer, Jumeirah. The beachfront place is on the 'breakfast goals' list of many foodies in Dubai.

In October last year, Chef Shehan took up a position at the Al Furjan Club. "It's been an exciting journey so far. Let's see where it takes me," the budding chef says.

For the Golden Chef's Hat Award competition, he is making a beef-stuffed, nori-wrapped veal loin dish. "I rolled the nori with beef and different vegetables. I have also added long beans and coconut croquettes. It takes a while to make but I hope the results surpass the judges' expectations."

Chef Shehan has also improved his plating skills over the past year. "It's a new idea and it has to be visually appealing too."

Will he be second time lucky? Let's wait and watch!

## SUDIP PANDEY

Maybe he was born with it, maybe he's just great at learning. But the fact that Chef Sudip Pandey is a self-taught gastronome makes his talent even more special.

The commis chef at Al Furjan Club plans to follow up Chef Shehan's beef roulade with an almond panna cotta served with chocolate sorbet. As a relative newbie in the culinary world, Chef Sudip is taking his first steps in pastry.

A Nepalese by birth, he specializes in the cuisine of the Himalayan country. In fact, that's what brought him to Dubai. "I started at the Mount Everest Restaurant in Bur Dubai as a helper and then





**SHEHAN ISURANAGA****SUDIP PANDEY**

progressed to chef," he says simply while tracing his journey.

The year was 2016 and all it took Chef Sudip to get a job was a cooking test. "I made just one dish – momos – and I was hired. Then after two months, I was made chef."

The 27-year-old spent three years at the restaurant, learning the operations of a professional kitchen. "I don't have a formal education in hospitality. In fact, I studied commerce for a bit and then dropped out of college. So it was my first real formal training."

As a chef hungry for knowledge, Chef Sudip finds the 10-12 hours spent daily in the pastry kitchen rather

enjoyable. It's a disciplined set-up and the standards are high. These features motivate him instead of stressing him out. "I am learning western style cooking. Other than watching my seniors, I try to use YouTube videos and online resources to refine my skills." The fact that he is passionate about food makes the hectic job fun.

Chef Sudip comes from a big family. Growing up with parents, two brothers and two sisters makes him comfortable working in large teams, especially teams with a lot of diversity. "I like to experience different cultures. Eventually, I want to try my luck working in America. There's so much to see and do there."

That might have to wait for some

though. There's still much to learn.

This is Chef Sudip's first participation in a culinary competition. For his dish, he's using Nestle panna cotta powder with almond milk, chocolate and different kinds of berries. The Nepalese chef sees the competition as an opportunity to learn sophisticated skills. He's looking forward to watching new techniques and innovative use of ingredients.

Someday, Chef Sudip hopes to use these learnings to open his own restaurant, maybe back home in Nepal. "It will serve Nepalese food but it's possible that my international experiences will lead to some fusion experiments."

Sounds like a plan!

## **Beef stuffed Nori wrapped veal loin. Beef tenderloin stuffed with harissa marinated veal loin wrapped in Nori served with honey roasted vegetable, puy lentil barley casserole, cannelloni beans puree, homemade harissa sauce**

### **BEEF TENDERLOIN**

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Beef Tenderloin | 200g  |
| Harissa paste   | 15g   |
| Nori sheet      | 1 pcs |

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Veal loin           | 150g |
| Thyme               | 2g   |
| Butter              | 10g  |
| Salt                | 5g   |
| Black pepper powder | 2g   |

### **Method**

◆ Place the tenderloin between two layers of plastic wrap and pound using a rubber mallet or rolling pin until it is about 1/2 inch thick then spread the harissa paste on meat. Wrap some loin in nori sheet and carefully roll the steak. Finally cook the meat in a sous vide to 50°C for 12mins.

### **HONEY ROASTED VEGETABLE**

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Heirloom baby carrots | 60g |
| Baby fennel           | 15g |

|                    |      |
|--------------------|------|
| Baby beetroot      | 30g  |
| Long beans         | 60g  |
| Shallot            | 40g  |
| Zucchini           | 30g  |
| Honey              | 10g  |
| Garlic             | 10g  |
| Thyme              | 3g   |
| Salt               | 8g   |
| Black pepper white | 3    |
| Olive oil          | 10ml |

### **Method**

◆ Pre-heat the oven to 17°C. Place all of the ingredients inside a large baking tray, this baking tray will be the one to use to roast the vegetables. Mix everything really well, making sure that all of the vegetables, are fully covered in the oil, honey and herbs. Place the oven

inside the pre-heated oven, bake for 15 minutes until all the vegetables are beautifully roast.

### CANNELLONI BEANS PUREE

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| Beans               | 100g  |
| Shallot             | 40g   |
| Garlic              | 10g   |
| Vegetable Stock     | 250ml |
| Butter              | 20g   |
| Salt                | 6g    |
| White pepper powder | 2g    |

#### Method

- Place the beans in a strainer and rinse well under water. Cook the beans in vegetable stock until soft. While the beans are cooking, prepare the browned butter. In another sauté pan, heat the olive oil to medium. Add the onion and salt and sauté for 5 minutes, or until the onions are soft. Add the pepper and garlic and sauté for 30 seconds more. When the beans have finished cooking, drain them and place them in a food processor or powerful blender. Add the sautéed onions to the beans with browned butter. Puree the beans for 1-2 minutes, or until smooth. Check the beans for seasonings and add more salt as needed.

