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THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE FOR CHEFS volume 10, issue 2



TROIKA

Alen Thong, Uwe Micheel and Andy Cuthbert have given over two decades of their lives empowering the UAE's culinary talent pool and ensuring global recognition for our chefs. We bring you their vision going forward



Nina Halal, Director Middle East, U.S. Dairy Export Council gives us a glimpse into its regional game plan



RAINING SCONES

Executive Chef Paul Ryan of Fortnum & Mason shares with us the art of creating that perfect scone



UNTRODDEN PATH

The unconventional journey of **Christopher Zerbe**, Head Chef & Operations Manager at The Cycle Bistro





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president'sstation

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Dear fellow Chefs, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the February issue of our Gulf Gourmet, the special 20th Gulfood awards issue. On this stage, I'd like to congratulate the Dubai World Trade Centre team for the amazing job done. I do remember my first Gulfood 20 years back. What growth!

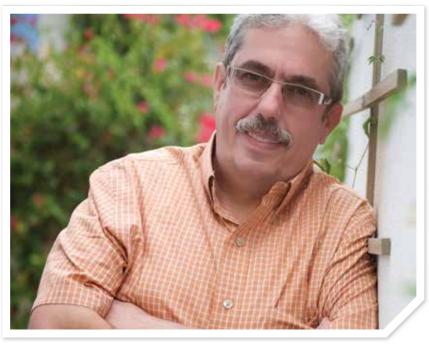
We have two of our judges celebrating 20 years with us this year. Chef Otto Weibel and Norbert Girnth have supported us since 1995. I had a look in our magazine from 1995 where we also had Jean Schillinger, Hans Bueschkens, Scott Webster, Heinz Kohler, March Debailleul and Pierre Fonteyne with us. The Emirates Culinary Guild was then headed by our Honorary President Mike Lee who is still with us in 2015 on the jury panel.

Thank you to all our supporters again. Our key sponsors, **Nestle Professional**, **Sadia** and **IFFCO Pristine**. Of course, we are grateful to Dubai World Trade Centre, Ginox, Convotherm Manitowoc, RAK, MLA, US Dairy Export Council, Masterbaker, Barakat, Mitras, Boecker and Diversey and all our partners. Thank you guys, without your support it would not be possible to host such a great event.

We are looking forward to welcoming over 30 international judges led by our friend Otto Weibel. Thank you as them, all the marshals and of course my colleagues from the Executive Committee. We are looking forward to the biggest and best Salon Culinaire ever.

On 7th and 8th of February we are hosting the Worldchefs Judge Seminar by Gert Klötzke. Sorry to everyone who could not register as we are overbooked. Good luck and hope all the participants will achieve their goal of becoming Certified WACS Judges.

After our Salon, I will go to Cape Town to judge the St Pellegrino Young Chef final for Middle East & Africa (MEA). We wish our two candidates from







United Arab Emirates good luck. May the best Young Chef win and represent our region at the world finale in Italy. Straight after, I will take a small team to compete in Tessalonniki in Greece. We are working with our corporate partner US Meat Export Council on a Mini Plated competition in April; full details will be made available after Gulfood.

I would also like to congratulate the Egyptian Chefs Association on the foundation of the Young Chef Club and its official launch on January 31, 2015.

The next WACS Congress will now be in September 2016 in Athens, Greece. I recommend our members to start saving a small amount each month and join us in Athens.

If you have missed any of the previous issues of Gulf Gourmet, please visit gulfgourmet.net.

I urge all members to go onto the Guild





website to see what is happening on the calendar at emiratesculinaryguild. net and to also visit the WACS Young Chefs Facebook page on facebook.com/ wacsyoungchefs and encourage your young chefs to join that page so they can 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.

A final thank you to Chef Rami and his team for hosting our January meeting in Sharjah and to our corporate partners for all the great product tasting.

Culinary Regards,

Uwe Micheel

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

ggcontents

- 09 > Editor's Note
 Our Editor's take on all things
 F&B in the region
- Friends of the Guild

 Brands that support the Emirates Culinary Guild
- 14 » News Bites
 A quick round-up of what's happening in the Chef community and the food service industry
- 18 >> Cover Story

 Uwe Micheel, Andy Cuthbert
 and Alen Thong have given
 over two decades of their
 lives empowering the UAE's
 culinary talent pool and
 ensuring global recognition
 for our chefs. We bring you
 their vision going forward
- 28 > Chief Speak
 Nina Halal, Director Middle
 East, U.S. Dairy Export
 Council gives us a glimpse
 into its history and the
 way going forward in an
 exclusive interview
- 32 >> Pastry Power
 (by Fonterra)
 Executive Chef Paul Ryan of
 Fortnum & Mason shares with
 us the art of creating that
 perfect scone and shares with
 us his life story on how life
 has taken him from music to
 muffins
- 37 >> Golden Chef's Hat
 (by Nestle Professional)
 Youngsters from The Club,
 Abu Dhabi are this month's
 challengers at the Nestle
 Professional Golden Chef's
 Hat Competition







ggcontents





42 > Chef of the Month
The unconventional

culinary journey of
Christopher Zerbe, Head
Chef & Operations Manager
at The Cycle Bistro

 $45 \gg \text{Events}$

Images from around the region related to the industry. This issue includes images from prize distribution ceremony for the winners of Golden Chefs Hat Season 2 and the Emirates Culinary Guild meeting

48 » Salon Rules

Exclusive listing of the complete rules and regulations for Salon Culinaire 2015

57 » New Members

Meet the new and renewed members of the Emirates Culinary Guild

62 » Members Directory

DirectoryA listing of all leading food and kitchen supplies companies for this region

More than a chefA monthly column by Rohit

A monthly column by Rohit Bassi for young chefs to help improve their soft skills

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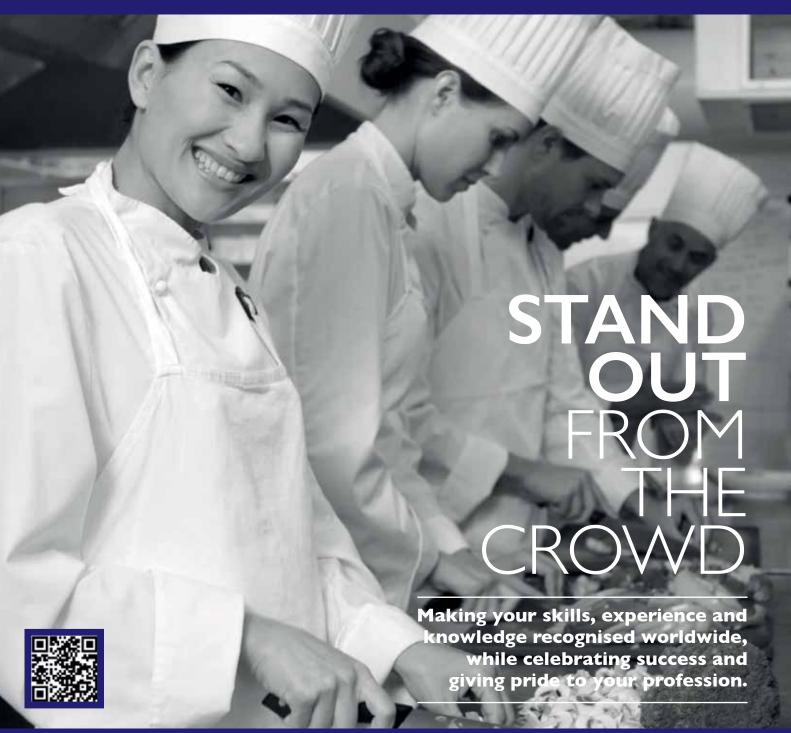


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editor'snote

email editor@gulfgourmet.net

e are all set to witness the biggest Emirates Salon Culinaire ever, in conjunction with the world's largest annual food and hospitality show, Gulfood. There are two things that make it special. One, when you look back 20 years ago when it all started, few could've envisioned the scale to which these events would rise. And two, some of the key people associated with it (at least as far as Emirates Salon Culinaire is concerned) are still around supporting and nurturing it.

There are very few national level culinary contests on this planet that can give our Salon Culinaire a run for its money. With over 1,500 chefs turning up each year to showcase their skills and talent across 25+ classes, this is truly a spectacle worth witnessing.

If you are a young chef who's only heard of this competition but never witnessed it, please do yourself a favour and go check it out. Disembark at the Dubai World Trade Centre metro station and the larger than life show is happening just a few steps away.

If you cannot afford five days off, then check out the full listing of the classes in this magazine and go on the day when chefs in your field of specialisation are competing. Just see the level of the contest and if possible try and overhear the comments they receive from WACS-approved judges who would've flown in from around the world. This will help open your eyes to a whole new world of cooking



that's out there and, who knows, you too could be inspired to bring back some of that knowledge to your own hotel kitchen.

It is also a great way to prepare for next year's competition. It will give you the confidence to be able to do what you like. It doesn't matter whether you speak good English or Arabic or Hindi. There are marshals out there to guide you.

Enough preaching from my end; will leave the rest to our monthly columnist Rohit Bassi who touches on the topic of service and its impact on page 66. Worth reading.

We've tried a new style of art for the cover of our special Gulfood edition. Let us know what you think.

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

Aquin George Editor

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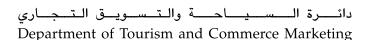
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Local Chefs to heat up all-new Dubai Food Festival Academy

The organisers of Dubai Food Carnival have announced the exciting line-up of local chefs taking part in the all-new Dubai Food Festival Academy.

Running February 12-14 at Dubai International Marine Club, the event combines the city's best food, drink, entertainment and music at one, family-friendly venue. This year's event returns with 80 food brands and 40 restaurants, many of which are new to both Dubai and the Carnival.

Another new concept for this year's event, the Dubai Food Festival Academy — a unique activation held in association with Dubai Food Festival, the city-wide culinary celebration running throughout

the city in February – will feature seven renowned local chefs in an interactive, live cooking area hosting executive chef demonstrations, competitions for the public and a selection of 'How to...' sessions. The Dubai Food Festival Academy will include exclusive appearances by:

A trio of leading culinary stars from Jumeirah Restaurant Group Dubai: Ireneo Labao, Chef de Cuisine of the noodle house; Oscar Rito, Chef Patron of Tortuga Mexican Kitchen and Bar, Mina A' Salam; and Lawrence Wells, Executive Chef and Pitmaster, Perry & Blackwelder's Original Smokehouse, Souk Madinat Jumeirah.

Tyson Podolski, Head Chef at Prime 68

and Chef Amrish Sood, Chef de Cuisine at the Rang Mahal, both located in the JW Marriott Marquis Dubai.

Russell Impiazzi, Culinary Director of Galeries Lafayette in Dubai Mall. David Cagle, Head Chef for CHI Hospitality brands, St. Tropez Bistro and SoHo Grill. Alex Ferris, Executive Sous Chef at Jones the Grocer.

In addition to the seven local chefs participating in the Dubai Food Festival Academy, the Carnival will also host six international celebrity masterchefs at its live-action Chefs' Dome area including Chef Simon Rimmer, Chef Atul Kochhar, Chef Silvena Rowe, Chef Manal Al-Alem, Chef Sanjeev Kapoor and Chef Tarek Ibrahim.







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newsbites

Check it out! Burj Khalifa made of pure Belgian chocolate



If you did pass through Dubai Airport Terminal 3 during December last, chances are you saw a Burj Khalifa tower made of chocolate. Well, there's more to the story. Baqer Mohebi enterprises and their partner Puratos, was a major sponsor in this Guinness World Record breaking attempt. The entire tower was made of pure Belgian chocolate.

The idea was to take further the 2012 world record breaking feat in Brussels where master chocolatier Andrew Farrugia, from Malta, built an edible train model to be the longest chocolate structure in the world. That train measured 34 metres in length and featured every detail of a classic steam-powered train. Not wanting to stop there, Andrew brought his innovation, imagination and enthusiasm to Dubai. The idea of creating the world's tallest chocolate structure in the shape of Burj Khalifa was accepted swiftly by all parties concerned.

The Burj Khalifa chocolate tower at Dubai Airport is 50 ft tall (that's approximately 5 storeys high) with a base of 18 ft x 12 ft. The goal was to smash the current world record held by French chocolatier Patrick Roger for a 40 ft Christmas tree.

Baqer Mohebi Enterprises, as the official distributor in UAE for all Puratos products, helped make this dream come true by working with the government and other agencies to ensure that the structure stood tall on UAE's National Day.

Which chef will fly to Switzerland?

Two of the more interesting classes to be held in this Emirates Salon Culinaire is the HUG sweet creations contest and the HUG savoury creations contest.

The company, HUG, is offering the winning chefs an all-expense paid trip

to Switzerland as well as cash prizes. This is the second such initiative that the company has undertaken in the UAE and the previous one too had seen some lucky chefs get to travel abroad. To find out who won, don't forget to tune in to the next issue.



Amwaj Rotana appoints new Executive Pastry Chef

The 5-star Amwaj Rotana has appointed Siddhesh Sukhathankar as the new Executive Pastry Chef. The talented young chef first joined the culinary scene as a trainee at the Oberoi in Mumbai, India and developed a particular interest in pastry during his time there.

