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volume 17, issue 1

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A PLAN

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Dear fellow chefs, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the January issue of 2022.

Hope you all had a good start getting into 2022. I would like to wish everyone a great new year, hope that we all stay healthy.

2021 was for many of us a very challenging year with Covid infections, job losses and even businesses closing. Let us leave all these behind us (even Covid is still with us) and start the New Year positively – with all the passion and energy we have. But at the same time, please take care of yourself and the people around you, keep wearing a mask when appropriate and sanitizing frequently.

Your Emirates Culinary Guild is starting the year with two great competitions. The Canadian Ingredients Competition with Part 1 being virtual and the final being live. We ask you to prepare your recipe of Surf and Turf using great Canadian ingredients. For information contact us anytime at emiratesculinaryguild@gmail.com. The second competition is with European vegetables available in the UAE market. Can products like beans, peas, lentils and chickpeas.

Wishing you all the success with these two great competitions.

Next, we have our Chefs Table team event together with DMG at the Hotel Show in May. More details will come soon.

Our main focus is the Big Show in Abu Dhabi 2022

We will have 7 events under 1 roof

1. Worldchefs Congress
2. Global Chefs Competition
3. Billy Gallagher Young Chef Forum
4. Young Chef African Cup
5. Expo Culinaire
6. Salon Culinaire
7. Education Corner

We look forward to these amazing events and welcoming chefs from around the world. I am really looking forward to show



case our Emirati Culture and Food at the same time learning from colleagues.

Please pass the word around, we still have spaces for the Exhibition. Contact the ECG at emiratesculinaryguild@gmail.com or Purple Kitchen at joanne.cook@purple-kitchen.com directly to book your space, don't miss it. We are expecting chefs from more than 100 countries to be with us.

The Congress registration is open now at worldchefscongress.org. Do not miss out on the Early Bird Discount.

Please visit www.gulfgourmet.net to browse through previous issue of this magazine. Visit emiratesculinaryguild.com.

net to see latest happenings on the events calendar. And visit [facebook.com/wacsyoungchefs](https://www.facebook.com/wacsyoungchefs) for young chefs to be in contact with over 4,000 chefs across the globe.

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.

Thank you to Chef Diyan Manjula De Silva and Radisson Blu Hotel DDC Team for hosting the December meeting.

Culinary regards,
Uwe Micheel
President of Emirates Culinary Guild

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Your first steps towards a culinary career.

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editor'snote

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New year begets new opportunities, and it is no different here at Gulf Gourmet. ChefID, the online community marketplace for professional chefs, is running a year-long series both on their platform and in this magazine to showcase young culinary talent. Called the 'ChefID Young Chef Championship' (CYCC), this series is poised to become the biggest young chef team event in the country.

The first team this year is a dynamic duo from Jumeirah Creekside Hotel. Listening to their interviews made me focus on their never say die attitude that people have in their twenties. While that attitude continues for many, what I miss is the feeling of invincibility that comes with it. When you are in your twenties, you fear way less than you do in later years.

The young duo Chef Naveen and Chef Vijeetha have clearly shown their exceptional talent in the first set of this series by creating stunning plates that will make your mouth water. Check out their recipes for 'BBQ Braised Beef Short Ribs with Sunchoke Puree, Gratin Dauphinoise and Pan Seared Vegetables' that can then be finished off with a 'Cream Cheesecake with Chantilly Cream'.

Talking of delectable recipes, we also have pastry master Bhupendra Singh of Mister Baker share his style of creating



an 'Aerated Cream Cheese Mousse with Mango'. This clean and straightforward recipe will touch your heart, we think.

This issue has some great interviews with other senior chefs too.

To begin with we have Chef Diyan Manjula De Silva, Executive Chef of Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek gracing the cover of this issue. Chef Diyan is a warm personality whom I have known

for over a decade. His charming smile when he greets you and his support of young chefs is testament to why he has been chosen to fill in the gigantic shoes of Chef Uwe Micheel at the property.

He has been lucky to have been mentored by Chef Uwe and continues to be mentored by him. He is someone I have wanted to be on our cover, and we are glad to have finally done it. Read his amazing journey to the top and his insights on what it takes to create a profitable F&B operation.

Another great interview is with Chef Mohamad Chabchoul, Executive Chef of Grand Millennium Business Bay Dubai. He talks about why he is so obsessed with delivering a treat for all senses.

We bring you moments captured at the last 2021 Guild meeting that was a fun Christmas gathering for all. Our Associate Publisher also met with the young team flown in from Luxembourg to run the Luxembourg Pavilion at the Dubai Expo 2020.

All this and more in the issue you hold in your hands.

Hope you enjoy the read and until next time, keep cooking with passion.

Aquin George
Editor

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UNOX Launches First Ever Self-Washing Combi Speed Oven

Technology-driven manufacturer of professional ovens, UNOX, launched their latest and most innovative product yet in an exclusive digital premiere on October 21, 2021. The Italian-based company presented SPEED-X™, the first ever self-washing combi speed oven, introducing a completely new breed of commercial-grade ovens to the foodservice industry throughout the world.

"The SPEED-X™ is the first oven to combine the capabilities of a combi oven and those of a speed oven with an additional self-cleaning feature," says Nicola Michelon, CEO of UNOX, S.p.A. "This not only expands the oven's capabilities beyond anything that was possible before, but it also allows for an incredible increase in commercial kitchen productivity."

This revolutionary product eliminates the need to compromise, improving both the speed and the quality of cooking processes. Thanks to its two fans – which are the beating heart of any combi oven – it reduces cooking times by 20% in comparison to its predecessors. As for speed mode, the new HYPER.Speed technology combines steam, air and microwaves, making it possible to not only heat but also cook and brown food in seconds. By means of this innovative equipment, for example, a toasted ham and cheese sandwich is ready in 75 seconds and a sea bass fillet is fully cooked in just 90 seconds.

The SPEED-X™ is designed for use in environments where the speed of service is paramount, without forgetting about the importance of quality. Transport catering (in airports and train stations) and spaces such as satellite kitchens, bars, café chains and gas stations are ideal venues for the

SPEED-X™. The oven is also perfect for traditional restaurants since it can speed up mise en place preparations with full loads. At the same time, it can drastically reduce service times.

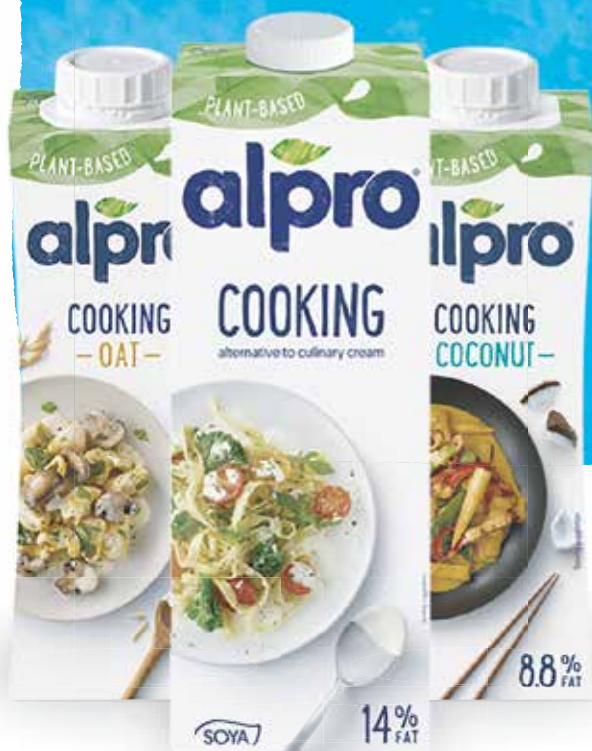
Those who are already fans of UNOX ovens will recognize familiar features such as STEAM.Maxi™ and ADAPTIVE. Cooking™, but many of these features will be optimized for the new SPEED-X™. For instance, MULTI.Time programming, the technology that allows users to cook different products at different times in the same oven, will be even more comprehensive and precise, allowing up to 10 dishes to be prepared at once.

SPEED-X™ is also equipped with brand-new technology. The Digital.ID™ operating system is the most advanced ever installed on an oven. Hyperconnection and an intuitive interface allow users to control the oven easily.

In fact, while UNOX continues to lead the way in technological innovation for professional ovens, the user experience and ease of use remain of utmost importance.

"It's simple to use and incredibly versatile," says Nicola Lai, Corporate Chef Team Leader at UNOX. "It's designed with everyone in mind."





WHATCHA GOT COOKING?