### LENTIL BARLEY CASSEROLE

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| Green lentil        | 40g   |
| Barley              | 40g   |
| Shallot             | 15g   |
| Carrot              | 20g   |
| Celery              | 20g   |
| Garlic              | 8g    |
| Butter              | 20g   |
| Veg stock           | 200ml |
| Olive oil           | 10ml  |
| Thyme               | 3g    |
| Salt                | 10g   |
| Black pepper powder | 2g    |

#### Method

- Prepare your vegetables: wash, peel and dice the carrots, celery, onion, and mince the garlic. Add the vegetables to the pot and continue to back sauté until all the veggies are soft and transparent (about 5 mins). Measure out the lentils and barley and cook separately. Combine the lentils, barley and veggies in a large pot and add the chicken stock and thyme into the pot. Cook it slowly until thick and check the seasoning.

### HOMEMADE HARISSA SAUCE

|                                |      |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Red peppers, halved and seeded | 150g |
| Fresno chili peppers           | 40g  |
| Habanero pepper                | 40g  |



|                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| Vegetable oil         | 20ml |
| Caraway seeds         | 10g  |
| Coriander seeds       | 10g  |
| Ground cumin          | 8g   |
| Dried mint            | 3g   |
| Garlic cloves, peeled | 15g  |
| Lemon, juiced         | 10ml |
| Virgin olive oil      | 25ml |
| Salt                  | 15g  |
| Black pepper powder   | 5g   |

#### Method

- Preheat oven. Place red bell peppers with cut sides facing down onto the prepared baking sheet. Cook until the skin of the peppers has blackened and blistered, 5 to 8 minutes. Place the blackened peppers into a bowl and tightly seal with plastic wrap. Allow the peppers to steam as they cool, about 20 minutes. Remove and discard skins. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add Fresno and habanero coriander and caraway seeds in a skillet over medium heat until you start to smell the spice, about 2 minutes. Use a mortar and pestle to crush toasted seeds; add cumin, mint, and salt, and crush until finely ground. Transfer spices to a blender and add roasted bell peppers, chilis, garlic, lemon juice, and vegetable oil; puree until smooth. Drizzle in extra-virgin olive oil at the end, blending for only a few seconds.

### DARK CHOCOLATE BEEF JUS

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Demi glace (Nestle) | 200g |
| Beef trimmings      | 500g |
| Onion               | 50g  |
| Garlic              | 20g  |
| Rosemary            | 5g   |
| Thyme               | 5g   |
| 70% Dark chocolate  | 120g |

#### For the sauce

- Roast the beef trimmings till golden brown and add onion, garlic and rosemary thyme. Pan roast for 3mins.
- Then deglaze it with demi-glaze.
- Bring to a boil then simmer until sauce consistency is thick.
- Before serving add the dark chocolate and remove from heat. Whisk until it combines.

### COCONUT CROQUETTE'S

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| Potato               | 250g |
| Maggi coconut powder | 150g |
| Butter               | 45g  |
| Flour                | 30g  |
| Breadcrumbs          | 30g  |
| Eggs                 | 28g  |

#### Method

- Boil your potato with coconut milk till soft and mash it. Strain with fine sieve. Then add coconut powder and butter till you get a dough-like texture. Portion it into balls of 12g each. Roll each in flour, egg, bread crumbs and deep fry.



## Almond panna cotta with chocolate caviar, fresh berries and cherry ice cream

### INGREDIENTS

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| Docello panna cotta mix | 150g |
| Cream                   | 250g |
| Almond Milk             | 250g |

### Method

- ◆ Combine almond milk and cream and bring to pre-boil.
- ◆ Add the Docello mix and mix it till it combines while avoiding boiling it. Remove from heat and mix it till it cools down and put in into round molds.

### CHOCOLATE CAVIAR

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Cocoa Powder    | 50g  |
| Sugar           | 90g  |
| Sodium Alginate | 2g   |
| Water           | 250g |

### Method

- ◆ Use an immersion blender to mix the cocoa powder, sugar, algin, and water. Let it rest in the chiller until the bubbles go out.

### CALCIC BATH

|                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| Water           | 1000g |
| Calcium Lactate | 5g    |

### Method

- ◆ Mix water and Calcic together with spoon set aside.
- ◆ Take a pipette and pipe the chocolate mixture in the calcic bath to create a small droplet of chocolate. Rinse with water and set aside.

### CHERRY ICE CREAM

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Cream        | 445g |
| Fructose     | 165g |
| Gelatin      | 6.5g |
| Malic acid   | 4g   |
| Cherry puree | 90g  |

### Method

- ◆ For the ice cream pre-heat your cream and don't let it boil. Disperse your gelatin. When the cream is hot (not boiling) add all the ingredients until it combines without any lumps. Put it in a paco jet container and freeze it. When serving, blend it in the paco jet and make a quenelle out of it.