Having joined the Rotana group in 2010, Siddhesh has had the chance to

work with top names in the culinary world such as Marike van Beurden of Caprice, Four Seasons Hong Kong, Chef Vikas Bagul of The Oberoi and Trident in Mumbai and Claire Clarke of French While the famed Heston Blumenthal is a great inspiration to him, Siddhesh himself has had the chance to earn a number of awards and accolades of his own such as scoring a perfect 10 by all judges for

desserts at the Battle of the Kitchens in May 2012 and at the same time, winning the award for most innovative chef out of 9 chefs competing.

Siddhesh, promises guests that he will revisit the classics in 2015 to add a modern touch to the desserts he will present, especially with his two favourite ingredients, Tahitian vanilla bean and passion fruit.



Going past souvlaki and moussaka!

Elia, the restaurant that claims to have put Greek food on Dubai's culinary map, is turning it up a notch and bringing you the culinary masters of the motherland to showcase Greek cuisine at its absolute best. Elia's consultant Chef Yiannis Baxevanis and Chef de Cuisine Ilias Kokoroskos are inviting four award winning chefs in 2015. Together they will delve into their roots and into authentic ingredients and with an eye to the future, create a menu just for you. The menu will be available

for three nights and diners will have the chance to meet and greet the Chefs.

The festival is going to kick-start with Jerome Serres from February 2nd until the 4th. The Michelin starred Chef is known for combining fine French cuisine with Greek. He will be followed by Dimitris Dimitriadis, a very highly respected Greek Chef, multi-award winner and received "Golden Hat" Greek recognition five times together with 1 Michelin Star.

L Capital Asia partners with Bateel

Bateel, the Gulf based food business and owner of the iconic gourmet date confectionery boutiques and premium cafes, announced a new partnership with L Capital Asia, the Asian private equity fund sponsored by LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton S.A. (LVMH).

Bateel is a homegrown Saudi brand renowned globally for its 'gourmet' dates, selling through Bateel Boutiques and international partners including Harrods and Fortnum & Masons. Bateel has market presence in 16 countries across Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East.

The L Capital Asia Team has been working with Bateel very closely over the last few years and plans to continue to do so and expand on the relationship to help Bateel achieve its potential worldwide. The partnership is based on Bateel's unique positioning, premium quality products and F&B experience with a best-inclass management team.

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



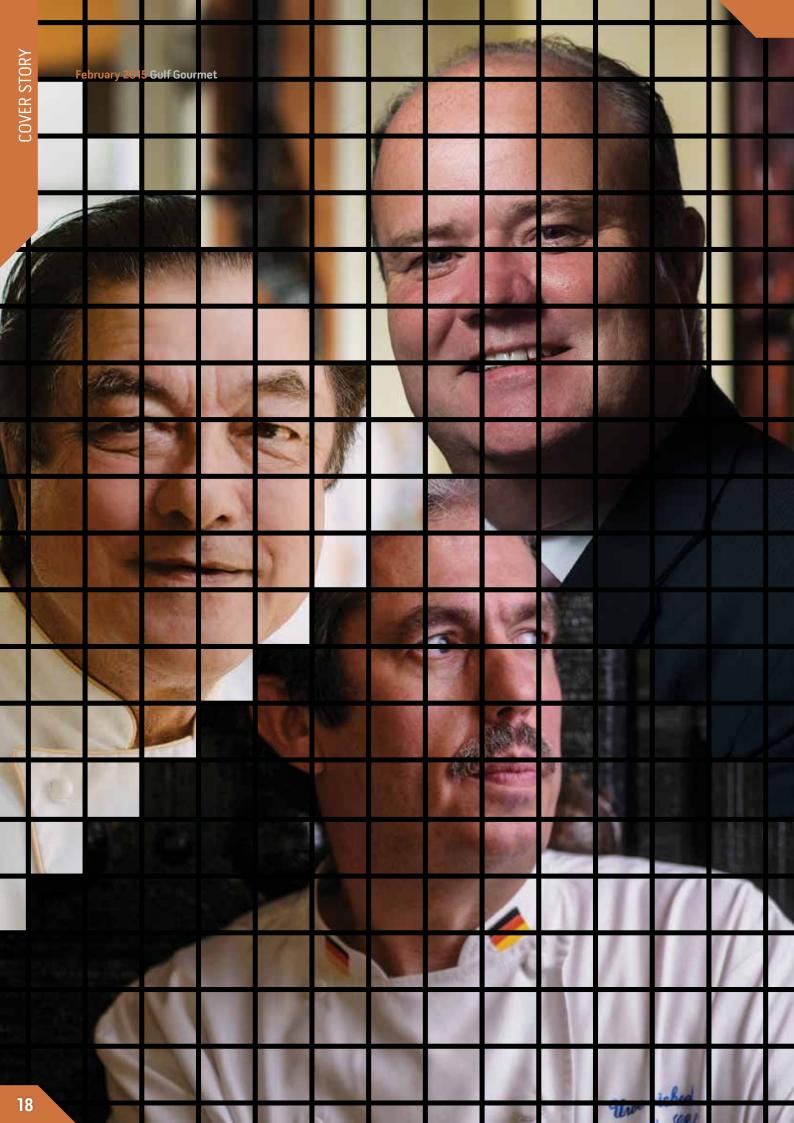




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THE TROIKA EFFECT

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE GUILD AND THE FUTURE OF IT

hat the culinary talent of this region have witnessed in the recent past is nothing short of inspirational. First came Chef Alen Thong, he was joined by Chef Uwe Micheel, finally, came along Chef Andy Cuthbert. Each one of them dedicated around two decades of their free time to do just one thing: improve the culinary standards of the Emirates and take it to

a level few had ever dreamed of. They have spent hundreds of hours each in their quest to empower the UAE's culinary talent pool and to ensure global recognition for our chefs.

And the journey has been nothing short of exciting because the three have each other's support. Each one brings a new dimension to the table to create a troika effect. So do they think

it's time to rest on their laurels? After all, we just sent our first all-Emirati culinary team to an international competition. We also have young expat chefs working here who have grown here and made their mark felt at international competitions; even bringing back 16 gold medals from the culinary Olympics. Truth is the road ahead is far from over. We bring you each one's vision going forward...

CAPTAIN OF THE CULINARY SILIENTED

Fame and fortune hold little attraction for Chef Extraordinaire **Uwe Micheel**. Food and faith are what drives this one-man army. The president of the Emirates Culinary Guild tells **Aquin George** what's on his plate

e's the straight-talking
German, true to the image
of his countrymen. He's the
taskmaster, the no-nonsense
boss, the practical guy. But underneath
that tough exterior, Chef Uwe Micheel,
the president of the Emirates Culinary
Guild, is a dreamer, a rather emotional,
impulsive one at that.

The face and voice of the guild, Chef Uwe has worked tirelessly for a decade to give the UAE culinary industry an identity on the world platform. His patriotism for his adopted country needs no proof.

When tomorrow - and we say "when" and not "if" - the UAE has a national culinary team that gives the world's leading teams a run for their money, the trophy belongs in Chef Uwe's personal collection. For, he's the one who has pushed hard to develop the industry's skills, forced it to adopt best kitchen and environmental practices and raised its standards to international levels. "My vision is to build a 'Team UAE' made entirely out of Emiratis. It will take time but we will make it happen," says the director of kitchens at Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek.

A big believer in "baby steps", Chef Uwe is now focusing on getting two-three UAE nationals in the team that will go to the culinary Olympics in 2016. "The road we are on will never end and we will never be satisfied with what we have achieved. But the small finishing lines in between make us proud."

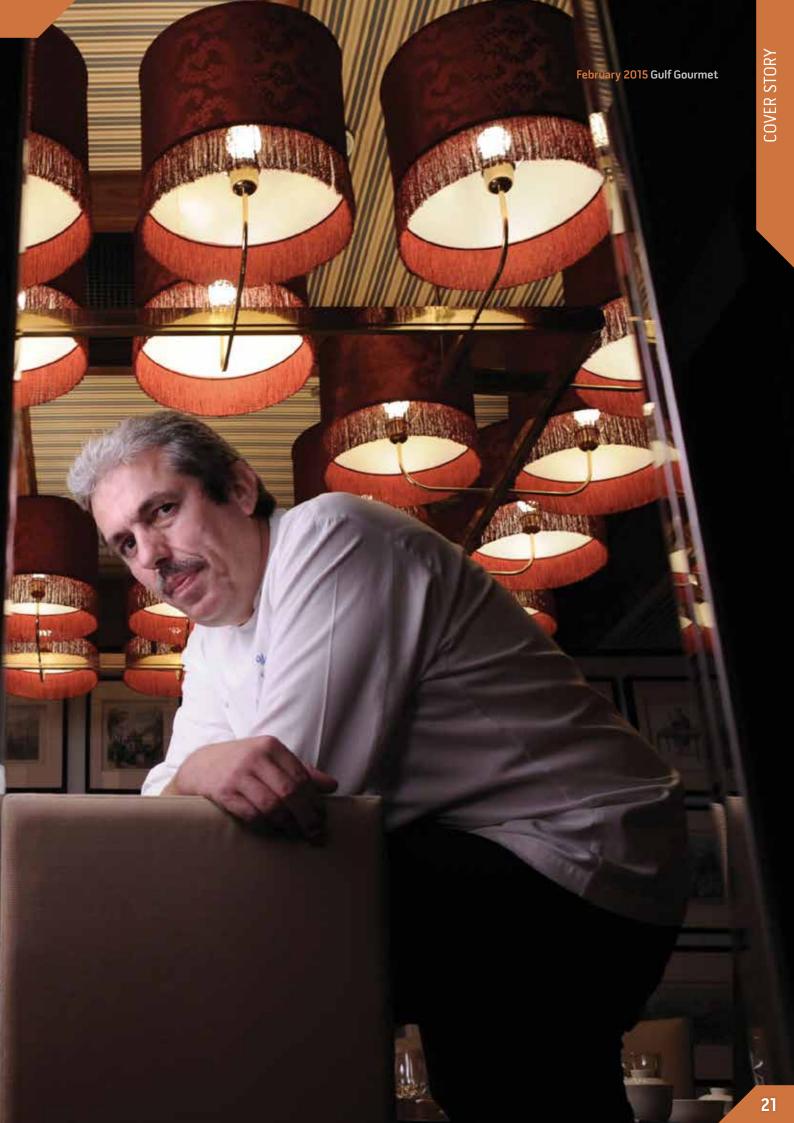
One of these big 'small finishing lines' was the World Association of Chef Societies (WACS) Congress that the UAE hosted in 2008. When Chef Uwe took over as its president in 1996, the guild decided that it would someday host the Congress. The target for living that dream was 20 years — it pulled the feat off in just 12! "To date, the Congress we organised is spoken of. People in the industry say it was one of the best ever. And the ones that followed have not been able to match up," he smiles.

Prestigious cooking competitions have indeed become the guild's calling card. From the Salon Culinaire to the Junior Chef of the Year to La SIAL to the Dubai World Hospitality Championship, the guild has its fingerprints on all noteworthy contests held in this part of the world. "Interestingly, we started our junior chef competition only to find someone to send

to a contest in South Africa. South Africa was 30 years ahead of us in the culinary field back then. We looked inferior and we had to find someone who was talented enough to represent us."

Today, that competition is to budding chefs what a Miss Universe pageant is to aspiring models — a chance to launch a spectacular career. Chef Uwe is especially proud of the sheer number of competitions the guild organises annually. "Other countries do one contest in four years. We do four in one year."

He is currently focussed on the successful implementation of a milliondirham scholarship programme that the guild has launched in association the International Centre for Culinary Arts. The scholarship occupied Chef Uwe's mind for years before it became a reality. "It's a conversation I started a long time ago with hotels and institutions. Hotels didn't want to invest because they were afraid that they would spend money on training young chefs and then lose the trained chefs to better salaries and better jobs. Others had similar concerns - that the chefs will use the training to migrate to another country after they spent so much to train them."



Chef Uwe personally had no such apprehensions about giving aspiring chefs a shot at a better life. "I feel very happy when an Indian or a Pakistani chef who trained under me calls me from Australia or Canada and says, "I am now an executive chef". That's my time and energy well spent."

The veteran of the culinary arts believes that the guild's philosophy mirrors his own — promote the white apron and the talents and culture of the host country. "The key reason why we are existing is to help young chefs."

When the guild came into existence, it was little more than a meeting place for chefs to enjoy a social gathering. Having evolved from there, it is today much larger than social events. Chef Uwe admits to having little tolerance for those who do not take the guild and its mission seriously. "Social activities are not our key driver. Some people even left us because



The only requirement to join the guild and its meetings is a white apron and commitment to it. You can be of any colour, any race, any gender they wanted more social events." Some who disrespected the guild's efforts were even asked by the straightforward Chef Uwe to not come back!

"The only requirement to join the guild and its meetings is a white apron and commitment to it. You can be of any colour, any race, any gender. We are chefs and that's all you need to be. But if you think a tennis game and a drink after that are more important than a meeting with your family of chefs, you are better off not being with us," he says with brutal honesty.

The guild has about 40 corporate partners and thousands of individual chef members. In its initial years, the guild chased chefs to become members. The focus has now shifted to corporate partners, who bring a lot more to the table and tend to stick around and support the training and upliftment of budding chefs and our competition teams. "In other countries, such guilds struggle to get partners. We have been lucky. We have at least 40 corporate partners every year. A majority renew their membership and some leave when they change their corporate strategy, which is fine."

On the guild's current menu is a strong team for the culinary Olympics next year. "The standards at the Olympics now are higher than they were a few years ago. Two years ago, we participated in the Olympics and made a great impression. We were the most

successful team in its history. We have to ensure we replicate that success."