DELICIOUSLY PLANT-BASED

newsbites



David Bonet is Emirates Palace Executive Pastry Chef

French national David Bonet has been appointed Executive Pastry Chef at Emirates Palace Hotel.

His experience includes working at the Savoy hotel in London, the French hotel La Reserve de Beaulieu and the three-Michelin-starred restaurant, Troisgros, in Roanne.

He brings insights and inspiration from around the world, including Asia, where he worked with Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok.

Bonet also teaches at the Bellouet Conseil School in Paris, giving lessons in 40 courses including chocolate, entremet, petits gateaux and viennoiserie, helping aspiring chefs improve their skills and techniques.

He also consults and demonstrates at schools, hotels, and bakery shops around the world in countries including Hong Kong, India, Macau, Morocco and Thailand.

Chef wins Dh 100,000; wants to open restaurant

A private chef in Dubai has dreams of opening his own restaurant after winning a share of a Dh1 million prize from Abu Dhabi's Big Ticket draw.

Rafeek Mohammed, a 26-year-old from India, shares the prize with nine other people who purchased the Dh500 ticket with him, reports The National.

With his share of the money, he plans to pay off his debts, help the needy and explore the possibility of opening his own restaurant in the UAE.

"I would be able to take better care of my parents now." He told the newspaper.



Sarsa Chef opening Filipino restaurant in Dubai

JP Anglo – the chef behind the beloved Sarsa Kitchen – is bringing Filipino food to Dubai with a new restaurant called Kooya Filipino Eatery.

He posted a video of the restaurant on Instagram, saying they will open "hopefully next week!" The restaurant is located at Jannah Place in Dubai Marina, reports Rappler.com.

In other posts, he shared glimpses of the restaurant's menu offerings, including inihaw na tokwa, and chicken inasal with all the requisite condiments.

A rtwork on Kooya's page also teases other Pinoy cuisine staples like isaw, halo-halo, and sorbetes.

JP, known in the culinary scene as Chef Jayps, hails from Bacolod, and is known for bringing a new twist to Filipino, and especially Negrense, cuisine.

New F&B Directors at Conrad Dubai and Accor Group

Kyra Bommeljé joins Conrad Dubai as Director of F&B. The Dutch national previously worked for JA Resorts & Hotels nearly seven years.

Her remit is to head up concept development, planning and execution across all restaurants and managing the teams involved. Outlets include Kimpo, Cave, Ballaro, Anasa, Bliss 6 and Isla as well as banqueting.

Bommeljé has 17 years of experience and started her career with Badhotel Domburg in the Netherlands before moving to Starwood Hotels. She has been in Dubai since 2013 starting out as outlet manager at the Jumeirah Beach Hotel.

Philip Mahoney has been appointed Vice President F&B for India, Middle East, Africa and Turkey, with the main responsibility to drive Accor's strategy in the region.

Throughout his 30-year career, Philip has managed hotels in the UK, Croatia and Mauritius for Malmaison, Lonrho, De Vere Deluxe, Radisson Blu and Regent



Hotels, before moving into a regional responsibility for Radisson Blu and Hotel Missoni in the UK and Ireland.

He then became Vice President Food & Drink for the Radisson Hotel Group for Europe, Middle East and Africa, with an overseeing role for the US and Asia Pacific, based in Brussels, Belgium, a position he held for 6 years.

His last role was Chief Operating Officer for Riverstone, a Goldman Sachs portfolio company developing luxury apartments and hospitality experiences in London, UK, before moving to Dubai to take on his current post.



Chef Said appointed Chef de Cuisine

Moroccan Chef Said Elmorabet will lead 56th Avenue Diner, the signature restaurant at Hyatt Regency Riyadh Olaya.

Chef Said worked in Tunisia and UAE before moving to Saudi Arabia. He began his culinary journey with Hyatt Regency Casablanca and grown with the brand. Prior to this role, he worked at Hyatt Regency Makkah and Park Hyatt Jeddah.



Chef Stefano joins St Regis

Italian culinary talent Stefano Micocci is the new Executive Chef at St. Regis Downtown Dubai. He was the pre-opening head chef for Carlino in Lecce, then managed the daily kitchen operations at The Westin Dubai and oversaw the launch of Bussola Dubai.

He has also worked at The Westin Abu Dhabi Golf Resort, Le Meridien Abu Dhabi, and The Andaman Luxury Collection Malaysia before joining here.

First African food hall opens in the UAE

Aclaimed Chef Alexander Smalls has opened the world's first African Food Hall. Dubai's Alkebulan Dining Hall features 11 regional restaurants — and plans are underway to bring the concept to more cities around the globe.

"As a kid, I was told if I loved what I did, I'd never have a job," acclaimed chef, James Beard Award-winning cookbook author, and entrepreneur Alexander Smalls told Food & Wine. "I've never had a job. I've been able to create work for myself by following my passion and understanding the mission of my passion. And this is how we got here, if you will."



The "here" he's referring to is the grand opening of Alkebulan, the first dining hall in the world that showcases and celebrates African food. It opened in Dubai last fall as part of the pandemic-delayed Expo Dubai 2020, and it's also the realization of a vision that Smalls has focused on for well over a decade.

To get your chef or company related news featured in this section, email editor@gulfgourmet.net

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MAN WITH A PLAN

Love at first sight? Nah, love at first bite. Or even before! If you have ever seen or tasted a dish made by Chef **Mohamad Chabchoul**, you will know he delivers a treat for all senses. The executive chef of Grand Millennium Business Bay Dubai shares his secret recipe for culinary success...

If we eat with our eyes before we eat with our mouths, his creations will leave you full even before you take the first bite. Even the hungriest of souls would think twice before dismantling the art that Chef Mohamad Chabchoul puts on a plate.

Vibrant colours, exquisite pairing of ingredients, and the delicate interplay of flavours that he conjures up are nothing short of fine art.

But the greatest compliment that any guest can give to the Executive Chef of Grand Millennium Business Bay Dubai is polishing off clean the plate he put together lovingly for them.

For, he loves to please and he lives to please. "Even as a kid, I loved reaching people's hearts through their stomachs," laughs the Lebanese-born chef. "I would make hummus and plate up fruit salads for guests during Ramadan. My mother saw how much I loved cooking and she told me to study hotel management."

And so began a journey that most can only dream of.

After nearly 16 years in the hospitality industry, Chef Chabchoul has made quite



I would make hummus and plate up fruit salads for guests during Ramadan. My mother saw how much I loved cooking and she told me to study hotel management

a name for himself. At 37, he is a rather young executive chef. Currently, he's basking in the glory of his win at the Middle East Chef Excellence Awards 2021. "It's very satisfying to have others appreciate your hard work," says the effusive chef.

The honour is just one in a string of achievements that Chef Chabchoul has enjoyed over the years. Other than winning medals and honours at competitions, he has been featured across media and won a fan following for his online masterclasses. The tech-savvy chef is also a social media influencer,





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with his Instagram handle having a whopping 108,000 followers!

Although he was born in Lebanon, Chef Chabchoul identifies more with the Syrian culture, having grown up in Damascus with his Syrian mother's family. "Although I am half Syrian and half Lebanese, I don't know much about the Lebanese culture. The women in my early life – my mother and my grandma – are Syrian. They had a greater influence on me than my Lebanese father and grandfather."

EARLY SIGNS

There are no professional chefs in his family, but Chef Chabchoul showed early signs of wanting to be in the hospitality industry. "When I was a kid, there was this famous Lebanese chef whose TV show was aired around Ramadan time. I would eagerly wait for the show and try to follow his cooking style." Although studying hotel management was not

encouraged much in Syria, his mother realised that was where his passion was. So after high school, he enrolled for hotel management. When he was barely 18, he secured a job at the Le Meridien hotel as a commis chef. Two years later, when the Four Seasons Hotel opened in Damascus, he became demi chef de partie. "I was very young but I was given responsibilities. I was already leading the team that prepared snacks for the swimming pool outlet – like sandwiches, pizza and burgers." There is no greater education than hands-on work. While balancing studies and a job, Chef Chabchoul realised that he was learning practical techniques and skills better than his classmates who did not have his kind of exposure to the real kitchen.

THE BIG LEAGUE

An opportunity to join the big league came towards the end of 2006. The

Intercontinental Group was hiring for the Dubai Festival City hotel and Chef Chabchoul considered applying.

It was food again that helped him make a decision? "I asked a senior chef what he thought about me applying and he said: 'how many kinds of tomatoes can you see here? Three? In Dubai, you can find 10 kinds of tomatoes everywhere you turn. Imagine how much you can learn there.'"