### MERINGUE CRUMBLE

|               |      |
|---------------|------|
| Egg white     | 100g |
| Sugar         | 30g  |
| Baking powder | 3g   |

### Method

- ◆ Whisk your egg, white sugar and baking powder until foamy and stiff consistency. Then bake it in the oven

at 120°C for 45 mins. Cool it down and break it into crumble.

### FRESH BERRIES

|              |          |
|--------------|----------|
| Strawberry   | 5g       |
| Black berry  | 5g       |
| Rasp berry   | 5g       |
| Blue berry   | 5g       |
| Water        | 200g     |
| Salt & Sugar | 10g each |

### Method

- ◆ Mix water, salt and sugar together. And brine your berries for 10 mins in the chiller and strain and pat dry.
- ◆ We do this to remove hitch hikers and to make the berries release more flavor

### RASPBERRY CONSOMMÉ

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Frozen Raspberry | 200g |
| Water            | 200g |
| Pectin           | 25g  |
| Sugar            | 80g  |

### Method

- ◆ Heat the raspberry frozen into a pot until it softens. Add water and when it almost reaches a boil, remove from heat and add pectin and sugar. Stir it till sugar dissolves and bring back to heat a little bit more. Strain it with stock cloth and leave it overnight to separate the protein and water. Then strain again a second time to get your sauce.





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# BEACH BOYS

Colleagues and fellow countrymen **Ranil Sameera** and **Shiran Warunajith Alahakoon** are representing Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort at the Golden Chef's Hat Award this month. Who are they and what do they have for us?

## RANIL SAMEERA

An import from Sri Lanka, Chef Ranil Sameera is the demi chef de partie in the pastry kitchen at Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort. Ask him how his journey began and he tells you that he's living out his father's dream. "My father was the one who convinced me to become a pastry chef," says the 26-year-old.

A commis in a hotel in Sri Lanka, his father later adopted carpentry as a profession but did not give up on the idea of having at least one pastry chef in the family. "I started with odd jobs in hospitality – housekeeping, F&B, front office and so on. Later, I got a diploma in hospitality and went into pastry."

Starting with a commis III chef position at

Pegasus Reef Hotel in Colombo in 2013, Chef Ranil had beaten out 39 students to get an entry into the pastry kitchen.

A couple of years later, he stepped foot into international waters with a job in Maldives. "A cousin worked there and he approached me. I was terrified at first because I did not speak any English and had never left Sri Lanka."

The experience, at Ellaidhoo Maldives by Cinnamon Maldives, turned out to be a rather pleasant surprise. "Life in Maldives is beautiful. The people are friendly."

Chef Ranil soaked up the sun, the sand and skills in Maldives. Three years later, he returned to Sri Lanka with a job at Uga Bay. Four months

into the job, he was offered a chance to work in the UAE at the Miramar. "Getting this opportunity was a dream come true."

However, the start was really rocky.

Chef Ranil secured a work visa and said goodbyes to his family to head for Fujairah. "It was a Friday and Ramadan time. At the immigration, I was not allowed in and asked to wait because they could not find my authorization to enter the country. I spent more than 24 hours at the airport and then was asked to return to Sri Lanka!"

The nightmare wasn't over. The officials took Chef Ranil's passport and said they would deport him back. Calls to the hotel officials who had organized his arrival did not yield much.

"I was sent back and spent the next three months looking for a job. My dream had turned into a nightmare."

Luckily, the issue was resolved eventually and Chef Ranil managed to join Miramar a year and a half ago, albeit with a delay.

It was brave to return to the UAE after the negative experience. But the Sri Lankan chef has no regrets. "I have learnt a lot here. Other than my day-to-day work, I also get a chance to improve my skills through competitions." So far, Chef Ranil has participated in three culinary competitions and won two bronze medals. His goal is to secure a gold sometime soon.



**RANIL SAMEERA**

Another short-term goal is to reach the pastry chef designation.

For the Nestle Golden Chefs Hat Award, he is putting together a passion fruit panna cotta with walnut brownie and hazelnut crumble. With a passion fruit sauce, chocolate mousse cake, crusted pistachio and raspberry sauce, this one promises to be a treat for all the senses.

His parents as well as his two brothers and two sisters are all rooting for him. "Winning is great but the learnings are priceless. That's how I see competitions."

Now that attitude has 'winner' written all over it.

## SHIRAN WARUNAJITH ALAHAKOON

Chef Ranil's partner for the competition is also from Sri Lanka. Chef Shiran Warunajith Alahakoon is a Salon Culinaire gold medalist and quite the expert in the hot kitchen – be it seafood or meat. As chef de partie in the Italian kitchen of Miramar, he supports the sous chef in daily activities even as he experiments with his own skills.

Chef Shiran's interest in the culinary arts was sparked by fiery celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay. "I used to watch his cooking shows and wanted to be like him," smiles the 30-year-old chef. The Sri Lankan chef

did what just a lucky few manage – work under his celebrity role model. "I worked at Opal by Gordon Ramsay restaurant in St Regis Hotel, Doha. I met him there and spoke to him a few times."