Chef Uwe wants more individual participants, in addition to senior and junior teams, for these high-profile contests. Hectic jobs and busy schedules, however, leave little room for him, Andy and Alen to groom chefs for individual categories. "We are going slow on it. We want to ensure that when we do it, we are completely ready. Do less but do it properly." Planning for participation in the event has already begun, with resources being readied for it.

Chef Uwe draws strength from Alen Thong and Andy Cuthbert, the other two pillars of the guild. Different personalities, different nationalities and different strengths and weaknesses set the three apart from each other. The one common vein that runs through all of them, though, is passion for the profession. "Andy and I are sometimes the impulsive ones and we move fast. Alen is the sensible one. He tells us to stop and think before jumping. Oh yes, he also corrects our English! All our serious emails go to him for editing," laughs Chef Uwe.

With the three running the show so well at the guild, is there any apprehension that the Guild will sustain its strength after they retire? Chef Uwe believes otherwise. "We do have a lot of guys who are eager and they spend a lot of time here doing things. That said, it will be very difficult to replace any of us because we have been doing this for very long. We are tuned in mentally to each other and we don't need meetings to align our strategy."

Chef Uwe hopes that the guild will grow bigger and go places even when he hangs up his apron. "When I leave the UAE one day, I would like to see that the guild is ready to keep going and grow much bigger."

Speaking for the entire culinary industry of the UAE, we would like that day postponed indefinitely!





PAYING IT FORWARD

Uneasy lies Chef **Andy Cuthbert**'s head. Yours would too, if you had a whole generation of young chefs depending on you to spread their message. Not that the chairman of the Emirates Culinary Guild is complaining. He's found his calling in educating the young to educate themselves...

or Chef Andy Cuthbert, the future is not tense. In fact, it's rather rosy. Tasked with fulfilling the Emirates Culinary Guild's most cherished dream – a new generation of chefs with training of international standards, sharp skill sets, versatility and wide exposure – its

chairman has nothing but optimism for the future. He sits on the Young Chefs Global Development Team for Worldchefs as its chairman, playing mentor to budding chefs.

Chef Andy did not hesitate for even a second when in 2010, he was asked to

head the Billy Gallaghar Young Chefs Forum. A hectic day job and superbusy schedules failed to dissuade him from doing what he likes best – grooming apprentice chefs. "The development of young chefs and the betterment of our industry have always been our focus. For me, it was a natural area of focus. I love



working with young chefs and giving them new knowledge and a chance to network with seniors," says Chef Andy, who is the general manager of Madinat Jumeirah C&I, Jumeirah Hospitality and the Beach Club.

Over the past four years, the Australiaborn chef has enthusiastically played the role of the promoter of new talent. He has been focusing on expanding the number of young chef clubs in countries where the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) has presence. "With a global team of senior chefs from Worldchefs and a strong team of young chef ambassadors, we work on developing such clubs."

Recently, new clubs were opened in Jordan and Egypt. "Liberia is now reaching out to us to set up a club. We have gone from a handful of clubs some years ago to more than 25 globally now, all of which are under the Worldchefs country association and guided by the senior people of the association.

Due to Chef Andy's efforts, a number of green chefs have had the once-in-alifetime opportunity to visit the WACS Congress, a prestigious event that brings together the most renowned names of the culinary industry. He took such teams to the Congress in Chile, Korea and Norway so they could get firsthand experience of what awaits them in a successful career. More than 60 young chefs attended the Norway Congress. "This is a great opportunity for young people from around the world to make new friends and also experience cultures, countries and cuisines."

The efforts have steadily been paying off. With excellent rapport between junior and senior chefs, the young chef clubs of Hong Kong and Singapore are good enough to serve as role models for upcoming clubs. "I would like to see more senior chefs step forward and assist their younger counterparts. These kids need guidance and nurturing and they cannot

be expected to shine in the kitchen without the support of seasoned chefs."

One of the key reasons the guild has a strong focus on the upcoming generations of chefs is that youngsters are more open to new ideas than are older chefs, who tend to be more set in their ways. This makes trainee chefs a fertile ground for the guild to plant the seeds of best practices for the kitchen, such as wastage minimisation and environmental awareness. Chef Andy believes that his pet project can serve as the backbone of WACS' two big global initiatives - Feed the Planet and Chef Without Borders. While the first targets food sustainability for the planet in the face of depleting resources and burgeoning population, the second aims at narrowing the cultural and political gaps that exist between the culinary industries of different nations.

A great reminder of the power of food in bridging social and political gulfs came in the recent past. "A young chefs club was launched in Palestine. For us, it was a big deal. Even the United Nations heard about it. These small steps are highly motivating!"

Social media has been a big driver of the initiative for Chef Andy. Even as experienced chefs around him shy away building an online presence, he has embraced it whole-heartedly. "Social media plays a big role in our engagement process and our team works on this constantly, updating our blog, our Facebook page and the Worldchefs website with insights, stories and information. Every kid today has a smartphone. We want to use websites such as Facebook to reach out to young chefs." The team seems to be doing a great job of that. The Facebook page of WACS Young Chefs Club has a whopping 8,000 'likes'!

"Together with a global team of senior chefs from the Worldchefs and a strong team of Young chefs ambassadors



I would like to see more senior chefs step forward and assist their younger counterparts. These kids need guidance and nurturing and they cannot be expected to shine in the kitchen without the support of seasoned chefs

we work on the promotion of the development of young chefs clubs within the association under the guiding hand of the country senior association. We have a focus or our pillars that are hands on learning, networking, development of young chefs clubs globally and social media," he says.

According to Chef Andy, lack of travel opportunities prevents youngsters from spreading their wings and fully realising their potential. He hopes to put together a contest-cum-exchange programme under which apprentice chefs get a chance to learn the basics and the not-so-basics in kitchens of large food companies.

In the near term, however, he wants to develop the UAE young chefs club that was set up in 2013. "For the coming years, our vision is to really engage with young chefs of the country." The idea is in line with guild president Chef Uwe Micheel's vision of having UAE nationals forming the country's culinary team for international contests.

One of the three senior most members of the guild, Chef Andy joined in 1992 and competed in the 2003 and 2005 competitions before becoming a part of the committee organising the Salon Culinaire. "As our reputation grew, we were invited to help government entities, including the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing. That's how the young chef competition was started."

"As chairman of the Guild, my role is one of planning for the events and the logistics around those events, the focus on young chefs is our mandate and in our constitution, so the development of young chefs and the betterment of our industry has always been our focus so it is a natural area of focus for myself. I love working with the young chefs when given the chance, and to give them some new knowledge and to network with their peers."

He adds, "I believe as a team we have met our objectives of the guild as it is about the members and the guild and not the individual. I am proud to have been chairman for the past 16 years and it has been an incredible journey for myself and the guild. We are a respected player in the international competition circuit and our Emirates Salon Culinaire is one of the biggest in the world."

Talking of Uwe and Alen, he says, "We respect each other, we argue for the good of the guild, and once one of us commits we back each other 110% and we work for the guild and the members not for ourselves. You can begin by attending one of our meetings and you will see this first-hand. We are a combination of individuals and professionals that support each other's strength and weakness."

New talent apart, he shares the other goals of the guild's founders. "Building a national culinary team, a succession plan for the guild and its sustainability would be our focus in the coming years," he finishes.

Taking the future forward leaves Chef Andy's plate rather full!



DIRECTOR'S CUT

Strong dislike for injustice pushed **Alen Thong** to set up the Emirates Culinary Guild. After turning it into a supersuccessful show, he's now planning a sequel...

ood nourishes the body, the soul and for a precious few, a dream.
Alen Thong, one of the three main men behind the Emirates
Culinary Guild, knows this well. His dream was to help other chefs fulfil theirs. With the guild now more than a decade old, he's turned many dreams into realities.

The managing partner of John Holt Foods and the honorary member of the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) can easily take the credit for starting a revolution that has transformed the UAE culinary landscape

The guild's President Chef Uwe Micheel calls Alen the director of the show and its voice of reason. Alen doesn't disagree.

Not being good at "lateral relationships", he believes he's more the "behind-thescenes kind of guy".

Alen's fascination for food and his wish to develop the industry is not surprising. It's what kept him "off the streets and out of trouble" in his impressionable years in Liverpool. "Now, every time I see aspiring chefs do something at the Salon Culinaire and make something of themselves, it gives me a sense of personal satisfaction. The judges have seen chefs the world over and when they say 'Hey, I haven't seen that before', it makes all of us at ECG proud," says Alen.

III health has slowed him somewhat these days. But it hasn't changed the

passion that Alen felt for the guild when he founded it. It was a tradition of casual banter among chefs on weekends that seeded the idea of the guild in the 1990s.

Salon Culinaire, which is now synonymous with the ECG, was back then being organised by a large hotel chain. With some signs of favouritism marring the event, Alen became the reluctant leader of a breakaway faction of the UAE culinary industry. The guild received its charter into the WACS in 1994 and since then, it has become the voice of the UAE in the world kitchen. From bringing in professionalism into a hitherto unorganised industry to hosting some of the most prestigious events in the UAE to promoting good practices

and the local flavour, there's much to credit ECG for.

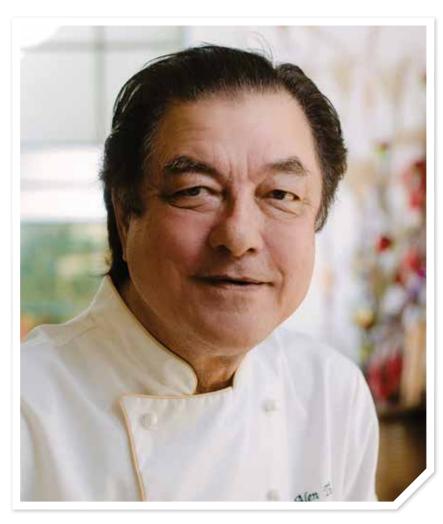
Alen, in his career spanning six decades – yes, he started working at the age of 15 – has seen both the kitchen and the business side of the foods industry. Last year, he was given a special award – the Gulfood Industry Outstanding Achievement Award – in recognition of his contributions. "It's very nice to be recognised. I can put that award on my Facebook page and brag to my family members about it but to be honest, what gives me a bigger high is seeing our chefs do well," he says with his signature candidness.

For Alen, the guild's biggest role is to bring together senior and junior chefs under one roof. "It saddens me to see that many young chefs who come for competitions don't even have their senior chefs' support. They pay 100 dirhams from their own pockets to participate. It's disheartening and we want to see that changing."

Language barrier is yet another problem that he wants the guild to help young chefs overcome. "Not being a native English speaker, they tend to feel somewhat lost at competitions. In such cases, we need good marshals to support them and guide them."

Alen recalls an incident at a competition that made him realise how acute the problem was. "There was this young chef who registered for both the beef and the fish and seafood categories of cooking. Once he was done with the beef dish, he was just waiting around for someone to tell him what to do next. He had no idea which kitchen to go to for fish and seafood!"

To a major extent, competitions can help bridge such gaps. Alen sees these as a platform for young and even experienced chefs to learn about new techniques and ingredients. "They learn that there exists a world beyond their own and that can be a great motivator."





I really don't have to be at the front of everything. There are other people who can make things happen and they know I am there and I will chase them to make things happen. Everyone I come in contact with treats me with respect and that's all that matters

In the guild's trinity, 72-year-old Alen is rarely on the forefront. He's happier giving direction to the guild's vision. "I really don't have to be at the front of everything. There are other people

who can make things happen and they know I am there and I will chase them to make things happen. Everyone I come in contact with treats me with respect and that's all that matters."

The same attitude is extended to business too. Alen admits that he derived more satisfaction from conquering guests' palates with his culinary skills than he did from winning boardroom battles. "Frankly, business is only about whether you made money or not. The only satisfying bit is when a customer orders something from you and is happy with the product or the service."

On a personal front, Alen is quite happy with the way life has turned out, health problems notwithstanding. "I have three children, which I would call my most precious possessions. My only ambition was to be respected in whatever I did and I have accomplished that." No chef worth his salt would argue with that!

February 2015 Gulf Gourmet

THE MILKY WAY TO MENA

Growing population, rising westernisation and increasing purchasing power and exposure have made the Middle East a good market for countries to export their products. As much as 10 percent of the cheese exported by the United States came to the region last year. **Nina Bakht Halal**, Director of the Middle East operations of **US Dairy Export Council**, tells **Gulf Gourmet** why this market is an important one for Uncle Sam..

Can you please tell us about USDEC and its history?

The USDEC is a non-profit, independent membership organization that represents the global trade interests of US dairy producers, proprietary processors and cooperatives, ingredient suppliers and export traders. USDEC was founded in 1995. Our mission is to help increase the demand for US dairy products and ingredients by securing

access for suppliers and helping them meet market needs that facilitate sales.

We do research and collaborate with members, the government, academia and related organisations whose goal is to ensure the health and vitality of the US dairy industry. USDEC, with its network of offices overseas, also works directly with global buyers and end-users to increase demand and innovation.

Dairy Management Inc, which is a farmer-funded marketing, promotion and research organization, is USDEC's primary financier. The United States Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service gives us support on market development and memberships help fund our trade policy initiatives.

How long have you been in the Middle East region?

We at Arab Marketing and Finance Inc have been the marketing representatives of the USDEC in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region since the late 1990s.