An interview followed and he got a job as the chef de partie. The process took a while and Chef Chabchoul arrived in Dubai in 2007. It was there he learnt how to enhance the aesthetics of his dishes while training under French chef Pierre Gagnaire. The Lebanese chef stayed at the Intercontinental Dubai Festival City for a couple of years, before moving to the Fairmont Bab Al Bahar in Abu Dhabi. Towards the end of 2010, Chef Chabchoul joined the Ritz Carlton as the chef de cuisine. "It was my dream to work at the Ritz Carlton. I was the cold kitchen chef in charge of lunch, banqueting and butchery and all the VIP events. Two and a half years later, they called me back to Intercontinental Dubai Festival City to manage the production of three hotels."

While working one day, he was approached by a stranger who handed him his business card. "I looked at the card later and he was the CEO of



When I was a kid, there was this famous Lebanese chef whose TV show was aired around Ramadan time. I would eagerly wait for the show and try to follow his cooking style



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HK ENTERPRISES

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Fauchon Paris, a high-end cafe brand. I called him and he told me he was looking for a development corporate chef for the entire Gulf region."

Chef Chabchoul took up the challenge and was sent to France to train for the job. It required quite a bit of travelling, with outlets in Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and Qatar being his responsibility. After doing this for about a year and a half, Chef Chabchoul realised that so much travelling did not quite fit into his new family life. He had got married and he needed some work-life balance to spend time with family. So when Binhendi Enterprises offered him the role of an executive chef to lead 50 restaurants, he took it up.

Based at the Dubai Mall, the company ran restaurants across cuisines, from Japanese to Asian and international. He also designed a new menu for a cafe that was eventually adopted in the company's London outlets. After some time, however, Chef Chabchoul started missing the action of a fast-paced hotel. All that energy was not being utilised fully. In 2018, he returned to the hotels format, joining Grand Millennium Bay Hotel as executive chef.

PRESENT PERFECT

The hotel is a new one, launched in 2018. Unfortunately, the timing could have been better, with the coronavirus pandemic affecting the entire industry since 2019. "It's a very nice hotel with 251 rooms. We have good outlets. Recently, we opened Bella, which is an Italian restaurant. In the first quarter of 2022, we will open Beau Rivage Bistro. It's a French name but a European cuisine bistro. That's a cold food concept and I am very excited about it." Chef Chabchoul's team also does weddings and corporate events, including business meetings. There are nine meeting rooms on the premises. In total, there are seven outlets and a small candy shop is also planned.

Despite the lingering after-effects of the pandemic, the executive chef is



I get to learn so much in a big hotel. There is something new happening every minute, unlike in a standalone restaurant

rather excited about his new tasks, also because it means he will get to indulge in creativity. "I love art, I love colours and in my free time, I also do painting. I created the background of the cold kitchen," he says with child-like enthusiasm.

While most chefs who leave the hotels format are reluctant to return to it, Chef Chabchoul loves the electric energy of large operations. "I get to learn so much in a big hotel. There is something new happening every minute, unlike in a standalone restaurant."

There is careful planning that goes into the offerings in any season at a hotel. Especially during festival times, there are many moving parts that need to come together seamlessly. "It's not just the kitchen here. You have to communicate with your marketing department, you need to get everything tied up for the menu and ensure that there is consistency in the theme. It's exhilarating and way more satisfying if you do a good job."

A COMPETITIVE STREAK

Given how many things he is juggling at the same time, you would think Chef Chabchoul has little time and energy to indulge in extracurricular activities. Surprisingly, he finds both. He is a part of the Emirates Culinary Guild and is a familiar face at culinary competitions.

The accomplished chef is also quite



active on social media, often sharing recipes with his followers. "I am targeting young chefs through social media. My recipes have pretty advanced techniques and it's mostly targeted towards professionals."

When he is not building his own brand, he's helping his wife develop her small culinary project. "My wife is also Syrian. She is trying to develop gluten-free Maamoul, which is a Syrian semolina cookie with sweet filling. My wife is passionate about developing healthy foods and we are trying to give them the same taste with oats."

The doting father of two loves to spend time with his daughters, encouraging them in their interests. "One of my



daughters is seven and she loves art. So I have put her in online training. The other is younger and she is into gymnastics. I encourage them to do whatever they do with full commitment."

Although he doesn't think his daughters are interested in following him into the culinary industry, Chef Chabchoul believes that anything is possible – an attitude that has taken him places.

On his own future plans, he is quite keen on starting his own business somewhere down the line. The chef has helped launch some successful culinary concepts in Dubai. With this experience, he could consider entrepreneurship if a good investor comes by in the next 5-10 years.

For now, building his brand among young chefs through social media remains a personal priority.

FOREVER YOUNG

Being rather young himself, Chef Chabchoul understands the challenges that aspiring chefs face. One of the valuable advice he has for those who want to have a long and successful career is learn every bit of kitchen operations, not just good cooking.

"Yes, food is the main thing. But also learn cost controlling, training, development of new menu and the other nuances."

Also, a good chef never switches off but learns from every surrounding, be it while working or on a holiday. Coming up

with own concepts and seeking feedback on them goes a long way in exploring all the opportunities that are available to new chefs these days.

Learning how to cook for big groups is also important. It's one thing to make a dish for one or two people and another to keep the consistency while cooking for 300 people. That is a skill any professional chefs cannot do without. "Uncle Google is a very good person to learn from. But nothing compares to hands-on training. Put some creative efforts into it and get better with each experiment. That is what I believe in and that has helped me in life," he says.

Something tells us that Chef Chabchoul's best is yet to come!

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THE SWEET HERO

Chef **Bhupendra Singh** is your quintessential shy guy. But behind that silent demeanour lies a strong work ethic and a never-say-die spirit. The young Indian chef, who is executive pastry chef at Mister Baker, shares the exciting story of his past, his present and his future...

In a world that just can't seem to stop talking, his reluctance to talk about himself is refreshing. Perhaps it's this humility that makes Chef Bhupendra Singh the success that he is.

Just 30 years old and he's already an executive pastry chef, at Mister Baker UAE. Point this out and it sets the tone for the rest of the interview.

About this rare achievement at such a young age, he replies with touching modesty: "I haven't met anyone younger in the Middle East but in Europe, it's normal to have young executive chefs because they also start their careers very early."

But those who have worked with him know that his success is not a matter of chance or an early start. Chef Bhupendra's work ethic and attitude are what make the difference. In fact, he continues to inspire people around him.

EARLY LESSONS IN LUXURY

Hailing from the north Indian state of Rajasthan, known for its opulent palaces, rich culture and royal lineage, Chef Bhupendra had early exposure to luxury hospitality. The tourism state is home to Udaipur, the 'City of Lakes'; and Jaipur, also called the 'Pink City' for its rose-coloured architecture.

Chef Bhupendra's home city of Udaipur was the capital of the Mewar Kingdom once upon a time. It was founded by Maharana Udai Singh II in 1559. "My father works in the museum in the City Palace and there were hotels and



My father is a specialist in preservation of crystal chandeliers and heritage items. He would be busy examining the chandeliers and I would wander off into the kitchens

restaurants in the palace complex. So I got a glimpse of professional kitchen operations in childhood."

The palace complex, which overlooks Lake Pichola, has more than 10 palaces, courtyards and gardens with intricate design reminiscent of the richness of medieval India. "I love the scent of food cooking. My father is a specialist in preservation of crystal chandeliers and heritage items. He would be busy examining the chandeliers and I would wander off into the kitchens," he laughs.

Although Chef Bhupendra's father himself was a creative professional, he had more mainstream jobs in mind for his son. When he was selected for a technical position in the Indian Air Force, there was parental pressure to pursue that career. "But I couldn't imagine a

life sitting in an office all day. A cousin of mine enrolled for a food production diploma and I decided to join him. My father was quite disappointed back then because at the time, being a chef in India, especially in small towns, was looked down upon."

That initial struggle is now gone and forgotten. Once the journey began, it proceeded smoothly, maybe because Chef Bhupendra went along easily with whatever came his way. "The funny thing is that this is my seventh job but I have never ever applied for a job in my life. I was lucky enough to be offered opportunities, right from when I was in training. I am grateful for that."

EXCITING BEGINNINGS

During his education at the Food Craft Institute in Udaipur, Chef Bhupendra was selected by the prestigious Indian hospitality group, Oberoi Hotels and Resorts, for an internship. At the time, he was barely out of his teens. The hotel was a luxury property but the start was basic. "I had to fetch things from the storage section, arrange items, clean the kitchen and so on. Nowadays, people have fancy hotel management degrees and they have helpers to clean up after them. When I started, we had to do all the cleaning ourselves. So we learnt the importance of hygiene early."