Chef Shiran doesn't mind Chef Gordon's abrasive personality. In fact, he finds it inspiring. "He's actually quite nice in real life. Of course, if you make a mistake, then you will get an earful. I was scared of him first but later, I used to look forward to his annual visits."

Chef Shiran started his career in 2008 in Sri Lanka's Palm Garden Village after getting a diploma from a hospitality school. After a couple of years, he too went to Maldives for an international stint. "A friend worked there and I joined the L'Aquila restaurant as a commis III chef. It was the first time I was out of Sri Lanka. So it was quite a nice experience." He echoes Chef Ranil's opinion of Maldives and its people. "It's a beautiful country and the people are nice too."

After three years there, Chef Shiran decided to spread his wings further. So when an opportunity came by to join St Regis in Doha, he immediately took it. "How could I say no? It was my chance to see my idol in person!"

Hits and misses are a part of a hospitality career. Chef Shiran recalls

**SHIRAN WARUNAJITH ALAHAKOON**

an incident in Doha that taught him a valuable lesson. "On one of my first nights there, we had to pre-cook around 34 turkey. When the orders came, we heated and served them. I put a turkey on the plate, garnished it and readied it for serving. The executive chef came in and stuck a thermometer in the turkey to check it. It was colder than required and he blew a fuse!"

The executive chef angrily threw the turkey at the new chef. The funny thing was that the head chef was visiting the kitchen to wish Chef Shiran a happy birthday. "He calmed down later and we still shared a drink and a laugh."

In 2016, Chef Shiran moved to Miramar. Fujairah's less- hectic nature gives the chef time and energy to train for competitions. He has participated in nearly 10 competitions, winning seven golds, four silvers and a couple of bronze medals.

For the Golden Chefs Hat Award, he is making a salmon roulade with fennel braise and pumpkin, tomato coulis with quinoa and lemon essence with blueberry sauce. But on his own plate, the chef likes a simple pasta with garlic and olive oil.

Simple tastes and complex skills, Chef Shiran is quite the complete package.



## **SALMON ROULADE WITH QUINOA, BRAISED FENNEL, POACHED PUMPKIN AND ASPARAGUS, COCONUT AND BLUEBERRY JUS** (Serves 4)

### **SALMON ROULADE**

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| Salmon          | 540Gm    |
| Veal bacon      | 40Gm     |
| Butter          | 60Gm     |
| Garlic          | 10Gm     |
| Thyme           | 03Gm     |
| Salt and Pepper | To Taste |

#### **Method**

- ♦ Open the Salmon fillet and season it well.
- ♦ Roll into a cylinder and wrap it with veal bacon. Rest it in the chiller.
- ♦ Add butter, herb and garlic to a heated pan. Add salmon and seal it gently by pouring melted butter onto it.
- ♦ Bake it in an oven as required (recommended 58°C)

### **BRAISED FENNEL**

|                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Chicken Stock (Maggi) | 100MI |
| Fennel                | 60Gm  |

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| White Onion    | 30Gm     |
| Thyme          | 03Gm     |
| Butter         | 50Gm     |
| Olive oil      | 30MI     |
| Bay Leaves     | 02pic    |
| Dry Peppercorn | 04pic    |
| Sugar          | To Taste |
| Salt           | To Taste |

#### **Method**

- ♦ Add olive oil and butter to a hot pan. Add fennel and toss it for a while. Add stock (until fennel is half covered) and keep it on slow fire. Add onions, thyme, bay leaves and peppercorn. Cook until fennel is soft. Add more stock if required
- ♦ Add seasoning.

### **POACHED PUMPKIN AND ASPARAGUS**

|           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| Pumpkin   | 100Gm    |
| Asparagus | 60Gm     |
| Honey     | 25MI     |
| Thyme     | 01Gm     |
| Butter    | 30Gm     |
| Salt      | To Taste |

#### **Method**

- ♦ Marinate the pumpkin and asparagus with honey, butter, thyme and salt. Place it in a vacuum bag and cook it in a water bath.

- ♦ Once done, seal it in a pan with butter.

### **COCONUT QUINOA**

|                             |      |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Quinoa                      | 60Gm |
| Coconut Mix                 | 30Gm |
| Tomato (skinless/ deseeded) | 30Gm |
| Thyme                       | 01Gm |
| Shallots                    | 20Gm |
| Olive oil                   | 40ml |

#### **Method**

- ♦ Boil the quinoa in coconut mix. Drain and keep it to rest.
- ♦ Heat the pan and add butter and onion. Add quinoa, sauté it well. Add tomato to quinoa. Season well.

### **BLUEBERRY JUS**

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Blueberry           | 60Gm     |
| Beef Stock (Nestle) | 60MI     |
| Butter              | 30Gm     |
| Thyme               | 01Gm     |
| Shallots            | 03Gm     |
| Salt                | To taste |

#### **Method**

- ♦ Sauté the blueberries in butter with shallots and thyme.
- ♦ Add beef stock to blueberries. Keep it on a slow fire until berries are very soft. Add seasoning.