We are the intermediaries between importers of the MENA region and US suppliers. USDEC works to identify and resolve barriers that suppliers face while trying to access markets and we help them reach their goals. Our aim is to position US dairy companies as long-term, committed and preferred suppliers of high-quality, safe products to the MENA region. We are also tasked with increasing

341,000mt

In 2014, the United States was the largest exporter of cheese for the second straight year. Although the final data is yet to come, 11-month data shows that the US exported 341,000mt of cheese

trade knowledge about US dairy for food service, processing and retail products and increasing distribution.

What is the geographic reach of USDEC's Lebanon office?

The Middle East office of USDEC covers all countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council, such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, and Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco as also Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Iraq when the need arises.

Who are the competitors for the US in the dairy business?

European Union, New Zealand and Australia. Dairy product suppliers from these regions are competitors to our industry.

Which product categories are the highest and fastest selling?

When it comes to US products, skim milk powder, bulk cheese and butterfat are doing well in the MENA region. Bulk cheese is used by customers to make processed cheese but it is also used in cut and wrap operations for retail. We are also seeing an increased demand for speciality cheeses as awareness increases among food service professionals about the many varieties offered by the United States.

Have you noticed any changes in the hospitality industry in recent years?

The hospitality industry is looking for newer, high-quality products that can easily be integrated into their operations. Easy availability of the product and formats that are simpler to handle are other requirements these days. The industry has been adopting global trends in terms of use of natural foods and less ingredients, healthier foods and diet options, more innovation and fusion cooking and higher usage of sustainable foods. More and more chefs are participating in charity events. Casual dining and fast foods have become more commonplace and franchising has increased. These days, restaurants and hotels also have to



The hospitality industry is looking for newer, high-quality products that can easily be integrated into their operations. Easy availability of the product and formats that are simpler to handle are other requirements these days

innovate a lot in terms of menu to stay competitive and price points have become important. Also, advertising has increased a lot.

What were the highlights of USDEC's work last year?

In 2014, the United States was the largest exporter of cheese for the second straight year. Although the final data is yet to come, 11-month data shows that the US exported 341,000mt of cheese. New Zealand's 10-month data shows it exported 219,000mt until October, while the US had shipped 316,000mt. For us, this was a huge accomplishment because the US used to be a residual supplier but with our efforts, it is now the leading supplier to the world. In the 11 months of 2014 that the data is available for, 10 percent of the cheese that the US exported was to the MENA region.

Are there any major challenges you face in this market?

Unfortunately, tension in some parts of the region limits the ability of US suppliers to service the market without disruptions.

How are you adapting to the changing needs of the market?

We continue to work on pushing higher volumes of products into the market.

US suppliers are now focusing on giving individual, more personalised attention to major customers and assessing their needs. We are also trying to encourage suppliers to increase capacity to meet global needs.

Could you please tell us about your association with the Emirates Culinary Guild?

USDEC has been an active corporate member of the guild for more than seven years. For us, the guild is an important platform to get in touch with a large number of food service operators and chefs in the UAE and the rest of the Gulf region. It is a very efficient and useful platform to showcase US dairy products, especially cheese. Being a member of the ECG has opened up new opportunities for us. For the third year in a row, USDEC has participated in the Salon Culinaire. This gives a lot of chefs a chance to use US cheese in their creations. Our membership with the guild has also helped our marketing.

How did you decide to come to the MENA region?

In the mid to late 1990s, the USDEC identified the MENA region as a market with great potential for US dairy products. With limited arable land and water, the MENA region imports a majority of its food to meet demand. The growth in population, westernisation of culture and eating patterns, adoption of global consumption trends and rapidly increasing retail, food service and manufacturing sectors means the region will need to import more. The food manufacturing sector imports a major part of its raw materials. Higher purchasing power of consumers and their increasing exposure to the world are translating into the need for a wider variety of products of good quality.

We have been engaging with the various players in the markets here and the USDEC is now recognised as a leading US dairy entity for information on products and innovations.



Senor Pepe's Mexican Foods is a family owned and operated business established in 1989 by chef/restaurateur Burt Alfieri, with over fifty years experience in the food service industry. Under our watchword principal of "QUALITY FOREVER", we continue to grow and expand with the support of sons Dante & Marco, as well as many dedicated personnel, some of which have been with us for over 25 years. We take pride in producing the broadest range of fresh, low preservative, wheat flour & corn tortillas, taco shell & chip products. We also stock a complete range of high quality Senor Pepe's Sauces, Spices, Seasonings, Rubs, Chille's and Mexican Foods. Our recent additions of frozen, 100% Hass Avocado Guacamole and Chilled Shredded Monterey Jack and Cheddar Cheeses adds another level to our range of products. Look for more new imported and fresh produced products as we enter another phase of growth, moving into our new facility at DIP. Welcoming all professionals in the food service industry to visit, taste and compare our products.

Burt Alfieri & Sons.



February 2015 Gulf Gourmet





FROM MUSIC TO MUFFINS

Be it making music or making muffins, Chef Paul Ryan is a master of the arts. The Ireland-born executive chef of Fortnum & Mason recounts his journey from the melodious roads to the cool kitchens...

hat do you get when you cross music with marzipan? Chef Paul Ryan! The result is nothing less than spectacular. Here's a chef who can make music with his mastery over the culinary arts.

The executive chef of Fortnum & Mason in Dubai, Chef Paul handles a number of fine dining experiences ranging from

The Diamond Jubilee Tea Salon to The Fountain and The Gallery restaurants to the St Panras 'traveller's escape'. Orchestrating the whole show at the Fortnum & Mason comes easy to him. In another life, Chef Paul was a full-time musician, with the kitchen filling in his breaks from music. But the melody lover's loss ended up being the foodie's gain. The next time you enjoy the eclectic mix of menus at the Fortnum & Mason and bask

in the exclusive service, do remember to send a mental thanks to Chef Paul.

Born in Cork in Ireland, he cut his teeth on baking at a very young age while hanging around the kitchen with his mom. "As I grew older, I lost my way," recalls the 38-year-old chef, referring to his entry into music sometime in his formative years. "I started working with bands and touring with them. It was only

when I wasn't busy doing that would I enter whichever kitchen I could find and wash dishes."

Barely 16 at the time, he did this for three more years before a chance absenteeism of a chef gave him an opportunity to start cooking. "It kind of snowballed from there. It was never really a mission of mine. I started cooking at 19 and started taking it seriously at 35," he laughs.

Through music, Chef Paul got into sound engineering and backline engineering, travelling the world in the process. Life was only about washing dishes and working with bands for quite a while.

At the age of 22, he trained in Scotland at the Malmaison Hotel Company, before heading off after a couple of years to Australia, Malaysia and China to explore different styles of cooking through parttime jobs at the Sofitel Melbourne, MGM Grand Darwin, Kakadu National Park, The Melbourne Grand Prix and others. "Cooking was supplementing my travel. Inevitably, you pick up some amazing skills, whether you want to or not. You experience a lot of cultures and a lot of techniques."

Returning to Scotland at the end of 2001, he worked at the Bonham Hotel in Edinburgh, learning event-style catering there and then at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre and Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre. "I had done project management for bands. Being on the road appealed to me and I liked being in different kitchens rather than being stuck in one kitchen." Ending up in London two or three years later, he handled events catering for a company that had clients including Rolls Royce, Virgin Media and Hamleys toy stores.

Sometime around then, he decided it was time he looked at doing something on his own. Returning to Ireland, Chef Paul ran an events catering company in his hometown Cork for as many as five years. "I was managing two restaurants and a pub, along with the catering

business. I also worked on my own brand of sandwiches, wraps, salads, healthy ready meals and gluten-free foods."

When the economic crisis hit towards the end of 2008, banks started scaling down events. Chef Paul's business battled it out for a while, but when orders for catering dwindled, he decided to shut shop and move with his family to Dubai in 2010.

Chef Paul's first employer in the Emirates was the Jumeirah Beach Hotel in Dubai. He assisted the executive chef there in managing events and 20 outlets for a couple of years, moving out to Hilton Conrad Hotel in the beginning of 2013. "We opened the Hilton Conrad on Sheikh Zaved Road. It was a very interesting assignment, opening a 550-room hotel. The chef allowed me to experiment with the menu and we wanted to hire more restaurant chefs than hotel chefs. I went into the market looking for a whole new breed of chefs, which was great fun. You are asking guys who have worked in restaurants all their lives to come and work in a hotel. I knew it was going to be dramatic no matter what happens."

After spending about 18 months at Hilton Conrad, Chef Paul was approached by Fortnum & Mason. There was much talk about a Fortnum & Mason store opening in Dubai but no one knew if it was true. "Then, I got a call. I came and had a look at the property and really liked what I saw. A couple of months later, I joined here. It's been about six-seven months now."

How has life changed work-wise at the Fortnum & Mason after working with hotels? "To begin with, there are no rooms here and no room service. Also, when I make a decision about something, that's the end of it. The buck stops at me. It's a double-edged sword though. If I get it wrong then I am in big trouble. The good thing is that with 20 years of experience behind me, my decisions are usually informed decisions. I know what's going to work."

The culinary team here doesn't have the advantage of a big hotel but it does have the support of a 300-year-old brand. As for the difference in the clientele, Chef Paul doesn't quite feel it. "Dubai is very cosmopolitan. You can be at a McDonald's outlet and be standing next to someone wearing a 50,000-dirham watch. Or you could be at a Fortnum & Mason sitting next to a family on a package holiday. People know what they are coming here for and what they can expect. We get all kinds of guests here."

One of the offerings at Fortnum & Mason that Chef Paul is really proud of is scones. For him, it's fitting that a three-century-old brand would serve up a delicacy that was first written about over four centuries ago. "The scones are one of our cornerstones, our lean-on items. Here we make them three, sometimes four, times a day so they are always fresh. It's pretty much just out of the oven at any point."

Chef Paul loves the fact that scones are such a simple snack and are yet so delectable and tasty. "It's hard to mishandle it. Is it scone or scon? Is it from Ireland or England or Scotland? Is it triangular or round? The debate goes on and on and it's great to be a part of it."

In his years in the kitchen, Chef Paul has realised that using good ingredients is the most important aspect of cooking. "If you use good ingredients, like Anchor butter for example, all you need is a basic knowledge of what you are going to do to end up with something great."

As for the most basic ingredient in the recipe for success, it's questions, questions, questions. "Ask as many questions as you can. Life goes by very quickly and before you know it, you are a pastry chef and in a room full of chefs asking you the same questions you should have asked many many years ago. You want to be able to answer them," is his advice to aspiring chefs.

Listen to the voice of experience.



SCONES

INGREDIENTS

(makes approx 10 scones

Double zero flour	250g
(pasta flour widely available)	
Sugar	50g
Baking powder	15g
Or a pinch of salt	2g
Anchor butter	65g
Milk	100ml
Golden raisons	50g
Free-range egg, beaten, to glaze	1
Pre heat oven to 160	

METHOD



1. Place the Flour in a wide based mixing bowl



2. Add the sugar.....



3. The baking powder...



4. And the salt



5. Combine the ingredients while humming your favorite tune



6. Add in the butter



7. Get your hands in & work into a crumble



8. Add the milk



9. Begin to work together with a spoon



12. Add golden raisins to one half & combine



14. Dust a clean dry surface with flour & roll dough out until approximately 3cm



10. Then kneed until you have a smooth soft dough



13. And combine



15. Use a 6cm cutter to stamp out rounds





16. Brush the tops of the scones with the beaten egg. Bake for 14-16 minutes until risen and golden

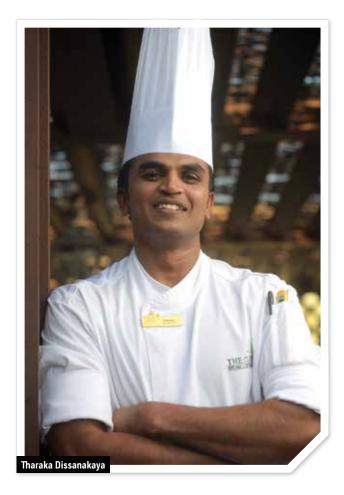
February 2015 Gulf Gourmet

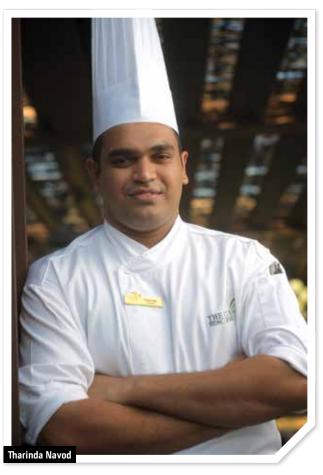
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ABU DHABI SHINING

This month we have two young men from Abu Dhabi's iconic landmark The Club, vying for the top prize at the Nestle Professional Golden Chef's Hat Competition – Season 3

he true mark of talent lies in the ability to deliver on quality and class at a short notice. The Club which is in the top 10, managed to not just stay in the game but also up the ante in the process of competing for glory. Chef Tharaka Dissanakaya from the hot kitchen and Chef Tharinda Navod

from the Pastry division teamed up to bring us a superb two-course meal using select Nestle products and letting their imagination take over. Here are their stories followed by their recipes.

Tharaka Dissanakaya

This 27-year-old Commis who grew up in

a village in the southern part of coastal Sri Lanka is one of three brothers born to a farmer father and a mother who's a homemaker. Two of these three boys ended up becoming chefs and it was his father who insisted that he go to Hotel School and complete his education before entering the job market.