He recalls an incident on the last day of his one-and-a-half-year training at the Oberoi. "I was just about to leave for the day and a chef came to me in panic. He said there was an event the next day and two chefs working in



butchery were sick. I had just finished training in butchery. There were 29 bags of chickens to be cut. I agreed to help him and we spent 27 hours on the job without a break. We drank coffee after coffee to stay awake. It was exhausting but also very satisfying. That's when I knew I had chosen the right career for myself."

After Oberoi, a colleague who joined the Leela Palace Hotel offered him a job. "It is a beautiful property in Udaipur and I admired my colleague a lot. So I joined him as a Commis III, right at the bottom of the ladder." Working in the bakery section, Chef Bhupendra would begin his days at 4 AM and continue working until 10 PM sometimes to absorb as much as he could as a newbie. "It was not easy to learn pastry. We had a French executive chef, who would come to the kitchen every morning and check the croissants. If it was not up to standards, we would get no days off. I learnt early in my career that a chef has to be willing to work hard and long hours."

This stint lasted a couple of years. Spending 14-15 hours a day at work was normal and Chef Bhupendra harnessed every chance he got to learn something new. He would assist senior chefs, offer new ideas and move between sections to pick up different skills.

Towards the end of 2011, he joined the Fairmont Hotel in Jaipur, where he stayed for a year and a half. "I also started getting offers from some friends who were abroad. I was offered a position at the Fairmont in Kenya and was ready to accept it, when a senior chef working at the Waldorf Astoria in Ras Al Khaimah contacted me."

The executive pastry chef at Waldorf Astoria was a very experienced German lady and the opportunities to learn from her were tremendous. Until then, Chef Bhupendra hadn't given much thought to moving out to the Middle East. "I had worked only in my home state. I was young when I came to Waldorf Astoria



It doesn't matter which hotel you work for. If the system has been functioning well for a long time, it tends to remain the same

and all set to explore the world. I think it was the best decision I ever made."

A DIFFERENT WORLD

Joining the Waldorf Astoria as chef de partie, he worked there for less than two years when the German chef moved to Palazzo Versace Hotel in Dubai. She offered to take Chef Bhupendra along at the same designation. For the next two and a half years, he fine-tuned his pastry and organizational skills at the Palazzo Versace.

When the German head chef moved again, this time to Richemont Masterbaker, a training centre for baking and pastry, she asked the Indian chef again if he would like to join her. "Admittedly, I was a bit confused. Many of my acquaintances said I shouldn't be leaving the hotel industry at such a young age and it would hurt my career prospects. Some felt teaching was for much older chefs and more like a retirement kind of job. But I was excited at the idea of trying something new." It helped that he had solid faith in the German chef and her decisions. Despite his reservations, Chef Bhupendra took the plunge.

CHANGING TRACKS

Initially, the job involved training students. But slowly, the centre started doing consultancy for hospitality clients. "Mister Baker was a client of Richemont. I worked for four months with Mister

Baker as a consultant, helping them set up the kitchen and implementing processes." Over the three years that Chef Bhupendra was with Richemont, a couple were spent consulting Mister Baker off and on. "Eventually, Mister Baker offered me a position here. They had a beautiful kitchen and I could see a nice future not only for myself but also for the company. I could see that I had opportunities to do things, an independent platform for innovation and ideas."

Chef Bhupendra hasn't regretted a moment of his decision. He is stationed at the central production unit of Mister Baker, producing for all its 20 outlets. "I am responsible for ensuring that all products meet the standards and also for development of new and existing products. In addition, I handle business development and process optimization. It's been a different kind of learning. I get to spend time in the kitchen, at the same time I learn the operational aspects of the food business."

As a manager, the Indian chef believes in leading by example. He respects fairness and equality and strives to give his team members an environment that encourages innovation. "I have a staff of 47 people but each person is different. I try to communicate with all of them regularly and I like to know how they are doing." Although the work environment is informal, there is strict adherence to high quality standards. Chef Bhupendra shuns an autocratic style of management. "You can't force people to do anything. Motivating them yields better and more sustainable results."

FOOD, FUTURE AND BEYOND

As a chef, he is a bit of a purist. "I don't like the idea of fusion foods. But that doesn't mean I believe in keeping things as they are for centuries. We have some classic recipes that have been around for 100-200 years but tastes and health needs are changing and it's important to adapt the recipes accordingly." Chef

Bhupendra constantly experiments with new ingredients and even new techniques and tools.

He doesn't see himself going back to the hotels business because of restricted freedom to implement fresh ideas. "It doesn't matter which hotel you work for. If the system has been functioning well for a long time, it tends to remain the same. Also, food decisions are not made by chefs in hotels. There are more challenges in an operation like Mister Baker, not just in terms of food or recipes but also logistics, packaging, nutrition, marketing and so on. But I feel included in the whole process unlike in a hotel." He plans to stick with his current employer for a few more years.

On the family front too, stability is key right now. Chef Bhupendra and his wife are new parents and they have a 10-month-old son. His wife is a certified yoga instructor but at the moment, she's busy with nappy duties.

Much has been achieved in both his professional and personal life at a young age. But after meeting Chef Bhupendra, it's easy to see that much more lies ahead.

We're as excited as he is about the next leg of his journey!



Aerated Cream Cheese Mousse with Mango

BISCUIT BASE FOR CHEESECAKES

Arla Pro Butter	50g
Icing Sugar	25g
Whole Eggs	30g
Vanilla Bean	1
Flour T45	100g
Salt	0.6g
Baking Powder	0.4g
Arla Pro Butter (2)	20g

Method

- ◆ In a mixing bowl, fitted with paddle attachment, add together butter, icing sugar, salt and vanilla bean. Mix until the mixture is smooth.
- ◆ Add the whole eggs little at a time.
- ◆ Sieve together flour and baking powder and add the above mixture.
- ◆ Let the dough rest in a fridge for about 2 hours.
- ◆ Roll to 3mm thickness and bake at 170°C for about 16-18 minutes.
- ◆ Allow to cool, then crush the dough to make crumbs.
- ◆ Add melted butter (2) into the crumbs.

- ◆ Line an oval mould with a clear acetate sheet.
- ◆ Press the crumb mixture to the base of the mould.
- ◆ Keep the mould aside while preparing the cream cheese mousse.

AERATED CREAM CHEESE MOUSSE

Gelatine	5g
Arla Pro Whipping Cream (35% fat)	250g
Sugar	135g
Vanilla Bean	1
Water	40ml
Egg Yolks	70g



Arla Pro Cream Cheese Method

250g

- ◆ Dissolve gelatine sheets in water and set aside.
- ◆ Whip the cream and keep aside.
- ◆ Add sugar and water in a pan and start heating.
- ◆ Add egg yolks and vanilla scrapped vanilla beans to a mixing bowl, fitted with whisk and start beating on medium speed.

- ◆ Once the syrup reaches a temperature of 118° C, pour it over the egg yolks and whip until the mixture reaches room temperature and is aerated.
- ◆ Melt, temper and add the gelatine into the egg yolk mixture.
- ◆ Fold in the smoothened cream cheese into the egg yolk mixture using a spatula, and fold in the whipped cream.
- ◆ Pour the mixture into the prepared mould. Tap to remove air bubbles.

- ◆ Blast freeze for 90 minutes, and store in the freezer.

ASSEMBLY AND FINISHING

- ◆ Demould the cake, place on a cake board.
- ◆ Pipe mango gel and crème chantilly on top, add fresh mango cubes and chocolate decorations.

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MASTER OF ARTS

When he started out more than three decades ago, Chef **Diyan Manjula De Silva** was just a scrappy young man out to learn a lot and do a lot. Along the way, the now executive chef of Radisson Blu Dubai Deira Creek has mastered the art of capturing hearts, not just through stomachs but also through good leadership...



Restlessness can be a double-edged sword. Channelled in the right direction, it can take you places. Not used properly, it can make you unreliable and unpredictable.

No prizes for guessing which group Chef Diyan Manjula De Silva belongs to. A restless person, he admits he is unable to sit still for too long or do the same thing over and over again. And yet, Chef Diyan has been working at the Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek for more than two and a half decades.

In an industry where frequent job changes are the norm, that is quite a statement on the ability of a good workplace to channel a talented professional's restlessness in the right direction.

In 1991, Chef Diyan started out as a kitchen helper at the Galadari Meridien in Sri Lanka. Who would have thought back then that the scrappy lad will one day be the executive chef at the Radisson Blu?

But that's exactly what happened.