## Passion fruit panna cotta with walnut brownie and hazelnut crumble, passion fruit sauce, chocolate mousse cake with crusted pistachio and raspberry sauce

### PASSION FRUIT PANNA COTTA

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Fresh milk              | 160ml |
| Fresh cream             | 160ml |
| Passion fruit puree     | 80gm  |
| Docello panna cotta mix | 50gm  |

#### Method

- ♦ Mix the fresh milk, fresh cream and passion fruit puree together and bring to a boil.
- ♦ Remove from the heat and add the panna cotta mixture, whisk without making lumps.
- ♦ Place the mixture in a mould and freeze until it's ready for use.

### WALNUT BROWNIE

|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| Butter         | 125gm |
| Sugar          | 70gm  |
| Brown sugar    | 70gm  |
| Dark chocolate | 20gm  |
| Eggs           | 80ml  |

|               |      |
|---------------|------|
| Flour         | 60gm |
| Cocoa powder  | 15gm |
| Baking powder | 04gm |
| Walnuts       | 60gm |

#### Method

- ♦ Beat the butter, sugar and brown sugar until floppy then add the eggs one by one and beat well.
- ♦ Mix all dry ingredients together with the butter mixture and ensure there are no lumps.
- ♦ Add the chocolate and walnuts.
- ♦ Pour it into the baking tray and bake at 180°C for 20 minutes.

### HAZELNUT CRUMBLE

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Butter          | 80gm |
| Flour           | 80gm |
| Sugar           | 50gm |
| Hazelnut powder | 40gm |

#### Method

- ♦ Mix all ingredients with soft butter and bake at 180°C
- ♦ for 8 minutes.
- ♦ Let it cool down. Then make it into a crumble using a rolling pin.

### PASSION FRUIT SAUCE

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| Passion fruit puree | 100ml |
|---------------------|-------|

|            |      |
|------------|------|
| Sugar      | 40gm |
| water      | 20ml |
| corn flour | 06gm |

#### Method

- ♦ Boil the passion fruit puree, sugar and water.
- ♦ Add corn flour and cook until it's well done.
- ♦ Keep it in the chiller until ready for use.

### CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CAKE

|                              |       |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Fresh milk                   | 300ml |
| Docello chocolate mousse mix | 80gm  |
| Gelatin                      | 05gm  |

#### Method

- ♦ Beat the fresh milk and chocolate mousse mix until it foams. Add gelatin and mix well.
- ♦ Pour into the mould and freeze until set.

### RASPBERRY SAUCE

|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Raspberry puree | 50ml |
| Sugar           | 20gm |
| Water           | 10ml |
| Corn flour      | 03gm |

#### Method

- ♦ Boil the raspberry puree, sugar and water.
- ♦ Add corn flour and cook it well.
- ♦ Keep it in the chiller until ready for use.



Alisa Belousova

## 2 Young Deira Chefs Win US Beef Virtual Cooking Competition

The Emirates Culinary Guild and US Beef Export Federation announced the result of the first GCC Virtual Online Competition. Chef Uwe Micheel, President of the Emirates Culinary Guild was very impressed with the high standard in all categories, videos and recipes from both Professional Chefs and Amateurs.

Both Amateur classes were won by lady chefs, Alisa Belousova won the Best Recipe with Picture Competition.

The Video Class was won by Badya Sallam Khairuddin. The Winners both used prime US Beef Tenderloin for their recipes.



The Professional categories were won by 2 Young Chefs working in Deira Dubai, Kanishka Dilhan Kulasekara from Radisson Blu Hotel DDC won the Best Recipe Category. Leon Robin Rozario from Jumeirah Creekside Hotel won the Best Video Recipe.

Andrew Cuthbert, Chairman of the Emirates Culinary Guild highlighted



that the competitors came from different GCC countries, properties on the winners list are Anantara The Palm Dubai Resort, Caesars Bluewaters Hotel, Zero Gravity, The Emirates Academy & Hospitality Management, Jumeirah Royal Bahrain. The best 10 in each category will be awarded with great prizes, cash money, trophies and knives. **See top 5 from each class on pg 50.**



August - September 2020 **Gulf Gourmet****Debjit Dass****Hillary Quentus Anthony Joseph**



August - September 2020 **Gulf Gourmet**



Supaporn Goldie



Arivukkarasan Ravi





Raeesha Aliza Al Azizi



Badya Sallam Khairuddin



Leon Robin Rozario





**Class 1 – US Beef Recipe - Professional**

|                                |                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Radisson Blu Deira Creek Hotel | Kanishka Dilhan Kulasekara     | Winner          |
| Anantara The Palm Dubai Resort | Debjit Dass                    | 2nd Runner - up |
| Radisson Blu Deira Creek Hotel | Hillary Quentus Anthony Joseph | 3rd Runner - up |
| Zero Gravity                   | Reynaldi Frisya                | 4th Runner - up |
| Caesars Bluewaters Hotel       | Rupesh Lal                     | 5th Runner-up   |