February 2015 Gulf Gourmet



He worked in Sri Lanka for a few years with his final year as a chef in Nuwara Eliya before he came to Abu Dhabi. He's been here for 3 years and his only dream is to become a chef who's renowned for his craft. He was recently promoted at his work place on the heels of him winning a Silver Medal in Australian Lamb 5 Course Gourmet Dinner at La Cuisine by SIAL 2014 in Abu Dhabi.

Talking of the main course Chef Tharaka created for this competition, he says he's

left no stone unturned to ensure that the judges take note of his hot dish. He's even used rabbit meat to add an exotic touch to his dish. Calling his dish 'Plat du Jour' he's combined lamb and rabbit to create an ensemble that is impressive to look and even tastier to dig into.

He says that this is his first tryst with some of the products provided for the competition and that they are all very good products. His ends the interview by thank his Executive Chef Peter de Kauwe for "pushing me to compete and giving me the confidence to pursue excellence in the klitchen".

Tharinda Navod

Chef Tharinda is also a fellow Sri Lankan but one who grew with the sights, smells and the sounds of a city. He calls Colombo his home where his parents and younger sister live. His dad works in the govt. sector while his mom is a homemaker.

The idea of becoming a chef was



instilled in him by a cousin who joined the hotel industry. Idea soon turned to inspiration when he realised that experimenting with food, trying to be creative and focus on decorations is what makes him happy. "The obvious choice was to become a pastry chef."

He joined an intensive hotel school programme for 3 months followed by a year's training at the Yala Village National Park. The 25-year-old chef says that after three years he decided to venture abroad and he chose Qatar, where he worked at an Indian hotel for a year and a half. He went back to Sri Lanka for another 18 months before joining The Club in Abu Dhabi in 2013. Chef Tharinda is no rookie when it comes to competitions.

Some of his achievements include Gold Medal in Friandes, Petit Fours, Pralines and Nougatine at La Cuisine by SIAL 2013 in Abu Dhabi; Silver Medal in Friands, Petit Fours, Pralines and Nougatine at La Cuisine by SIAL 2014 in Abu Dhabi and a Bronze Medal in Four Plates of Dessert at La Cuisine by SIAL 2014 in Abu Dhabi. For the current challenge he created what he calls 'Assiette d' Nestle'.

This includes some bold creations such as the tomato and basil jelly. He says his wins are all thanks to the support of people like Executive Chef Peter de Kauwe and his Pastry Chef Kamil. And of course, Nestle Professional for giving them the opportunity to compete, learn and provide media coverage.

ASSIETTE D' NESTLE

SERVES 4

C	L C			Mousse
I HINC	nv i	nnrn	iare i	VINIIEED

Docello® Chocolate Mousse	100gr
Fresh Whipping Cream	200 1
Popping Candy	20gr
Kit Kat® Mix In	5 gr
Raspberry Pannacotta with a dash of	of Rose
Docello® Panna Cotta	50gr
Raspberry Puree	20gr
Rose Extract	
Fresh Whipping Cream	150ml
Gelatine	2gr
Coconut Crème Brulee	
Docello® Crème Brûlée	50gr
MAGGI® Coconut Powder	50gr
Milk	200gr
Fresh Whipping Cream	160gr
Iomato Basil Jelly	
Nestle Tomato Puree	50ml
Castor Sugar	20gr
Water	150gr
Gelatine	10gr
Fresh Basil	2gr
Passionfruit Sauce	
Fresh Passion fruit Pulp	30ml
Castor Sugar	100gr
Pinch of Salt	
Water	150ml
Pistachio Sponge	
Pistachionosa	40gr
Bakers Flour	15gr
Egg White	50gr
Egg Yolk	30gr
Sugar Castor	40gr
Garnish	
Seasonal Fresh Fruits	60gr
Melted Dark Chocolate	
Pistachio Sponge	1pc

To make Chocolate Mousse

Kit Kat® Mix In

- Temper Chocolate for Decoration and leave in Kettle
- Whisk together Chocolate Mousse powder and Liquid Cream together by hand and then transfer to machine to whisk for further 5 minutes
- Mix in the crunchy Chocolate and transfer to bowl
- · Refrigerate until required

To make Raspberry Panna Cotta

 Mix the Raspberry Puree and Panna Cotta powder together and whisk in the Liquid Cream



- Add the Rose extract to the mix and bring to the boil
- Take of fire and transfer into desired mould for refrigerating.

To make Crème Brulee

- Mix Coconut Milk Powder, Milk and Liquid Cream together
- Put Crème Brulee powder into bowl
- Bring to the Coconut Milk mix to the boil and whisk in the Crème Brulee Powder
- Continue whisking for approximately 2 minutes, after having taken off the pan from the stove
- Transfer into mould and refrigerate

To make the Tomato Jelly

- Blend Tomato Puree and Fresh Basil together
- Make warm simple syrup and add the blended tomato mix and Gelatine together and continue cooking to reduce the water content
- Pass through fine muslin cloth into flat tray to form thin layer and leave to set in refrigerator

To make the Micro Sponge

- Mix all ingredients together and transfer into Syphon
- Add the Gas and shake well
- Pipe into disposable plastic cup and cook in microwave for 30 seconds
- Remove and leave to cool
- Cut all fruits as desired and leave in refrigerator
- Pour a part of Chocolate onto Stencil and leave to harden
- Pour tempered chocolate into piping bag and pipe onto plate as desired

Assembly

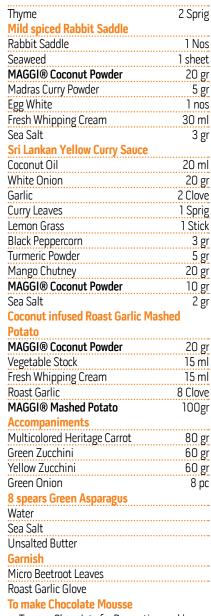
- Sprinkle crushed Kit Kat Mix and place on the plate as illustrated
- With the aid of two Dessert spoons quenelle the Chocolate Mousse and place on the crushed Kit Kat Mix
- Cut Gelatine Sheet as desired and place on half of the piped Chocolate
- Unmould the Crème Brulee and place on the Gelatine Sheet in the center of the plate
- Unmould the Raspberry Pannacotta and place on top of Creme Brulee
- Glace Fruits and arrange on Crème Brulee
- Spoon the Passionfruit Sauce and garnish with Chocolate Rectangle and Tulip

PLAT DU JOUR

SERVES 4

Tomato crusted Lamb Cutlet

Tomato crusted Lamb Cutlet	
Lamb Rack (Gross Weight)	1600 gr
Dijon Mustard	5 gr
Rosemary	4 Sprin
Thyme	6 Caria
Sea Salt	G or
Black Peppercorn	4 gr
Olive Oil	60 ml
Tomato Crust	60
Tomato Crust	
Nestle Tomato Puree	60 gr
Grated aged Parmesan Cheese	15 gr
MAGGI® Mashed Potato	15 gr
Panko Breadcrumbs	20 gr
Chili Chocolate Jus	
Chef® Veal Jus	200 gr
Docello® Chocolate Mousse	30 gr
Thai Red Chili	
Shallot	50 gr
Rosemary	2 Sprig



- Temper Chocolate for Decoration and leave in Kettle
- Whisk together Chocolate Mousse powder and Liquid Cream together by hand and then transfer to machinTo make the Tomato Crust
- Drain well the Tomato Coulis in fine Muslin cloth
- Mix together the Mashed Potato powder, grated Parmesan Cheese, and Panko crumb to form a sandy texture
- Then mix in the drained Tomato to form a moist crumb

Lamb Rack

Trim the Lamb Rack and portion is



illustrated

- Make marinade of Mustard, Rosemary, Thyme, Salt, Pepper and Olive Oil
- Rub the marinade on the Lamb cuts
- In a Hot pan sear the meat and roll in Tomato crust
- Cook in Oven on 180C for 8 minutes

To make the Chocolate Sauce

- Bring to the boil the Veal Jus, Rosemary, Thyme and Shallot
- Reduce Heat and continue simmering with the addition of the Chili
- Finally whisk in the Chocolate Mousse
 Powder and cook till consistency has arisen
- Pass through sieve and season to taste

To make Rabbit Saddle

- Make marinade by mixing together the Coconut Milk Powder, Curry Powder and Salt
- In a robot coupe make farcie of Rabbit Meat, Egg White, Fresh Cream and Salt
- Take a part of Farcie and roll into thin tubes and wrap in Nori Sheet (Seaweed)leaving behind a little of the farcie
- Rub the deboned Rabbit Saddle with the marinade and spread the remainder Farcie on the Saddle
- Place the two tubes into the center of the Saddle and roll up tightly in Cling wrap
- Steam for approximately 15 mts and sear in frypan

To make the Curry Sauce

- Heat Oil in Saucepan and fry lightly the Onion and Garlic until pungent
- Add the Curry Leaf, Lemon Grass and Peppercorn and continue cooking for another couple of minutes
- Spoon in the Curry and Turmeric Powders and Cook for a couple of minutes core

- Then add the Mango Chutney and cook for further few minutes
- Meanwhile dilute the Coconut Milk Powder in 50 ml Cold Water
- Finally add the Milk mixture to the saucepan with Curry mixture and cook for a few more minutes to ensure sauce is cooked
- Remove from stove and blend to smooth sauce and season to taste

To make the Mashed Potato

- Preheat Oven to 240C and roast Garlic Cloves (in Skin)
- Whisk Coconut Milk Powder, Vegetable Stock and Cream together in a Saucepan and bring to Boil
- Peel half the roasted Garlic Cloves and mash finely and add to the liquid
- Take off the stove and whisk in the Mashed Potato Powder
- Bring back to the Stove and continue cooking until desired consistency arises

Cooking Vegetables

- Cook the Carrots in Salted Cold Water until done and Drain
- Bring Water to boil, cook the Zucchini, Asparagus and Green Onion
- Toss all the Vegetables in Melted Butter

With the aid of 2 Spoons, make quenelles of

- With the aid of 2 Spoons, make quenelles of Mashed Potato and place on the serving plate
- Portion the Lamb and place on plate as shown in picture
- Slice rabbit Saddle and arrange on plate as shown in picture
- Arrange Vegetables on plate as per picture
- Garnish with Micro Beetroot Leaves and Roasted Garlic Clove
- Serve accompanying Sauces with the plate



STANDING TALL

Christopher Zerbe, Head Chef and Operations Manager at The Cycle Bistro shares his culinary journey with Jehan Nizar and tells us why working in a standalone restaurant has afforded him the creative freedom he never had in a five-star kitchen

ooking, as with most other forms of art, is just not one of those things that is meant to go according to plan and the same can be said of Chef Christopher Zerbe's career. For many an aspiring Commis, working your way up the ranks to become the executive chef of a fine dining five-star restaurant is the ultimate star in your culinary career, but this is a dream that Zerbe who is the Head Chef and Operations Manager at Dubai Sports City-based The Cycle Bistro firmly says, "he's over it".

So why did an undeniably talented chef who had put in the time at some of the world's finest kitchens in iconic properties ranging from The Ritz-Carlton St. Thomas to the Jumeirah Beach Hotel choose to not go down the fine-dining route and settle for the conventional

recipe for success? "Well for starters, I've done enough of it in my career. I wouldn't ever go back to doing it. It's a young man's game for one. I'm 36 now, fine-dining is what you do when you're in your twenties. You can work for 20 hours a day, sleep for two hours, party for an hour and still get up and go to work and do it all over again. You do that six-seven days a week. You're more resilient in your twenties. When you get to being in your mid- to late- thirties, the physical strain of cooking and working in hotel kitchens catches up with you. We stand in one place for hours at a time, we stand on concrete floors, we pick up 50kg items regularly, we don't sleep enough and we tend to eat poorly because we don't sit down long enough to do so."

And while all of these could well be driving factors in leading him to never

look back, the real reason behind why he chose to leave behind what he knew best and take up his present role as the Head Chef and Operations Manager at The Cycle Bistro is the degree of creative license he enjoys. He puts this into perspective when he says, "I'm very fortunate because I'm probably one of the few chefs in the city who pretty much gets to do whatever I want. I can literally cook whatever I feel like that day. It's a seasonal menu but I have a lot of people who just come in asking me to whip up something and I'll do it."

It doesn't hurt that Zerbe shares a great rapport with his employers and owners of the restaurant Khalid Al Zarooni and Sam Sayadan. In fact, the paleo positioning of The Cycle Bistro has a lot to do with Al Zarooni, who is also the CEO and President of Dubai Sports

City and has enjoyed a paleo diet from about 2007. Al Zarooni, incidentally, was educated in the US and perhaps felt an immediate degree of familiarity with Zerbe for just this reason. On their first meeting, he asked Zerbe if he could make him sourdough blueberry pancakes but grain-free, a request which was carried out the very next day. The building blocks for their professional relationship were laid that day.

As with most of the best chefs in the world, cooking lies deep in Zerbe's blood and he speaks fondly of his grandmother who was a professional chef back home in the United States. Although he did receive formal training at the New England Culinary Institute in Burlington, Vermont, he is quick to say he hated it because he had already learned most of the stuff on the job, over the years. He also gives his insight into the steep cost of going to culinary school, which in his opinion isn't justified because, "to go to culinary school in the States is about \$52,000 and you go to school for only six months and then leave for six months, and come back for six months, so in reality you're only doing a year's worth of college and it costs that much."