Chef Diyan now runs the show at the hotel, overseeing the operations of eight restaurants and banquet outdoor catering. "You can say that restlessness has always been my biggest asset. I could not sit still for more than 10-15 minutes and that made me learn a lot faster and a lot more," he smiles, as he sits down with Gulf Gourmet to talk about his past, present and future.

A SIMPLE START

When he started, Chef Diyan had only basic training in hotel operations. "I knew how to do housekeeping, front office, service and cookery but I realised early enough that I wanted to make a career in cooking after doing my time in all four functions."

The initial stint lasted a couple of years. Chef Diyan joined a resort as a supervisor but returned to Galadari as a



You can say that restlessness has always been my biggest asset. I could not sit still for more than 10-15 minutes and that made me learn a lot faster and a lot more

commis chef. Then in 1996, a call from Dubai changed the course of his life.

"I came here in March that year to work in an English pub. I was lucky to have found a strong mentor in the sous chef there." It was a remarkable learning curve for a newbie who was thrown suddenly into an international setting. There were new techniques to be learnt, new skills to be absorbed and new attitudes to be developed. Chef Diyan immersed himself in the experience, earning a promotion through his dedication and his sponge-like ability to absorb the best of his surroundings. "In a year and a half, we started an Italian restaurant called La Moda."

Chef Uwe Micheel had already noticed the young chef's drive and talent. So he was eager to hand over more responsibilities to Chef Diyan. "He asked me to be the supervisor for the restaurant and promoted me to demi chef de partie." Soon, the restaurant became one of the busiest in the city, with 300-400 guests per day.

The success came with very busy schedules and it was not uncommon for Chef Diyan to frequently spend the night at the restaurant. The hard work, however, paid off. After two years, when another branch of La Moda was being opened in

Media City, Chef Uwe elevated Chef Diyan to chef de partie and allowed him to head the 220-cover restaurant. The hectic days and nights continued but along the way, Chef Diyan picked up valuable skills that would eventually become the tools he needed to achieve his career dream.

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

When he came to Dubai in 1996, Chef Diyan had promised himself he will be an executive chef someday. When Chef Uwe retired from the role, he named the Sri Lankan-born chef as the best candidate to succeed him.

As Director of Kitchens at Radisson Blu, Chef Uwe continued to guide and mentor Chef Diyan. He does so to this day. "I am happy and proud that I have achieved my goal. It would not have been possible without the guidance and support of my seniors."

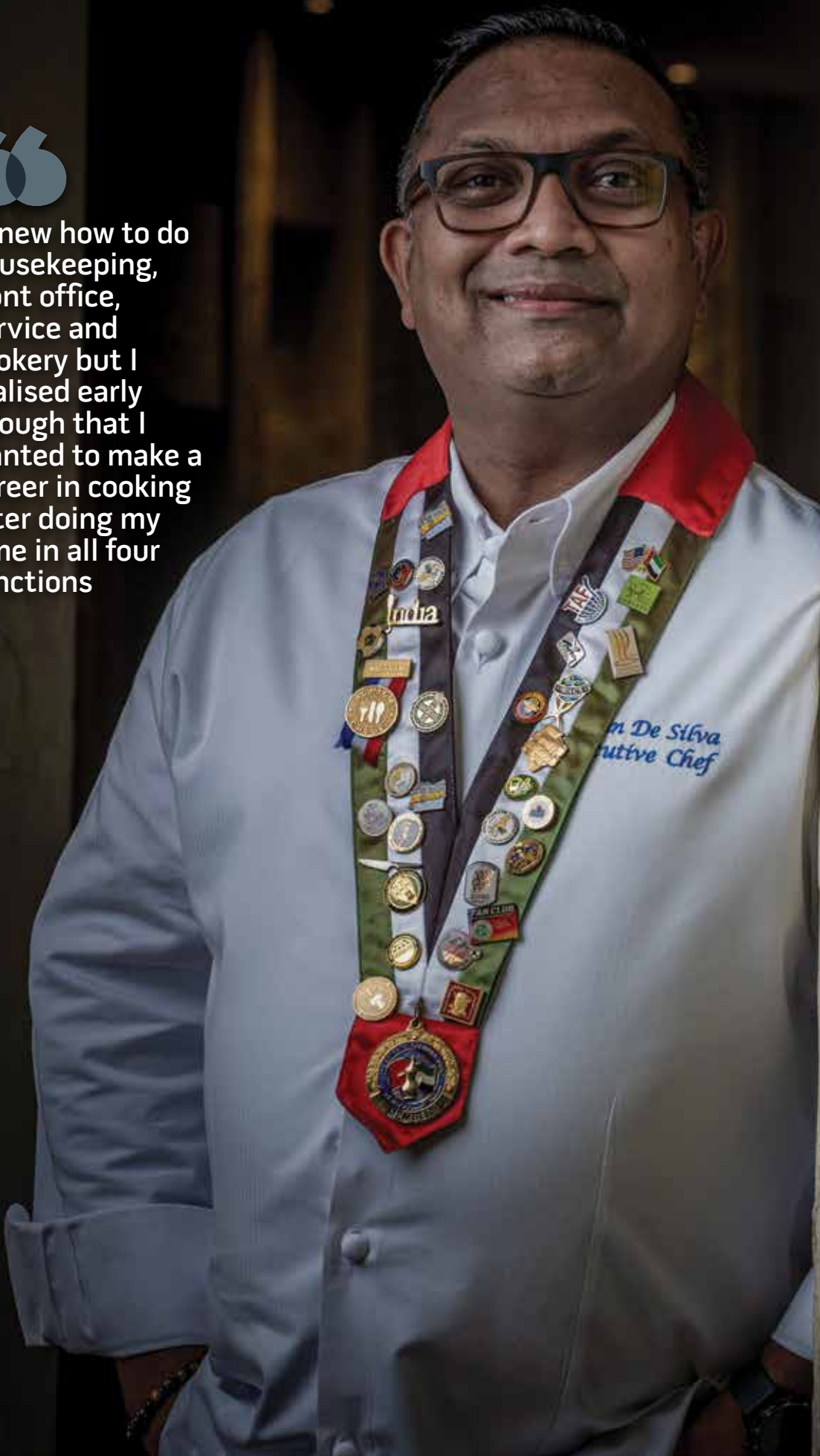
For any professional, onwards and upwards is the only way to go. But each promotion comes with its own set of challenges. As someone who is used to taking challenges head on, Chef Diyan does not let adversity faze him. "What helps, is that we are like a family here. We have each other's back. We look after each other and we help each other. There is tremendous strength in unity."

The hotel has a team of 78 chefs. Before the coronavirus pandemic caused severe disruptions in the hospitality industry across the world, the team was much larger.

While the hotel remained operational and all restaurants were open, catering had to shift to in-room for all three meals. There were situations when staff members would suddenly fall ill and there would be a sudden paucity of enough people to do the job. Supply chain disruptions also caused operational problems. To smooth over some of these issues, Chef Diyan and his team did bulk purchasing and storage of ingredients and carefully navigated the landscape with the support of each other.



I knew how to do housekeeping, front office, service and cookery but I realised early enough that I wanted to make a career in cooking after doing my time in all four functions



A MENU OF MOTIVATION

Throughout the challenges of the past two years, the executive chefs team members continued to give their best to the hotel and to their jobs. Amid personal problems and widespread anxiety and uncertainty, how did Chef Diyan keep the morale high? "The secret lies in keeping your team motivated. Extending unwavering support to anyone who is struggling builds loyalty and commitment. We are in a creative industry and motivation is everything. A lack of motivation and enthusiasm shows up in the quality of food and service. An unhappy person cannot be a happy professional and we do everything to ensure our employees are happy, whatever the circumstances."

On food: While efforts and commitment are the secret sauce for a sumptuous meal,



The secret lies in keeping your team motivated. Extending unwavering support to anyone who is struggling builds loyalty and commitment

the importance of quality and freshness of produce and ingredients cannot be emphasised enough, says the executive chef. Compromising on ingredients to cut costs rarely leads to profits. "Customers

are sensitive to the taste and quality of food. When these things are affected, they will not return to you. To me, that does not make good business sense."

Not that Radisson Blu has anything to worry about. The hotel and its restaurants enjoy the loyalty of many customers. Chef Diyan himself knows many customers who have been frequenting the hotel and its restaurants for 16-20 years! "The customers have been with us for so long and so have many members of the staff. That says a lot about us."