**Class 2 – US Beef Recipe - Amateur**

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Alisa Belousova        | Winner          |
| Supaporn Goldie        | 2nd Runner - up |
| Raeesha Aliza Al Azizi | 3rd Runner-up   |
| Supaporn Goldie        | 4th Runner - up |
| Evgeny Belousov        | 5th Runner - up |

**Class 3 – US Beef Video - Professional**

|                                |                     |               |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Jumeirah Creekside Hotel       | Leon Robin Rozario  | Winner        |
| Caesars Bluewaters Hotel       | Arivukkarasan Ravi  | 2nd Runner-up |
| Anantara The Palm Dubai Resort | Sreenivas Rao       | 3rd Runner-up |
| Catch 22                       | Andrew F. Paderes   | 4th Runner-up |
| Caesars Bluewaters Hotel       | Yosua David Supardi | 5th Runner-up |

**Class 4 – US Beef Video - Amateur**

|                         |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Badya Sallam Khairuddin | Winner          |
| Raeesha Aliza Al Azizi  | 2nd Runner - up |
| Supaporn Goldie         | 3rd Runner - up |
| Supaporn Goldie         | 4th Runner - up |
| Lara Mohammad Saleh     | 5th Runner - up |

**Kanishka Dilhan Kulasekara****Sreenivas Rao**



# Can Anybody Cook?

The Guild's foray into a series of online virtual cooking competitions has met with super success. Season 1 of 'Anybody Can Cook' – that took place in the month of July – saw better than expected response from professionals, amateurs and children.

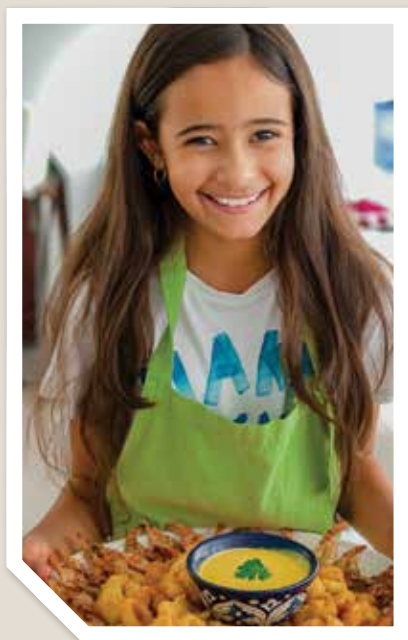
The competition required competitors to present a dish in a 3-5 minute video. People from all over the globe competed and as a result, ECG's YouTube channel saw greater reach. The judging for the

competition included social media parameters. This meant contestants have to subscribe and share, and their friends and family had to view and like their videos on the YouTube channel.

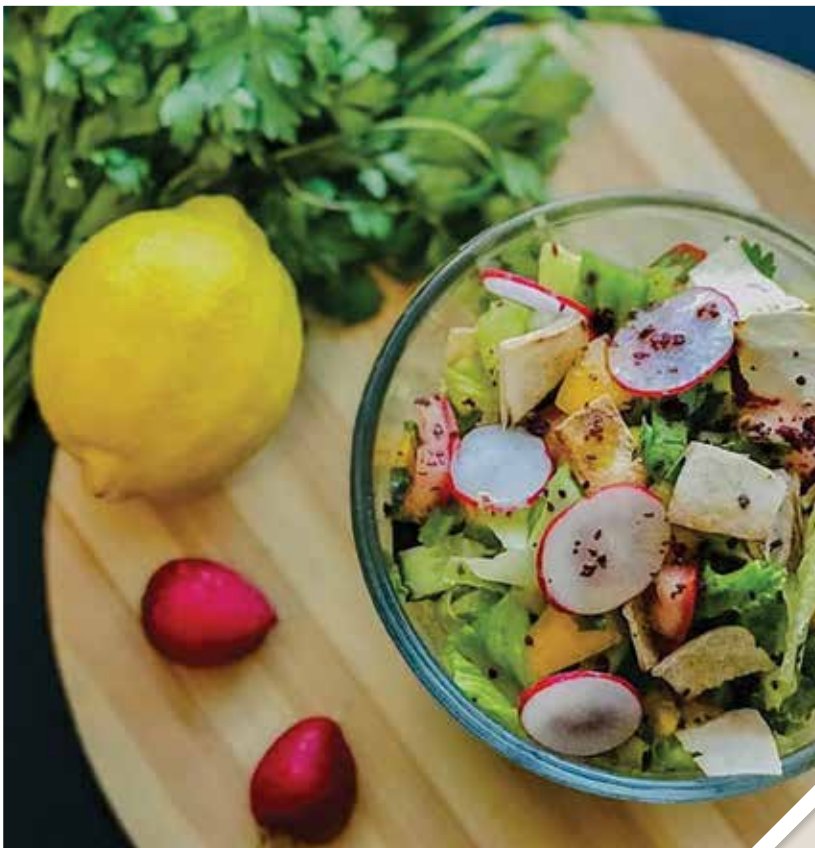
Emirates Culinary Guild YouTube channel has been a great place for culinarians. If you haven't already, you should check it out and subscribe.

Here are images from the Anybody Can Cook virtual cooking competition.