His first professional internship though is where the magic started when he was placed in the prestigious Deer Valley — the number one ski resort in North America for food and beverage. He loved the place so much that he didn't want to go back and decided to stay on. One job led to another job, and he landed a job in the Caribbean. Ever in search of more stimulating pastures, Zerbe moved to Dubai with not much convincing required on the part of a close friend who had already taken the plunge.

Dubai has been a training ground of sorts for Zerbe and he says that within the food industry it is common knowledge that if one wants to work in East Asia, you need to break into the market in Dubai first. Since his ultimate goal has always been to live in Thailand it was a no-brainer. It helped





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of course that his first gig was at the well-established Jumeirah Beach Hotel, where he worked in three different restaurants over a short span. From the erstwhile Marina seafood restaurant to the much-loved Argentinean steakhouse La Parilla and finally a surprise shift to the banqueting side of the business, nothing came easy for him, but he was a willing and enthusiastic team player.

Unlike a lot of senior names in the business, Zerbe maintains that he has always been willing to roll up his sleeves and get his hands dirty. There is also an unmistakable sense of humility when he says, "I know where I started and I'll never forget it." This becomes evident when he speaks with affection of his staff in the kitchen and how he surprised all of them when on his first day in the kitchen at the Jumeirah Beach Hotel he whipped up a home style South

Indian prawn curry with Basmati rice (cooked the old-fashioned way and not in a steam oven) for his hungry team of largely Asian commis chefs.

As with most chefs who have earned their culinary stripes the hard way, Zerbe firmly reiterates that there is no substitute for work. He says he learned the tricks of the trade from numerous restaurants and the desire to learn. He adds that while the internet is a great tool if used constructively, a lot of chefs rely solely on it and this is their downfall. And then of course comes the natural process of absorbing and learning by simply being in the kitchen. Zerbe himself has stacks and stacks of writing pads with his own shorthand notes, arranged in chronological order, from all the restaurants that he's worked in. He is so systematic that he says if someone were to ask whether he had recipes from August 2002, he'd not only know exactly where it was but would also be able to read it.

Tough love seems to be an unconscious philosophy that governs Zerbe's working style and this becomes evident when he urges up and coming chefs to, "Earn it. Earn respect. If you want the job and the pay cheque you gotta earn it. You gotta work your way up the ranks, suck it, keep your mouth closed, keep your ears open, keep your head down and work hard. Stop thinking you can figure everything out on your smartphone. There are chefs who have become legends who didn't have Google. How did they do it? They studied, they travelled, they learned, they read, they practised. Cook at home, there's no excuse - none whatsoever. So many people are just getting takeout food because it's easy. Master seven dishes and those seven dishes are your foundation. Each of these dishes teaches you a fundamental technique that you can pay thousands of dollars to learn or you could just learn these seven dishes." And with a repertoire like his to back him, maybe Zerbe really is on to something with that bit of advice.













Golden Chef's Hat winners receive their awards

s revealed last month, the season 2 of the Nestle Professional Golden Chefs Hat competition was won by youngsters Ruchi Shueng-Li Thammitage and Fodil Baghal of Madinat Jumeirah. They won among 10 teams that competed after a three panel jury of chefs certified by the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) adjudged the competition dishes.

Madinat Jumeirah, followed by Marriot Al Jaddaf and Season 1 winners Radisson Blu Deira were the top three teams and the winners were all given certificates and medals in front of a huge gathering of senior chefs from around the country. Nestle Professional, the sponsors of the contest, was represented by Brand Manager Najoud Al-Jabri and Chef Wayne Gebhardt. Here are the images from the prize distribution ceremony.

If you are interested in being one of the 10 teams this year, email amaresh@gulfgourmet.net. The chefs of each competing team will be interviewed in this magazine and their competition recipes featured every month.









THE GUILD MEET

he January edition of the Emirates Culinary Guild meeting was hosted by Chef Rami and his team in Sharjah. The event saw a large turnout of decision making chefs, young chefs and corporate partners of the Guild. It was also the venue for the prize distribution to the winners of the Nestle Professional Golden Chefs Hat competition. The networking event was one of 10 such events that happen each year and was a success. Here are images from the meeting.



















BRIEFS OF THE CLASSES FOR ENTRY

THE EMIRATES SALON CULINAIRE

RESUME OF CLASSES FOR ENTRY

- 01 Cake Decoration Practical by MasterBaker
- 02 Wedding Cake Three-Tier-Pristine by IFFCO
- 03 Four Plates of Dessert -Docello Nestle
- 04 Pastry Showpiece
- O5 Bread Loaves and Showpiece by Masterbaker
- O6 Friandises Petites Four Pralines Nougatines By Masterbaker
- 07 Chocolate Carving Showpiece by Seville by IFFCO
- 08 Fruit & Vegetable Carving Showpiece by Barakat
- 09 Open Showpiece
- 10 Five-Course Gourmet Dinner Menu by Meat & Livestock Australia
- 11 Four-Course Vegetarian Menu by U.S. Dairy Export Council
- 12 Tapas, Finger Food and Canapés by U.S. Dairy Export Council
- 13
- 14 An Arabian Feast
- 15 Individual Ice Carving
- 16 Ice Carving Team Event
- 17 Practical Fruit & Vegetable Carving by Barakat
- 18 Dressed Lamb Practical Butchery by Meat & Livestock Australia
- 19 Arabic Mezzeh Practical Cookery by Rahma by IFFCO
- 20 Fish & Seafood Practical Cookery by Mitras
- 21 Beef Practical Cookery by Meat & Livestock Australia
- 22 Emirati Cuisine Practical Cookery – Shama by IFFCO
- 23 HUG Savoury Creations
- 24 HUG Sweet Creations
 The following two classes (25 &

26) are for entry only by those

- competing for the Young Chef of the Year trophy.
- 25 Dressed Chicken by Sadia & Dressed Fish
- 26 Ovo-Lacto Vegetarian Three-Course Menu - by U.S. Dairy Export Council.
- 27 Chicken Practical Cookery by Sadia
- 28 Breakfast & Brunch Practical cookery- by Convotherm Manitowoc

Class 01: Cake Decoration — Practical by MASTERBAKER



- 1. Two hours duration.
- Decorate a pre-baked single cake base of the competitor's choice.
- The cake base must be a minimum size of 30cm X 30cm or 30cm Diameter.
- 4. The cake can be brought already filled ready to decorate.
- 5. All decorating ingredients must be edible and mixed on the spot.
- 6. No pre-modelled garnish permitted.
- 7. Chocolate and royal icing can be pre-prepared to the basic level, e.g.. Tempered chocolate can be brought.
- 8. Competitors must provide all ingredients, cake base, utensils, and small equipment required.
- A standard buffet table is provided for each competitor to work upon.
- 10. Water, electricity and refrigeration might not be available.

- 11. All cakes will be displayed until the end of the Salon and will be disposed of by the organizer.
- 12. The cake will be tasted as part of judging.
- 13. The Judges will cut the cake.

PASTRY DISPLAYS

Class 02: Three-Tier Wedding Cake Pristine by IFFCO – vanilla and chocolate Cake mix must be used. Supplied by IFFCO

PRISTINĒ _{IFFCO}↑ عفا

- 1. All decorations must be edible and made entirely by hand.
- 2. Pillars or stands may be inedible but, unless decorated by hand, must be plain and unadorned.
- 3. Fine, food-quality wiring is allowed for the construction of flowers and the like, but must be properly wrapped and covered with flower tape or paste.
- 4. Royal icing, pastillage, pulled sugar, etc., may be used in the construction, but the finished display must not be dependent on these items.
- 5. The bottom layer of the cake must be edible.
- 6. The cake will be tasted by the judges.
- 7. Inedible blanks may be used for the two top layers.
- 8. Typewritten description and recipes are required.
- 9. Maximum area w60 cm x d75 cm.
- 10. Maximum height 75cm (including socle or platforms)

Class 03: Four Plates of

Dessert by Docello Nestle



- 1. Prepare four different desserts, each for one person.
- 2. Each dessert presented singly on an appropriated plate.
- 3. Presentation to include a minimum of one hot dessert (presented cold).
- 4. Typewritten description and recipes are required.
- Tasting will be part of the judging process if deemed necessary to determine quality and authenticity.
- 6. Maximum area w90 cm x d75 cm
- 7. One of the plates must use **DOCELLO** as the main ingredient.

Class 04: Pastry Showpiece

- 1. Freestyle display.
- 2. Edible media, marzipan, pastillage, sugar, pulled-sugar, croquant, etc., may be used, singly or in mixed media.
- 3. Written description required.
- 4. Maximum area w90 x d75cm.
- 5. Maximum height 90cm (including base or socle).

Class 05: Baked Goods and Baked Bread Showpiece by MASTERBAKER



- The entire exhibit must comprise baked goods and must include the following:
- 2. A baked bread showpiece.
- 3. Two types of bread loaves (competitor's choice) minimum of one piece of each loaf to be displayed.
- 4. Two types of bread roll (competitor's choice) minimum two pieces of each roll to be displayed.
- 5. Two types of baked sweet

- breakfast items (competitor's choice) minimum two pieces of each item to be displayed.
- 6. Two types of baked savoury/salt breakfast items (competitor's choice) minimum two pieces of each item to be displayed.
- Doughs prepared and breads baked at place of work and brought to the competition for judging.
- 8. Tasting will be part of the judging criteria
- 9. Typewritten recipes are required.
- 10. Maximum area w90 x d75cm

Class 06: Friandises Petites Four Pralines Nougatines by MASTERBAKER



- Present the exhibit to include a small showpiece; the showpiece is for effect only and will not be judged as part of the class.
- 2. Exhibit eight varieties.
- Six pieces of each variety (48
 pieces total) plus one extra
 piece of each variety on a
 separate small platter for
 judges' tasting.
- 4. Freestyle presentation.
- 5. Written description mentioning the theme is required.
- Typewritten recipes are required.
- 7. Maximum area w90 cm x d75 cm.

ARTISTIC DISPLAYS

Class 07: Chocolate Carving Showpiece- by Seville by IFFCO



- 1. Free-style presentation.
- 2. No frames or supports.
- 3. Natural colouring is allowed.

- 4. Minimal glazing is allowed.
- 5. No molded work.
- 6. Maximum area: w80 cm x d75 cm.
- 7. Maximum height 75cm (including base or socle).

Class 08: Fruit & Vegetable Carving Showpiece by BARAKAT QUALITY PLUS



- 1. Freestyle presentation.
- 2. Light framing is allowed, but the construction of the piece must not depend upon it.
- 3. Maximum area w60 cm x d75 cm.
- Maximum height 55 cm (including base or socle).

Class 09: Open Showpiece

- 1. Freestyle presentation.
- Only showpieces made of edible food material will be accepted for adjudication.
- 3. Maximum area w90 cm x d75 cm.
- 4. Maximum height 75 cm. (including base or socle).

GASTRONOMIC CREATIONS

Class 10: Five-Course Gourmet Dinner Menu by MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA



- 1. Present a plated five-course gourmet meal for one person
- 2. One of the appetisers for the meal must contain Australian Lamb as the main ingredient.
- 3. The meal to consist of:
- A cold appetiser,
- ➤ A soup,
- > A hot appetiser,
- ➤ A main course with its garnish
- ➤ A dessert.





- 4. Hot food presented cold on appropriate plates.
- 5. Food coated with aspic or clear gelatin for preservation.
- 6. Total food weight of the 5 plates should be 600/700
- 7. Typewritten description and typed recipes required
- 8. Maximum area w90 cm x d75

Class 11: Four-Course Vegetarian Menu by U.S. DATRY EXPORT COUNCIL



- Present a plated four-course vegetarian meal for one
- 2. Suitable for dinner service
- 3. The meal consist of:
- > An appetizer
- ➤ A soup
- A main course
- > A dessert
- 4. To be prepared in advance and displayed cold on appropriate plates.
- 5. No meat, chicken, seafood or fish to be used, (meat-based gelatin glaze to enhance presentation is accepted).
- 6. Ovo-Lacto products are allowed.
- 7. Two types of AMERICAN U.S. CHEESES only must be used in the creation of the menu.
- 8. Total food weight of the four plates should be 600/700
- 9. Typewritten descriptions and recipes required.
- 10. Maximum area w75cm x d75cm.

Class 12: New Arabian Cuisine

- 1. One dish must contain dates as a major component.
- 2. One dish must contain

- sustainable UAE fish as a major component.
- 3. Present a plated five-course gourmet menu for one person.
- 4. Free style presentation.
- 5. All menu ingredients used must be those found in the Arabian Gulf area.
- 6. To be prepared in advance, and presented cold on appropriate plates.
- 7. Food coated with aspic or clear gelatine for preservation.
- 8. Dishes are to be presented in an up-to-date setting and decoration.
- 9. The meal to comprise:
- A cold appetiser
- A soup
- A hot appetiser
- A main-course with appropriate garnish
- A dessert.
- 10. Total food weight for the entire menu should be 600/700 gms.
- 11. Typewritten description and recipes are required.
- 12. Maximum area 90w cm x 75d cm

Class 12: Presentation of Tapas, Finger Food and Canapés by U.S. DAIRY **EXPORT COUNCIL**



U.S. Dairy USA Export Council

- Exhibit eight varieties.
- Six pieces of each variety (total 48 pieces)
- Four hot varieties.
- 4. Four cold varieties.
- 5. Two types of American (U.S.) cheeses only must be used in the creation of these dishes.
- 6. Hot food presented cold
- 7. Food coated with aspic or clear gelatin for preservation
- 8. Presentation on suitable plate/s or platter/s or receptacles.