Although the past couple of years have been tough, the supportive work environment helped the team pull off major challenges. Among the most difficult was doing the catering for the Formula 1 event in December. "There



Chef Diyan with his wife Kushari and son Uvindu



Customers are sensitive to the taste and quality of food. When these things are affected, they will not return to you. To me, that does not make good business sense



were many Covid protocols, several layers of approval were needed to get people inside. Our team is rather fresh but everyone worked very hard. We had to cook here and take it to Abu Dhabi. The hours were long and the process was way more complicated but in the end, we did it – almost 10,000 covers in three days, about 30 members of staff on site and around 50-60 chefs cooking the meals.”

As the adage goes: All's well that ends well. The quality and taste of the food was much appreciated and the team was applauded for not allowing pandemic-induced challenges to come in the way of excellence.

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

So where did it all begin for the successful chef? Born in Moratuwa in Sri Lanka as the only child, Chef Diyan was told by his parents from the beginning that he was destined to be an engineer. However, as soon as he was old enough to understand his likes and dislikes, he knew that sitting in front of a computer all day, hacking away at the keyboard, wasn't his thing. “Hospitality is an industry where you meet a lot of new people. You face new challenges and the landscape keeps changing daily. There are big events, there are small events, there is so much planning for every day. It's very exciting,” he explains when you ask him why he picked a culinary career. Although his parents were initially disappointed, today they are happy with his choices. And why not? He has achieved much in life following this path.

Chef Diyan met his wife Kushari also through his career. She was a room attendant in the housekeeping department at a hotel. The couple got married in 2000 and she left her job to be a full-time mother to their son, Uvindu. The sacrifices have paid off. Their son is 17 years old and all set to finish school.

Interestingly, Chef Diyan's son wants to



Hospitality is an industry where you meet a lot of new people. You face new challenges and the landscape keeps changing daily

be an IT engineer, the very same career he himself declined to pursue. “I wanted him to be a pilot but he doesn't think that is his calling. He wants to do what I said I didn't want to do. I guess life has come a full circle.”

Although his schedules give him little free time, Chef Diyan makes it a point to spend quality time with his family regularly. “On my days off, I rest for a day and the second day is for a family meal out and entertainment together.” Despite his workdays being spent in the kitchen, he does not shy away from cooking on days off too. Of course, it's a lot more fun when he is cooking simple and homely Sri Lankan food with his wife. “Rice and curry. That's our go-to weekend meal!” At work, however, he is known for his expertise in Italian cuisine.

In the next five years, he would like to move to a position that gives him greater work-life balance. Maybe something along the lines of an advisor to the hotel. Chef Diyan has no plans of moving out of Dubai, as it is a city that resonates with him more than any other.

YOUNG CHEFS

His plans to move into an advisory role will have to be on hold for now. At the moment, many young chefs are looking to him for guidance and mentorship.

Chef Diyan is not unaware of the fact that today's budding chef is different

from those from his generation. Back then, tough love was what turned simple cooks into talented chefs. The new generation is more sensitive to slights and needs diplomacy and careful guidance to perform well. “I am happy today that my mentors didn't think twice before scolding me. It made me stronger and better at dealing with situations. Unfortunately, nowadays if you raise your voice with young chefs, they will go complaining straight to HR,” he smiles.

Chef Diyan uses the same template to deal with youngsters that he uses with his son. “You have to explain to them patiently and be gentle. It's a different species altogether but you have to adapt to societal changes.”

Some pieces of advice, however, hold true across time. His main advice to those looking to be culinaries is to practise until perfection comes naturally. “It's good to follow recipes in books but don't forget to practise so many times that you know the recipe by-heart. You should be to explain not just the ingredients but also the thought processes behind your creations. True excellence comes from fully understanding what you are doing.”

An artistic bent is also a requisite for anyone who wants to succeed in the culinary industry. One of the reasons Sri Lanka manages to churn out so many talented chefs is that encouragement of culinary artistry is built into the country's culture. “Spend some time sharpening your artistic knives and experimenting with ideas. You will see the difference it makes to your career.”

It's also important to surround yourself with people who support and encourage you. “For me, my biggest supporter is my wife. None of this would have been possible without her,” he finishes.

Dedication, determination and motivation, the three most important ingredients in the recipe for a successful career!



Spend some time sharpening your artistic knives and experimenting with ideas. You will see the difference it makes to your career



chef ID

YOUNG CHEF CHAMPIONSHIP

THE WONDER YEARS

There is a beautiful tenacity that comes with being young, talented and just a few years of experience under the belt. You have miles to go before you sleep and yet you feel completely invincible. Here are two such young chefs from Jumeirah Creekside Hotel looking to take over the world with their culinary marvels

Naveen Bharadwaj

Chef Naveen is an Indian Commis I working at the Jumeirah Creekside Hotel in Dubai. The multiple medal-winning chef says, "I mostly work in the hot kitchen. That's my specialty."

Understanding how all sections of the kitchen work is important to the 28-year-old. He rarely bats an eyelid if the opportunity to work in pastry or the cold kitchen presents itself. "I also work in banquet and a la carte. I am fully cross trained," he says with a smile.

At the start of his career, his chef mentored him to be a versatile cook. "I was trained early on to learn as much as possible so that I could become an asset to any culinary team."

That learning has clearly held him in



**Naveen Bharadwaj****Vijitha Kumara**

I did not want to be a chef. My uncle offered me a cooking job and I said yes because there was nothing else to do

good stead ever since. During this interview, he had just stepped in to fill the shoes of a pastry chef in quarantine. Before that he was called in to replace someone else in the hot kitchen.

Jumeirah Creekside has been Chef Naveen's employer since 2016. What he thought would be a two-year gig turned out to be five years and counting.

He credits this change of heart to his

hotel's General Manager Andy Cuthbert, who took over operations in 2018. Andy is currently also the Worldchefs Chairman for global initiatives aimed at young chefs. "It was a dream come true to work with him and to grow in an environment that benefits from his leadership," says Chef Naveen.

And grow he did. In 2019, under the guidance of his Executive Chef, he took part in his first competition, the East Coast Salon Culinaire. He won a gold medal and that did well to boost his confidence. He says that he then participated at the Young Chef of Year competition at ExpoCulinaire 2020 and won! Feeling invincible he took part in the Cuisinier of the Year competition at ExpoCulinaire 2021 but missed winning the country's top culinary prize.

He even got a full scholarship to complete a City & Guilds UK approved culinary course at the ICCA Dubai.

Chef Naveen displays an unusual



When I make desserts, I make them from my heart. So when I see guests happy it motivates me to do better

instinct for not just cooking beautifully but also having the patience to go after learning rather than fancy designations. This could perhaps have to do with the fact that he comes from a family of professional cooks.

"My father, my grandfather and my uncle have all chosen cooking as their profession," he says. Born and raised on the foothills of the Himalayas, within the farthest corners of India, he says,

life there is simple, comfortable and the people are not fascinated by money.

The flipside was not many job opportunities came his way. This forced the reluctant chef to say yes to cooking. "I did not want to be a chef. My uncle offered me a cooking job and I said yes because there was nothing else to do."

After a year of working in India, Chef Naveen got a job opportunity in Dubai through his uncle. The job was with the pre-opening team of a British/Indian street food themed restaurant.

There he met his mentor, who honed his foundational skills. He even followed him to his next job working for a catering company that did bulk orders for other outlets as well. Jumeirah Group came two years later.

Chef Naveen's long-term goal is to open his own restaurant in India and to live closer to home. In his spare time, he likes to dabble in painting and art and sometimes writing too.

He says he's extremely thankful to his mentor from his first job in Dubai, the pastry chef who helped him get this job, his current Executive Chef Ramola and to ICCA's Shanaaz Raja for supporting him during critical phases of his career. "Throughout my culinary journey, I have

met many who helped me. Without their help, I wouldn't be here today."

Vijitha Kumara

This 26-year-old Sri Lankan describes himself as lucky. And lucky he sure is. It's only been two weeks since joining the Jumeriah Creekside Hotel and his seniors have already trusted him to represent the hotel for this article on young chefs.

"I feel so good about this. I have decided that my next competition plate will be even better," says Chef Vijitha with a motivated fervor.

The Commis I was recruited after his four years of hardwork for a luxury property in Doha did not go unnoticed. "I started my career doing bulk production, followed by restaurant plating and a la carte. I even did buffet and chocolate garnish for some of the desserts being prepared there," he says.

His work ethic and dedication caught the eye of one of his seniors who helped him join his current employer.

Chef Vijitha says, "Here I'm focused on the production of pastry and bakery items.

I'm good at plating and I can do great showpieces too. I enjoy innovating and I keep using Google in search of inspiration."

Growing up in Kalutara near Colombo, the decision to become a chef came from his father. "My dad told me about the potential for a career in the kitchen. So, I joined a year-long culinary program and soon after got a job working for the Dolphin Hotel in the city."