August - September 2020 **Gulf Gourmet**







August - September 2020 **Gulf Gourmet**





## USAPEEC - ECG Virtual Cooking Competition

# COOK WITH USA POULTRY

Calling all **Chefs Professional and Amateurs in GCC**,  
great prizes for the Top 10 in each of the 4 categories

### The Competition has 4 different Categories – Classes

- > **Class 1 – USA Poultry Dish, Main Course or Starter – High Resolution picture and full recipe - For Professional Chefs**
- > **Class 2 – USA Poultry Dish, Main Course or Starter – High Resolution picture and full recipe – For Amateur Chefs**
- > **Class 3 – USA Poultry Dish, Main Course or Starter – Video 5-10 Minutes – For Professional Chefs**
- > **Class 4 – USA Poultry Dish, Main Course or Starter - Video 5-10 Minutes – For Amateur Chefs**

### The Competition is now open 15th August 2020 UNTIL 2nd September Midnight

Competitors can enter multiple pictures with recipes and videos.

There is no age limit, but competitors must be GCC Residents.

Awards and prizes must be collected in Dubai – United Arab Emirates.

The top 10 from each Class will receive the following.

#### WINNER

Branded Trophy  
2000 Dhs Cash  
Branded USA Poultry Knife  
Book By Chef Uwe Micheel

#### 2ND PLACE

Branded Trophy

1000 Dhs Cash  
Branded USA Poultry Knife  
Book By Chef Uwe Micheel

#### 3RD PLACE

Branded Trophy  
500 Dhs Cash  
Branded USA Poultry Knife  
Book By Chef Uwe Micheel

#### 4TH PLACE

300 Dhs Cash  
Branded USA Poultry Knife  
Book By Chef Uwe Micheel

#### 5TH PLACE

200 Dhs Cash  
Branded USA Poultry Knife  
Book By Chef Uwe Micheel

#### 6TH PLACE – 10TH PLACE

Branded USA Poultry Knife  
Book By Chef Uwe Micheel

- > *The Winner will also be featured in the Gulf Gourmet Magazine both on print copy and digital copy.*
- > *The best Video will be uploaded on the Emirates Culinary Guild YouTube Channel.*
- > *The Judges will be Professional Chefs from the Emirates Culinary Guild and the decision of Jury will be final.*
- > *By sending your video and recipes, you agree that the ECG and USA Poultry reserve the right to use them freely.*

### USAPEEC On- Line Competition for GCC Region

#### RULES AND REGULATIONS

*The Event is divided in 4 different categories – classes for Professional Chefs and Amateurs Chefs*

#### Class 1 – Plated USA Poultry Starter or Main Dish (Professional Chefs)

- a) 1 plate, bowl or any dish for 1 portion
- b) Written recipes in English – for 1 portion
- c) The main ingredient must be US Chicken or US Turkey
- d) We encourage the Competitors to do Traditional Dishes
- e) Good quality photograph in colour
- f) For the US Poultry must be the star of the dish hence must be seen on the picture as the Key Ingredient
- g) Judges will consider following points
  - > **Use of US Poultry**
  - > **Balance Recipe**
  - > **Cooking Skills in the recipe**
  - > **Presentation Skills**
- h) Portion size must be suitable for lunch dish
- i) The best recipe and picture will be published in Gulf Gourmet Magazine
- j) Class 1 is open for **any Professional Chef** (any age, any position) National or GCC Resident
- k) The Jury will award up to 5 bonus points for the Best Traditional Dishes



### Class 2 – Plated USA Poultry Starter or Main Dish (Amateur Chefs)

- A) 1 plate , bowl or any dish for 1 portion
- B) Written recipes in English – for 1 portion
- C) The main ingredient must be US Chicken or US Turkey
- D) We encourage the Competitors to do Traditional Dishes
- E) Good quality photograph in colour
- F) For the US Poultry must be the star of the dish hence must be seen on the picture as the Key Ingredient
- G) Judges will consider following points
  - > *Use of US Poultry*
  - > *Balance Recipe*
  - > *Cooking Skills in the recipe*
  - > *Presentation Skills*
- H) Portion size must be suitable for lunch dish
- I) The best recipe and picture will be published in Gulf Gourmet Magazine
- J) Class 2 is open for any **Non - Professional Chef**, any Amateur Chefs – Cook (No age limit, must be GCC National or Resident)
- K) The Jury will award up to 5 bonus points for the Best Traditional Dishes

### Class 3 – USA Poultry Video (Professional Chefs)

- a) You the Chef must be seen in the video
- b) Show us all the ingredients
- c) Send the list of ingredients and method, how you prepare the dish in English
- d) Video should be 5 -10 minutes and must be in English
- e) Prepare 1 portion of your recipe

- f) Dish can be a starter or Main Dish can be a soup or a wrap
- g) We encourage the Competitors to create a Traditional Dish using US Poultry
- h) Video can be done by mobile or DSLR Camera.
- i) Make sure you have good lightning it helps a lot for the video quality
- j) Film in Landscape for YouTube Channel. No music required
- k) Class 3 is open for **any professional Chef** (any age, any position) GCC National or Resident
- l) The Jury will award up to 5 bonus points for the Best Traditional Dishes
- m) Most viewed and liked video in Emirates Culinary Guild You Tube Channel will get up to 5 bonus points