- 9. Eight pieces should correspond to one portion.
- 10. Name and ingredient list (typed) of each variety required.
- 11. Maximum area 60cm x 80 cm.

Class 14. An Arabian Feast

- 1. Present a traditional Arabian wedding feast as it would be served at a five-star hotel in the UAE.
- 2. Suitable for 10 people.
- 3. Free-style presentation
- 4. The presentation to comprise the following dishes (both cold food and hot food presented cold).
- 5. Six cold mezzeh
- 6. Three hot mezzeh.
- 7. A whole Ouzi presented with rice and garnish
- 8. A chicken main course (Emirati Cuisine)
- 9. A fish main course (Emirati Cuisine)
- 10. A lamb main course
- 11. A vegetable dish
- 12. Three types of kebabs, one of chicken, one of lamb, one of beef, each with appropriate accompaniments.
- 13. One hot dessert (presented cold)
- 14. Three cold desserts.
- 15. Two of the above desserts (competitors choice) must be typically Emirati
- 16. Only the above dishes are to be presented, no other dishes are to be added.
- 17. Maximum available space for presentation is 180 cm x 75 cm.
- 18. Competitors must ensure their exhibit is presented neatly so as to fit the available space

PRACTICAL ARTISTIC

Class 15: Individual Ice Carving

- 1. Freestyle.
- 2. 90 minutes duration.
- 3. Hand carved work from one large block of ice (provided by the organisers).
- 4. Competitors to use own hand-tools and gloves.
- 5. A non-slip mat is mandatory.
- Before the competition starts, competitors will be allowed 30 minutes to arrange and temper the ice block.
- 7. The use of power tools is forbidden.

Class 16: Ice Carving Team Event

- 1. Freestyle.
- 2. Two persons per team
- 3. 120 minutes duration.
- 4. Hand-carved work from three large block of ice (provided by the organisers).
- 5. Competitors to use own handtools and gloves.
- 6. Non-slip mats are mandatory.
- Great care must be taken with health and safety considerations. If an exhibit becomes in any way unstable or dangerous to competitors or public, it will be dismantled and destroyed by the organizers.
- 8. The use of power tools is forbidden.

Class 17: Practical Fruit & Vegetable Carving by BARAKAT QUALITY PLUS



- 1. Freestyle.
- 2. 120 minutes duration.
- Hand carved work from competitor's own fruit\ vegetables.
- 4. Competitors to use own hand-tools and equipment.
- 5. No power tools permitted.
- 6. Pre-cleaned, peeled material is allowed, but pre-sliced/carved

- will result in disqualification.
- 7. Each competitor will be supplied with a standard buffet table on which to work.

Class 18: Dressed Lamb -Practical Butchery by MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA



- 1. Prepare a whole, fresh, dressed lamb carcass into various ready-to-cook joints and pieces, some as required by the organisers, the others to competitor's choice. A training/demonstration will be provided by MLA prior to Salon event
- 2. Make a presentation of the finished cuts and off-cuts for exhibiting to the judges.
- Cuts/joints can be suitable for foodservice or suitable for a retail butchery display.
- 4. Organisers will supply the dressed lamb for this class.
- Each competitor will have one banquet table (supplied by the organisers) on which to work.
- 6. No power tools permitted.
- Competitors to supply their own:
- Tools and knives
- Twine or netting
- RED cutting boards (this is a municipality requirement and will be strictly enforced)
- Garnishing
- Display trays
- Sundries
- 8. Time allowed: two hours
- All tools and sundries will be inspected to ensure that they are hygienically suitable for food use.
- 10. Cuts required by the organisers are:
 - a) Neck slices or Neck boned.
 - b) 1 x shoulder, boned and rolled, tied or netted ready for roasting.

- c) 3 pieces shoulder chops.
- d) Spare ribs.
- e) 1 x 8 rib Frenched rack.
- f) Mid-loin chops from a short loin
- g) 1 x Eye of Loin.
- h) 1 x Tunnel-boned leg tied or netted for roasting.
- i) 1 x Seam-boned leg trimmed into its 4 primal cuts plus its bone-in shank.

NOTES ON THE PRACTICAL COOKERY CLASSES

These notes pertain to all practical cookery classes. They must be read in combination with the brief of the class entered.

- The preparation, production and cooking skills of each competitor must be demonstrated during her/his time in the kitchen.
- 2. Waste and over-production will be closely monitored.
- 3. There is a 5-point penalty deduction for wastage or overproduction.
- 4. Timing is closely monitored.
- 5. There is a 2-point penalty deduction for each minute that the meal is overdue.
- 6. All food items must be brought to the Salon in hygienic, chilled containers: Thermo boxes or equivalent.
- Failure to bring food items in a hygienic manner will result in disqualification.
- 8. All dishes are to be served in a style equal to today's modern presentation trends.
- 9. Portion sizes must correspond to a three-course restaurant meal.
- 10. Dishes must be presented on individual plates with appropriate garnish not exceeding 250g total food weight excluding sauces.
- 11. Unless otherwise stated, competitors must supply their own plates/bowls/platters



- with which to present the food.
- 12. Competitors must bring with them all necessary mise-enplace prepared according to WACS guidelines in the hot kitchen discipline (www. worldchefs.org).
- 13. Competitors are to provide their own pots, pans, tools and utensils.
- 14. All brought appliances and utensils will be checked for suitability.
- 15. The following types of prepreparation can be made for the practical classes:

EXPLANATION (what foods are permitted to be brought into the kitchen)

- a) Salads cleaned, washed, not mixed or cut.
- b) Vegetables cleaned, peeled, washed, not cut, must be raw.
- c) Fish may be scaled and filleted and the bones cut up.
- d) Meat may be de-boned and the bones cut up
- e) Stocks basic stock, not reduced, not seasoned, no additional items (garlic,etc.) Hot and cold samples must be available for the judges.
- f) Pastry sponge, biscuit, meringue – can be brought in but not cut.
- g) Basic pastry recipes can be brought in weighed out but no further processing.
- h) Fruit pulps fruit purees may be brought in but not as a finished sauce.
- i) Decor elements 100% must be made in the kitchen.
- 16. No pre-cooking, poaching etc. is allowed.
- 17. No ready-made products are allowed.
- 18. No pork products are allowed.
- 19. No alcohol is allowed.
- 20. If a farce is to be used for

- stuffing, filling, etc., at least one of the four portions of the farce must be prepared in front of the judges to show the competitor's skill
- 21. Within 10 minutes after the end of the competition, competitors must have the kitchen thoroughly cleaned and tidied and ready for the next competitor to use.
- 22. Two copies of the recipes typewritten are always required.
- 23. Submit one copy of the recipe/s to the clerk when registering.
- 24. Submit one copy of the recipe to the duty marshal at the cooking station.

PRACTICAL COOKERY

Class 19. Mezzeh – Practical Cookery by RAHMA OLIVE OIL



- 1. Time allowed: 60 Minutes
- Prepare and present for four persons: Three types of hot mezzeh and three types of cold mezzeh.
- Only one (if any) of the following types of mezzeh may be displayed: humus, tabouleh, babaganough, fatouche, moutabel.
- The mezzeh can be representative of any of the following countries:
- ➤ Lebanon
- Syria
- Jordan
- ➤ Morocco
- ➤ Egypt
- ➤ Tunisia
- Dishes must represent a variety of cooking methods and the use of ingredients as used in the Arabic restaurants of the UAE.

- 6. Rahma olive oil must be the only olive oil used in the creation of these dishes and will be available in the competition venue
- 7. Present the mezzeh in four equal portions.
- 8. Two portions will be presented and two portions will be presented to the judges.
- 9. Typewritten recipes are required..

Class 20: Fish & Seafood - Practical Cookery by MITRAS Norwegian Cod Fish



MITRAS INTERNATIONAL TRADING L.L.C.

- 1. Time allowed 60 minutes
- 2. Prepare and present four identical main courses using Norwegian Cod Fish as the main protein item.
- 3. The Norwegian Cod Fish will be provided to the competitors at the venue on the competition day
- 4. Present the main courses on individual plates with appropriate garnish and accoutrements.
- 5. Typewritten recipes are required.

Class 21: Beef - Practical Cookery by MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA



- 1. Time allowed 60 minutes
- Prepare and present four identical main courses using Australian Beef as the main protein item.
- 3. Any cut of beef with the exception of tenderloin, rib eye and sirloin, can be used.
- 4. Present the main courses on individual plates with appropriate garnish and

- accoutrements.
- 5. Typewritten recipes are required.

Class 22: Emirati Cuisine - Practical Cookery - by Shama by IFFCO



إفكو 🆊 IFFCO

- 1. This class is designed to ensure that the tradition of Emirati Cuisine is preserved and promoted through professional chefs. Shama spices will be available in the venue kitchens for the competitors to use but it is not compulsory.
- 2. Prepare and present two plated portions each of three Emirati dishes according with the following criteria:
- 3. Prepare and present two plated portions of any one of the following dishes:
- ➤ Balalit
- ➤ Kabeesa
- > Assedat Bobal
- 4. Also prepare and present two plated portions each of any two of the following dishes:
- Margougat Al Khudar
- ➤ Thareed Laham
- Margougat Al Dijaj
- ➤ Maleh Biryani
- Samak Mashwi
- ➤ Machboos Samak
- Emirati cuisine with traditional presentation and serving as would be found in a family home of the United Arab Emirates.
- 6. Competitors must bring their own plates/bowls for presentation and all necessary mise-en-place for the meals
- 7. The judges will check appliances and utensils for suitability
- 8. Typewritten description and recipes are required
- 9. Time allowed 60 minutes to present all three recipes

Class 23: HUG AG — Savoury Creations



- This is a static class featuring savoury HUG pastry shells suitable for dinner service.
- 2. Only savoury HUG pastry shells are to be used.
- 3. Pastry shells will be supplied by ARAMTEC.
- 4. Present four different plates, using two savoury HUG shells per plate (i.e. exhibit eight shells in total).
- 5. To be prepared in advance and displayed cold on appropriate plates.
- 6. Typewritten description and recipes required.
- 7. Maximum space available: 75cm x 75cm.

Class 24: HUG AG – Sweet Creations



- This is a static class featuring dessert HUG pastry shells suitable for dinner service.
- 2. Only dessert HUG pastry shells are to be used.
- 3. Pastry shells will be supplied by ARAMTEC.
- Present four different plates, using two dessert HUG shells per plate (i.e. exhibit eight shells in total).
- 5. To be prepared in advance and displayed cold on appropriate plates.
- 6. Typewritten description and recipes required.
- 7. Maximum space available: 75 cm x 75 cm.

YOUNG CHEF OF THE YEAR ENTRIES

Entrants for The Young Chef of the Year trophy must enter the

following classes and no others. In addition to classes 25 & 26 here below competitors must also enter for class 22 Emirati Cuisine Practical Cookery.

Class 25: Dressed Chicken by Sadia — Dressed Fish -Supplementary Class:

سادیا Sadia

- Practical Butchery Fish and Chicken Class for Young Chef of the Year Trophy.
- 2. Competitors are to supply their own whole fish and whole chicken, all utensils and chopping boards.

Time allowed 1 hour in 30 minute sections as below:

Chicken:

- 3. Time allowed 20 minutes
- 4. Take a whole fresh chicken and prepare from it the following:
- 5. One breast skinless.
- 6. One breast skin-on.
- 7. One whole leg, skin-on, and tunnel-boned, ready for making a ballotine.
- 8. One thigh boneless.
- 9. One drumstick.
- 10. Two wings prepared for pan frying/grilling.
- 11. Carcass prepared for stock. After 20 minutes:
- 12. 10 minutes to explain to the judges the method of preparation of a classical chicken stock.

Fish:

- 13. Time allowed 20 minutes.
- 14. Take a whole fresh Sherry or other sustainable fish species of the Arabian Gulf waters.
- 15. No imported type of fish is to be used.
- 16. Gut, clean and fillet the fish.
- 17. One fillet with skin on.
- 18. One fillet skinless.
- 19. Cut each fillet into as many 140gr size servings as possible.



After 20 minutes –10 minutes

- 20.Explain to the judges the usage of any left overs.
- 21. Explain to the judges the method of preparation of a classical fish stock

Competitors will be marked on knife skills, clean bone work, meat left on carcass, wastage, basic knowledge of questions asked about the preparations of stocks.

Class 26: Ovo-Lacto Vegetarian Three-Course Menu

- 1. Present a plated three-course vegetarian ovo-lacto meal for one person.
- 2. Suitable for dinner service
- 3. The meal to consist of:
- a. An appetizer
- b. A main course
- c. A dessert
- 4. To be prepared in advance and displayed cold on appropriate plates.
- No meat, chicken, seafood or fish to be used, (meat-based gelatin glaze to enhance presentation is accepted).
- 6. Total food weight of the four plates should be 600/700 gms.
- 7. Typewritten descriptions and recipes required.
- 8. Maximum area w75cm x d75cm.