His world is made up of his parents, grandmother and two younger brothers. "My dad has a small business in Sri Lanka, my mom is a homemaker, and my brothers are still in completing their studies," he says.

Ask him to describe his culinary journey and he says, "I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with great chefs, who give me ideas that are good for my career. When I make desserts, I make them from my heart. So when I see guests happy it motivates me to do better."

Cricket is another passion for the young chef. When he's not cooking he loves playing the street version of his favorite sport.

His vision is to be a world-renowned chef, whose innovative ideas could shape the way the next generation of chefs approach the art of pastry making.

Check out the culinary creations of both these amazing chefs.

BBQ Braised Beef Short Ribs with Sunchoke Puree, Gratin Dauphinoise and Pan Seared Vegetables

BBQ SHORT RIBS

Short Ribs	01 kg
Mirepoix	250gm
BBQ sauce	50gm
Tomato paste	50gm
Brown stock	2 L
Salt	08gm

Black pepper 05gm
Method

- ◆ Season the ribs and sear in a pot.
- ◆ Once seared from all sides keep it in a deep insert in the same pot. Sear the mirepoix, add tomato paste, bbq sauce and cook. Add stock and boil.
- ◆ Add in ribs and braise for 4 hours at 160°C. After cooking, cut into rectangle shape. Reduce the braised jus and glaze the short ribs.

SUNCHOKES PUREE

Jerusalem artichoke	200gm
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White onion	1 pc
Garlic	4 cloves
Sage Leaves	06gm
Butter	20gm
Salt	05gm
Vegetable stock	800gm

Method

- ◆ Roughly cut the artichoke, onion and garlic. Add butter in a pot, add the vegetables. Sear and season add stock and cook. Finally, add sage leaves and blend.

GRATIN DAUPHINOISE

Local Potatoes	400gm
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Thyme	06 gm
Cream	100gm
Butter	50gm
Gruyere cheese	50gm
Salt	04gm
Pepper	04gm

Seasoning**Method**

Peel the potato and slice thinly. Season

and spread 1/3 in a baking dish. Glaze with butter & cream. Sprinkle cheese. Repeat for the 2nd and 3rd layers. Cover with foil and bake for 45 minutes at 160°C.

PAN SEARED VEG.

Carrot	01 pcs
Beetroot	40 gm
Asparagus	08pcs

King Mushroom	02 pcs
Salt & pepper	05gm
Olive Oil	02gm

Method

♦ Blanch the carrot and asparagus. Cook beetroot in an oven for 180°C for 20 minutes. Heat a pan, add oil and add mushroom and vegetables. Sear and season with salt & pepper.



Cream Cheesecake with Chantilly Cream

CREAM CHEESE

Cream Cheese	900gm
Sugar	200gm
Sour Cream	240gm
Egg	3pcs
Self-Rising Flour	50gm

Method

- ♦ Mix cream cheese and sugar.
- ♦ Add eggs one by one
- ♦ Add flour

- ♦ Mix all together to become cream

DIGESTIVE BISCUIT

Biscuit	400gm
Melted Butter	200gm

Method

- ♦ Crush the biscuit
- ♦ Add melted butter to the crushed biscuit

RASPBERRY KULLY

Raspberry Puree	200gm
Sugar	38gm

Agar Agar	2gm
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Method

- ♦ Boil raspberry and sugar
- ♦ Add agar-agar

CHOCOLATE GARNISH

White Chocolate	50gm
Cocoa butter	25gm

Method

- ♦ Melt the chocolate
- ♦ Add the cocoa butter

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January 2022



Welcome to LUXEMBOURG

We caught up with three of the hospitality staff working at the Luxembourg pavilion at the Expo 2020. Here are answers to some rapid questions we posed to them



SARAH

Sarah is part of the service team and truly likes the challenges she faces because "you can talk to different people". She wants to explore this country absorb as much of the culture as she can.

Are you enjoying in Dubai?

Yeah, I am. Dubai is a city where everything is possible and that's why I like it. We are lucky to work with Jumeirah Group. At the beginning we had the usual challenges with understanding how they work and finding the key to working in sync. Of course now we are all working in sync. After some time, you get used to the rhythm and it gets really nice.

How different is it working back home?

It is a different work culture back there and here there are 200 nationalities. Also, I think it's always interesting to try other things rather than always the same!

GAIA

Gaia Rimi is a 20-year-old working at the Luxembourg pavilion's kitchen and is in her last year of Hospitality Management studies back in her home country.

How has been your experience so far?

It's very nice and a big opportunity for me to be here. It's a big honor that my school chose me. The culture here is different and that is a good thing because we have the opportunity to work with new cultures and learn about new cuisines.

What about operations?

We have learnt a lot of our own cultural cuisine here. More than what we learn in our school. I learnt lots of stuff about Luxembourgish food. As an Italian living in Luxembourg we don't cook these dishes.

MARC

Marc Moris is the teacher at École d'Hôtellerie et de Tourisme du Luxembourg (EHTL) and is based in Diekirch, northern part of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg.

Tell us about your trip here

I'm here to take care of the students working for the Luxembourg pavilion at the Dubai Expo 2020.

Why has your school been selected to come here?

Our school has a collaboration with the Luxembourg government for nearly 4 years now. And the idea of working with Jumeirah came from one of our head chefs Mr. Alain Hostert. We are here to give a helping hand with another teacher of ours, Chef De Dood.

How many students do you have here?



We have 11 students aged between 18 to 22. They are extremely hard working, and this opportunity serves as an internship for them far away from home.

For some of them, it's the first time they are going abroad and it's not been easy. Thankfully, Dubai is an impressive place to visit and explore.

US\$ 3 billion

what's your GCC market share?

The UAE alone has over 750 hotels.
Each hotel has an Executive Chef.
Each Executive Chef has an annual budget.
It ranges from AED 1 million - US\$ 3 million.

There are over 7,000 independent restaurants in the UAE.

Each restaurant has a Head Chef.
Each Head Chef has an annual budget.
It ranges from AED 100,000 - US\$ 1 million.

Now you do the maths.

The largest body that speaks for this group of Chefs is The Emirates Culinary Guild (ECG).

ECG organises Salon Culinaire at Gulfood Dubai, La Cuisine by SIAL in Abu Dhabi and world-record breaking food events in the city.

Gulf Gourmet is the only magazine endorsed by the ECG.

It also influences non-ECG Chefs across the GCC and is distributed at World Association of Chefs Societies events around the globe.

Take advantage of our platform.

Positively impact your market share!

Contact us now

advertise@gulfgourmet.net / 050-5045033

REACH

ENGAGE

INFLUENCE

ABOUT GULF GOURMET

- ▶ Most widely read magazine by Chefs & Decision Makers in the GCC
- ▶ Officially supported by the Emirates Culinary Guild
- ▶ Highest circulation in its category at 6,150 copies per month
- ▶ Readership estimates of nearly 11,276 per month
- ▶ Positively influencing the UAE food industry since 2006
- ▶ Recognised by the World Association of Chefs Societies
- ▶ Circulated at top regional and international culinary events

WHO READS IT?

▶ Executive Chefs	23%
▶ Senior & Mid-Level Chefs	36%
▶ Hotel GMs	10%
▶ Restaurant Owners	15%
▶ C-Level Executives	2%
▶ Purchase Managers	7%
▶ Food Industry Leaders	4%
▶ Marketing / PR Managers	1%
▶ Others	2%

REACH BY COUNTRY

▶ United Arab Emirates	71%
▶ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	18%
▶ Oman	2%
▶ Qatar	4%
▶ Kuwait	1%
▶ Bahrain	2%
▶ United Kingdom	1%
▶ Others	1%

MARKET SEGMENTATION

▶ 5-star Hotels	46%
▶ 3/4-star Hotels	19%
▶ Independent Restaurants (Elite)	18%
▶ Independent Restaurants (Standard)	12%
▶ Food Industry Suppliers	3%
▶ Large & Medium Food Retailers	2%



gulf
gourmet



**Nestlé
Golden
Chef's Hat
Award**



Meet The Finalists

The Nestlé Professional Golden Chefs Hat Award UAE Season 9 is a leading competition to find the best young chef duo in the country and is organized and managed by Gulf Gourmet. The competition ran throughout 2021 with each issue showcasing two young chef teams and their recipes.

Of the 20 teams with 40 recipes featured in 2021, the top 10 were selected by a panel of senior renowned chefs late last month.

The judging panel consisted of Alen Pedge, Atim Sutyatim, Vivek Huria and

Amro Al Yassin. The deliberation lasted a little over an hour to score all 40 recipes.