### Class 4 – USA Poultry Video (Amateur Chefs)

- a) You the Chef must be seen in the video
- b) Show us all the ingredients
- c) Send the list of ingredients and method, how you prepare the dish in English
- d) Video should be 5 -10 minutes and must be in English
- e) Prepare 1 portion of your recipe
- f) Dish can be a starter or Main Dish can be a soup or a wrap
- g) We encourage the Competitors to create a Traditional Dish using US Poultry
- h) Video can be done by mobile or DSLR Camera.
- i) Make sure you have good lightning it helps a lot for the

- j) video quality
- j) Film in Landscape for You Tube Channel. No music required.
- k) Class 4 is open for any **Non Professional. Any Amateur Chef** – Cook (no age limit, but must be GCC National or Resident).
- l) The Jury will award up to 5 bonus points for the Best Traditional Dishes
- m) Most viewed and liked video in Emirates Culinary Guild You Tube Channel will get up to 5 bonus points



# US POULTRY VIRTUAL COMPETITION 2020 - ENTRY FORM

|                          |                  |                    |  |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--|
| Full Name                |                  |                    |  |
| Nationality              |                  | Email Address      |  |
| Age                      |                  | Contact Mobile No. |  |
|                          | Category         | Country Base       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Professional 18+ |                    |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Amateurs         |                    |  |

### Class Description Category

© Class 1 – US Poultry Dish, Main Course or Starter – High Resolution picture and full recipe - For Professional Chefs

© Class 2 – US Poultry Dish, Main Course or Starter – High Resolution picture and full recipe – For Amateur Chefs

® Class 3 – US Poultry Dish, Main Course or Starter – Video 5 -10 Minutes – For Professional Chefs

® Class 4 – US Poultry Dish, Main Course or Starter - Video 5- 10 Minutes – For Amateur Chefs

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## Application Membership

Date of Application:

|                             |  |                         |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Family Name: (Mr./Ms./Mrs.) |  |                         |
| First Name/s:               |  |                         |
| Nationality:                | Civil Status:  | Date of Birth: dd/mm/yy |
| Name of Employer:           | Address in Home Country:   |                         |
| Work Address:               | Tel:   |                         |
| 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 |
| Approved           | Approved      |                      |
| President.....     | Chairman..... |                      |

Fees:

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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

# Pass Through Stress With Laughter

*"Laughter is good for thinking because when people laugh, it is easier for them to admit new ideas to their minds" — Dalai Lama*

Laughter is great. In 2004, my marriage was crumbling due to my own self-sabotaging feelings, thoughts and actions. I had no clue at the time how laughter will help me out. In that time of painful agony, I came across the book 'The Art of Happiness' by the Dalai Lama and Howard Cutler. Howard Cutler, a psychiatrist posed questions to the Dalai Lama on the concept that the purpose of life is happiness.

Dalai Lama, is know as the Buddhist Tibetan spiritual leader and it was this book that got me to on the path of the miracle of compassion. The book talks about love but before dwelling into love. It lays out that the foundation is compassion. Compassion holds the key to eliminate human suffering.

Compassion is highly misunderstood. Unfortunately, many see it as pity and believe it to be wimpish, frail or weak. A trait considered by many in the world as pathetic. On the other hand, when you listen to the likes of Dalai Lama, Daniel Goleman or Lorne Ladner you learn compassion has got nothing to do with pity.

In the words of Dalai Lama "Compassion is not religious business, it is human business, it is not luxury, it is essential for our own peace and mental stability, it is essential for human survival."

The beauty about compassion is that its fuels awareness, gratitude and the final crucial ingredient being laughter. If you have heard any talks done by the Dalai Lama you will get a pleasant surprise that he actually is a "professional laughter" and he openly admits to this title. He knows that laughter is the best medicine.

He knows that laughter can mend bridges, bring harmony and unites humankind. He is a man who cannot return to his homeland and

MORE THAN A CHEF

**ROHIT  
BASSI**



considers himself to be homeless for more than half a century. Yet, this serene individual laughs, laughs and laughs.

Laughter, in essence, brings six main benefits for you:

- ♦ Relaxes the whole body
- ♦ Boosts the immune system
- ♦ Decreases stress hormones
- ♦ Triggers the release of endorphins
- ♦ Improves the flow of blood
- ♦ Defuses the anger held within

Throughout one's life, one is likely to face adversity. These adverse moments affect our feelings, thoughts, health, career, finance, relationships, growth and much more. As humans, we love to have self-pity yet this is a ridiculous notion that has no productivity for our inner self.

Either we can take the path of a victim or get up and be victorious.

Decide where to spend your time, effort & energy. Would you like to spend it in on loving life or fearing it?

And when you allow laughter to take control of the way you respond to life, it permits you to focus your attention towards a loving life. Laughter fuels compassion and this in turns allows you to be at peace with yourself, your circumstances and surroundings.

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**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](mailto:roi@roitalks.com)**





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