Class 27: Chicken - Practical Cookery by Sadia

سادیا Sadia

- 1. Time allowed 60 minutes
- Prepare and present four identical main courses using Sadia Chicken as the main protein item.
- 3. Any cut of Chicken may be used.
- 4. Present the main courses on individual plates with

- appropriate garnish and accoutrements.
- 5. Typewritten recipes are require

Class 28: Breakfast and Brunch – Practical Cookery

To prepare and present in 60 minutes 3 breakfast/brunch style items, one item must be a Panini suitable for breakfast and made using the Convotherm Merrychef oven. A Convotherm chef shall be available to demonstrate the use of the oven no other equipment will be available. Each competitor shall be given one standard Stainless Steel work table 1800cmL x 75cm W and 75cmH no other tables can be used.

- 1. Time allowed 60 minutes, each item to be served at 20 minute intervals
- 2. Only chefs of the rank of demi chef and below can enter this class.
- 3. Prepare and present 3 sets of Breakfast Items, 2 for jury and 1 for feedback and photo:
- a. Panini Sandwhich using the Merry chef
- b. Bircher Muesli with appropriate garnish
- c. Breakfast smoothie with appropriate garnish
- 4. All serving equipment to be provided by competitors
- 5. All ingredients to be supplied by competitors
- All ingredients can be preprepared so as the dish is only finished at the venue, however work expended on each dish will be part of the judging criteria
- 7. All ingredients to be brought to the venue following Dubai's strict hygiene criteria

ADDENDUM – The Emirates Salon Culinaire 2015

VENUE & ENTRY FEES:

1. The Emirates Salon Culinaire will be held during the Gulf Food Hotel and Equipment

- Exhibition from February 8th to 12th 2015.
- 2. The venue is at the Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre
- 3. The entrance fee for single entries is Dhs.100 (AED. One Hundred) per person per class, unless otherwise stated in the Rules and Regulations or the Class Briefs.
- 4. The fee for entry to the trophy classes is as follows:
 - i. Best Cuisinier The Emirates Salon Culinaire-Dubai 2014 AED:500/- per person
 - ii. Best Pastry Chef The Emirates Salon Culinaire-Dubai 2014 AED:400/- per person
 - iii. Best Artist The Emirates Salon Culinaire- Dubai 2014 AED:500/- per person
 - iv. Best Arab National The Emirates Salon Culinaire-Dubai 2014 AED:300/- per person
 - v. Young Chef of the Year

 The Emirates Salon
 Culinaire Dubai 2015 AED:
 500/- per person

CLOSING DATE:

5 Closing date for entries is January 21st 2015 However, many are often fully subscribed and closed well before the closing date.

TROPHY ENTRY

Entrants to a trophy class must enter and finish in all and only those classes that pertain to the trophy for which they are entering. No other classes may be entered into by a trophy entrant. Trophies are awarded on the highest aggregate points from all three classes.

The required classes are:

BEST CUISINIER:

- i. Class #10. Five-Course Dinner Menu by Australian Meat
- ii. Class # 21. Beef Practical

- Cookery by Australian Meat
- i. Class # 20. Fish & Seafood Practical Cookery by MITRAS

In order to qualify for inclusion in the points tally for Best Cuisinier Trophy a competitor must win three medals, at least one of which must be a gold medal.

BEST PASTRY CHEF:

- i. Class # 01. Practical Cake Decoration by Masterbaker
- ii. Class # 03. Four Plates of Dessert
- iii. Class # 06. Friandises, Petites Four by Masterbaker
- In order to qualify for inclusion in the points tally for Best Pastry Chef Trophy a competitor must win at least two medals one of which must be a gold medal..

BEST ARTIST:

- i. Class # 07. Chocolate Showpiece
- ii. Class # 09. Open Showpiece
- iii. Class # 15. Individual Ice Carving
- iv. Class # 17. Practical Fruit & Vegetable Carving by Barakat Quality Plus
- In order to qualify for inclusion in the points tally for Best Artist Trophy a competitor must win at least three medals one of which must be a gold medal..

BEST ARAB NATIONAL:

- i. Class # 14. An Arabian Feast
- ii. Class # 19. Arabic Mezzeh -Practical Cookerv
- iii. Class 22: Emirati Cuisine -Practical Cookery
- iv. In order to qualify for inclusion in the points tally for Best Arab National Trophy a competitor must win at least one medal.

YOUNG CHEF OF THE YEAR:

See Classes for Entry Document.

JUDGING AND THE AWARDS SYSTEM

A team of WorldChefs (The World Association of Chef's Societies) approved international Judges will adjudicate at all classes of the competition: using Worldchefs-approved methods, criteria and documents www.worldchefs.org After each judging session, the judges will hold a debriefing session at which each competitor attending may learn something of the thinking behind the judges' decision.

Competitors will not be competing against each other: rather, they will be striving to reach the best possible standard. The judges will then apportion marks that accord with their perception of the standard reached. The competitor will then receive an award commensurate with his/her points tally for the class.

In theory, therefore, everyone in a particular class could be awarded a gold medal. Conversely, it could be possible that no awards at all are made.

The scaling for awards in all classes is as follows:

Points	
100	Gold Medal with
	Distinction with
	Certificate.
99 - 90	Gold Medal with
	Certificate.
89 - 80	Silver Medal with
	Certificate.
79 - 70	Bronze Medal with
	Certificate
60 - 69	Certificate of Merit
Thereafter	Certificate of
	Participation

Corporate and Establishment Trophies

The corporate and establishment trophies available are:

Best Effort by an Individual

Establishment – The Emirates

Salon Culinaire

This trophy is awarded to the establishment whose competitors gain the highest total combined points from the medals won from all of their entries.

Best Effort by a Corporation — The Emirates Salon Culinaire

This trophy is awarded to the corporation whose competitors gain the highest total combined points from the medals won from all of their entries.

Point Value of each Medal Won:Gold Medal with Distinction 6

Points
Gold Medal 5 Points
Silver Medal 3 Points
Bronze Medal 1 Point

Bronze Medal 1 Point
Winners where a sponsored trip is
awarded are restricted to wining
the trip once per life time. In a
case where the overall winner
has participated in a sponsored
trip previously the trip shall be
awarded to the 2nd place winner

FRESHNESS IS OUR BUSINESS

Nature-based vitamin and mineral blends extend the shelf-life of freshly cut fruits and vegetables to over 21 days!



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newmembers



IFFCO is an innovative and integrated multi food products Group based in the United Arab Emirates. The company has a significant presence in Impulse Foods, Agri Business, frozen foods and Oils & Fats. Key product categories cover the following: Sauces, ice cream, soft oils, shortening, olive oil, flours, pasta, bakery ingredients, biscuits, snacks, fresh chicken & eggs, confectionary, chocolate, herbs and spices. Amongst these products IFFCO Group are proud to produce a strong portfolio of brands such as London Dairy, Tiffany, Hayat, Shama and Noor. Our products delight Bakers, Chefs and consumers alike enabling passionate and devoted professionals the chance to amaze their customers.

Since IFFCO established its first business in the UAE in the 1970's, they have successfully grown from a trading company to a highly successful



INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

manufacturer and distributor across the whole of the Middle East. North Africa, India, Pakistan, and Levant. All products are manufactured by IFFCO in world class, certified facilities here in the Middle East. Sourcing raw materials from the best places across the globe, IFFCO import and process a wide range of food items from Wheat from the USA, Chocolate from Belgium and Mangoes from India. These finished products are then marketed across a wide range of customers from retail and traders to foodservice establishments. This "one Company" approach to importing, manufacturing and distributing allows IFFCO to be a key player in the market and to manufacture products according to a wide variety of customer needs.

IFFCO is dedicated to serving the customer better through, delivering 'Great Service' and 'Great Quality Products' all at 'Great Value'. This partnership is built on trust, trust that is proven daily through listening to our customers' needs and providing the best possible professional advice.

As a well-established business in the market IFFCO can offer expertise. support and advice across all areas from technical cooking, display and marketing, recipe/menu development, product insight and development

IFFCO group dedicate efforts to continuing to grow relationships with our partners across the region with our company mission to be. "The preferred provider of essential and value added foods for everyone, everywhere and every day."



Elfab Co. (L.L.C) was established in 1975 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The company has nearly 35 years of hands-on experience in the Middle East region in the sales of Chilled & Frozen Meats and Poultry, and Seafood products. Our head office in Dubai Investments Park is a strategically central location to distribute products within a stipulated time frame.

We import Chilled & Frozen Meat, Poultry and Seafood mainly from Australia, New Zealand, USA, Brazil, Holland, Germany and Vietnam. Presently, we are dealing with leading international meat suppliers



across the globe. Elfab has grown from modest beginnings to a leading food import and distribution company, with strong focus on quality and service.

Elfab has its own HAACP and ISO approved modern warehouse facility and distribution system in Dubai Investments

Park. Our trucks are equipped with GPS to help ensure smooth delivery across the emirates every day.

Our diverse range of products are distributed across the country to 5 and 7 star hotels, palaces, hypermarkets, supermarkets, airline catering companies, various government institutions, and high end restaurants.

Customer service is extremely important to us, and our 70 employees are committed to meeting customer needs on an ongoing basis.



Fonterra is a global leader in dairy nutrition – the preferred supplier of dairy ingredients to many of the world's leading food companies. Fonterra is also a market leader with our own consumer dairy brands in Australia/New Zealand, Asia/Africa, Middle East and Latin America.

The farmer-owned New Zealand cooperative is the largest processor of milk in the world, producing more than two million tonnes of dairy ingredients, value added dairy ingredients, specialty



ingredients and consumer products every year. Drawing on generations of dairy expertise, Fonterra is one of the largest investors in dairy based research and innovation in the world. Our 16,000 staff work across the dairy spectrum from advising farmers on sustainable farming and milk production, to ensuring we live up to exacting quality standards and delivering every day on our customer promise in more than 100 markets around the world.

Anchor, Fonterra flagship brand, is dedicated to working with Chefs, bakers and pastry chefs to provide innovative solutions and best practices in the kitchen.



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 UAF.

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 is 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

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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?

Þ	Executive Chefs	23%
•	Senior & Mid-Level Chefs	36%
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Þ	Purchase Managers	7%
>	Food Industry Leaders	4%
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≣ 5			S	Senior	Young Chef (under 25 yrs below)		
	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:						
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FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY				ILY			
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	Fees: Young Member: Junior members will receive a certificate. Senior Members: Above the rank of chef de partie (or senior chef de partie on executive chef's recommendation). Dhs.350/=joining. Includes certificate; member-pin, member medal and ECG ceremonial collar. Dhs. 150/=per year thereafter. Affiliate Member: Dhs.350.00 for the first year. Dhs.300 per year thereafter. Corporate Member Dhs. 20,000 per year						

SOUL BASED SERVICE EXCELLENCE

"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless"

— Mother Teresa

o start a company could be as easy as drinking a cup of tea. On the other hand to develop and maintain it requires much more. Many essential ingredients are required to make a business successful. One of the finest and most precious ingredients required for such success is taking care of your customers. This is where you come in; with your attitude towards the customer you can either grow the business or destroy it.

Whatever your role, you are interacting with customers, these being internal or external individuals. Your role has a direct implication on the service you offer your customers and it is in your hand for this to go beyond expectations. Your interaction has an impact on the company you work for thus it has a direct influence on your career.

Next time you come across a customer maybe it is time to think in terms of: "A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption of our work; he is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider to our business; he is a part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him, he is doing us a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so." -Mahatma Gandhi

The honest fact is that many people are either unaware of this or have simply turned their back to this. And the reality is that without the customer an organisation will stop existing, which means your role, will no longer exit too. This goes for both internal and external customers.

The term customer service has been abused to its core and the true essence



has been lost. Once in awhile you will receive customer experience that makes you say wahoo, an experience that gives you complete bliss in the way you were treated. There is no room for complaints or feedback, you simply appreciate it and are grateful for it.

On the other hand most of you have experience that awful customer experience that makes you cringe, irritated, angry or upset when you think of it. It is very likely you have come across more of these than the wahoo customer experience.

My father taught me customer service was all about making the customer feel special. In other words customer service is all about the way you take care of the people who support your business. Now those people included paying customers, staff and vendors/suppliers.

Providing poor service or average service is never an option. Customer service is never about a transaction; it is about feelings, energy and enthusiasm. That is why on the behalf of my father I have named it "Soul Based Service Excellence". It is simply the ability to link up with the customer in a manner that creates a sense of mutual trust and understanding. This can only be achieved from the heart and soul.

It is crucial for you to have "Service PRIDE" of not only in doing your role, but also to comprehend you are the customer and sales service representatives for your organisation. You represent your organisation through your actions and appearance.

Service PRIDE simply implying

- Politeness with customers
- Remember to go the extra smile
- Inspire each other to be the best
- Develop to be customer focused
- Evaluate how you can be better You have experienced a variety of customer service and after talking with numerous people it can be seen the levels or categories could easily be divided into four distinct parts known as PAGE: Pathetic, Average, Good, Excellent. The fifth and ultimate level of customer service is Soul Based Service Excellence.

It's simply perfect. In such a service scenario you made the customer feel as the king/queen in that time span of interaction even if the customer did not purchase a service/product from you. Such a service makes the customer smile.

This has to and needs to be demonstrated by all employees, from the front line people right up to the CEO. It is not about a team, department, a program or a policy. It is about the whole organization.

Before you can provide even Soul Based Service Excellence you need to meet expectations. All customers have four basic expectations, which are simply to be understood, feel welcome, important and comfortable. Most importantly remember, "Excellence is not a skill. It is an attitude" Ralph Marston.

Rohit Bassi is the founder of In Learning and works across industries to help employees outperform themselves. You can contact him on rohit@in-learning.com

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