The finals will be a live cook-off to be held at the ICCA Dubai on February 11. Some of the live competition can be seen on the chefID app and the March issue of this magazine will carry the names of the winners.

The top 10 finalists are:

1. Gulayaz Ahmed and Maurilla Tenden from JW Marriott Marquis Dubai
2. Islam Masoud and Nurangi Madubashinbi from Caesars Bluewaters Dubai
3. Suraji Sivasdas and Ronnie M Sicut from Waldorf Astoria the Palm
4. Ramy Eldesouky and Dinesh Kumar from Jumeirah Creekside Hotel
5. Abhishek Sharma and Chakrawarthige Fernando from Sheraton Juimeirah Beach Resort
6. Jhaneen Dela Paz and Restu Dinar Aulia from W Hotel the Palm Dubai
7. Mohammed Fayis and Dasun Tharaka from Radisson Blu Deira Creek
8. Bibu Ranjit and Rohit Surve from JW Marriott Marquis Dubai
9. Rabin Maharajan and Sima Thokar from Doubletree by Hilton
10. Sushant Joshi and Harshani Sandamali from Wyndham Garden Ajman Corniche







The Christmas Get Together

The final monthly meeting of the Emirates Culinary Guild for 2021 was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek and was hosted by Chef **Diyan Manjula** and his team. The gathering saw some of the UAE's most powerful chefs come together to find ways to support and reinvigorate the culinary scene. Here are images from the event





January 2022 **Gulf Gourmet**

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newmembers



Sagar Surti, CEO, Masterbaker Marketing FZCO and Jayakrishnan Unnikrishnan, Sales Manager, receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel

MASTERBAKER MARKETING FZCO

Masterbaker was born out necessity of its bakery pedigree. The company belongs to the SWITZ GROUP, which boast Industrial bakeries in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as well as Oman and retail bakeshops in Oman, Sri Lanka and India and present in 9 countries.

Started operations in Jebel Ali in the year 1992 as a 100% foreign owned branch of Masterbaker Marketing Ltd BVI, The purpose was to Import, Stock and Distribute and service the Bakery Industry. We were the first and only company to specialise in bakery ingredients only. The focus still continues.

Masterbaker has its own affiliates in the form of LLC companies in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha, Oman, Bahrain and now KSA.

Our first dedicated temperature



MASTER BAKER

controlled and refrigerated warehouse was built in 1994 had capacity of 2700 pallets. And now we have new home in National industries park (Technopark) with 13,000 temperature-controlled pallet capacity.

Our quest has been to de-commoditise different bakery products and bring value to our customers. We did this successfully with several major lines like margarine and croissant butter. We were the first to bring function specific, margarine and butter to the Arabian Gulf.

Our next focus was on the largest bakery ingredient (besides flour and sugar) which is egg.

Egg Station was built and commenced operations in April, 2003, to produce pasteurised egg products including separates and supplies first class E.U standard products to 10 countries. Our egg station facilities are in UAE and now in KSA. www.eggstation.com

MASTERBAKER REPRESENTS THE BEST INGREDIENTS' COMPANIES IN THE WORLD. Some of them are:

- ♦ C.S.M (erstwhile, Meistermarken/ Ulmer Spatz) Germany
- ♦ Lesaffre, France
- ♦ Dawn Foods, USA
- ♦ Dawn Europe previously know as Unifine, Belgium
- ♦ Felchlin, Switzerland
- ♦ Candia, France (part of Sodial group)
- ♦ Schapfen Muehle, Germany
- ♦ Sonneveld, Holland (part of Orkla Food Ingredients)
- ♦ Royal Steensma, Holland



Victoria Hassani, Managing Director, GMA Marketing Management, local rep for Potatoes USA GCC, receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel

POTATOES USA

Here at Potatoes USA, we believe that the high quality, consistent year-round supply and variety of potato products from the United States offer a unique sales opportunity. Potatoes USA in the GCC promotes four categories of potato products: fresh table-stock potatoes, frozen potato products, dehydrated potato products, and fresh chip-stock potatoes.

Our goal is to establish a partnership with you supporting our mutual objective of increasing sales and profits.

To assist with this process, our local representatives in the GCC are there to connect U.S. potato growers, shippers and potato processors with you to provide the most assistance possible for those interested in and currently using U.S. potatoes and products, across the foodservice, retail and manufacturing / ingredient sectors in the GCC market.



Foodservice

An endless variety of products and preparation methods makes potatoes one of the most versatile products available for foodservice uses. Potatoes USA can help you make potatoes one of your most profitable menu items through recipe development, technical training and promotions.

Retail

When it comes to food, today's retail consumer is looking for quality and convenience. U.S. potato products offer both, and Potatoes USA has carried out extensive research on how retailers can improve their sales of potatoes.

Ingredients

For frozen food processors, bakeries, snack

processors and many others, potatoes offer an unexpected new twist as an ingredient. Potatoes USA has conducted research to demonstrate how U.S. potato products can be utilized to enhance many products and create new ones.

Public Relations

Public relations work conducted by Potatoes USA helps consumers and others to understand that potatoes deliver good nutrition along with their naturally rich potato flavor.

Why Buy U.S. Potatoes?

We believe you can grow your business by accessing the many high-quality potato products available from the U.S. potato industry.

High Quality:

The United States is a world leader in potato production and processing and can supply the very best product to meet your needs at a price that assures customer satisfaction.



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Is your message loud and clear?

Content-Farm.com is an international network of business and lifestyle journalists, copywriters, graphic designers, web developers and communication specialists that have come together to create an ecosystem for content marketing. Our role is to understand your target audience, get the message right and to deliver your message in a format that is cost-effective, has maximum impact and increases the return on your marketing dollars. We have:

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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:

Young Member: Junior members will receive a certificate.

Senior Members: Above the rank of chef de partie (or senior chef de partie on executive chef's recommendation).
Dhs.350/=joining. Includes certificate; member-pin, member medal and ECG ceremonial collar. Dhs. 150/=per year thereafter.

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

Corporate Member Dhs. 20,000 per year

FEAR IS A GOOD THING

The fear of losing control scares most people. We get so engrossed in the dark side of fear that we completely forget that fear makes us stronger, better and bolder

Les Brown, a great inspirational speaker, speaks a lot about fear in his talks. His famous words are, "Feel The Fear And Do It Anyway®".

Another popular quote on fear is from the movie Star Wars. In it, Master Yoda says, "Train yourself to let go of everything you fear to lose." He may have been a fictional character but the words he uttered are what we read in the great books from across the world.

Our fear can be our greatest enemy, or we can befriend it to redirect our path. Once we learn to manage this emotional state, we can channel it for betterment of ourselves and others.

In the movie, the dialogue continues, "Fear is the path to the dark side. Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering." Words so simple and well written that it needs no further explanation.

So how do we overcome fear? We do that by accepting it, passing through it, and amplifying our awareness of it. This is possible with five truths listed by Dr Susan Jeffers:

- Fear never truly goes away. Every step taken into the unknown comes with some form of fear. There is no point in saying, "When I am no longer afraid, then I will do it." You'll be waiting a long time. Fear is part of the package.
- The only way to get rid of fear of doing something is to go out and...do it! When you do it often enough, you will no longer be afraid in that particular situation. You will have faced the unknown and you will have handled it. Then new challenges await you, which certainly add to the excitement of living.
- Develop a pattern of strength. With each little step you take into unknown territory, a pattern of strength develops. You begin feeling stronger and stronger.

MORE THAN A CHEF

ROHIT BASSI



- Take relief in the fact that you are not alone. Everyone has fears. Those who have succeeded in doing what they have wanted to do in life have felt the fear – but did it anyway. So can you!
- Pushing through fear is better than living with a feeling of helplessness! This is the one truth that some people have difficulty understanding. When you push through the fear, you will feel such a sense of relief. This is because the feeling of helplessness subsides. You will wonder why you did not act sooner. You will become more and more aware that you can truly handle anything that life hands you.

Jim Carey once gave his insight into fear. He said, "Fear is going to be a player in your life, but you get to decide how much. You can spend your whole life imagining ghosts, worrying about the pathway to the future, but all it will ever be is what's happening here, the decisions in that we make in this moment, which are based in either love or fear.

"So many of us choose our path out of fear disguised as practicality. What we really want seems impossibly out of reach and ridiculous to expect, so we never dare to ask the universe for it. I'm saying that you can ask the universe for it."

Rohit Bassi is a corporate trainer and TedX speaker, who specializes in getting employees to perform better at work. You can reach him at rohit@in-learning.com



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