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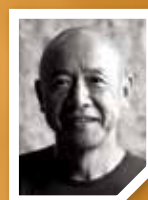
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THE MAGAZINE CHEFS LOVE TO READ
volume 11, issue 2

CANADA CALLING

Full report from the Clearwater
Innovative Shellfish Challenge
held at the Emirates Academy

YOUNG SCHOLARS

Special report on the million dirham
scholarship for 25 privileged chefsGREECE
LIGHTNINGExecutive Pastry Chef Achala Weerasinghe
has his eyes set on winning the
Global Pastry Chefs Challenge at
the WorldChefs Congress in ThessalonikiSPANISH
CONQUESTInterview with
three-star Michelin
Chef Quique
Dacosta from
Dénia, SpainPIZZA
QUEENExclusive interview
with Dubai-based
world pizza
champion Chef
Floriana PastoreJAPANESE
MASTERExclusive interview
with three-star
Michelin Chef
Masayoshi
Takayama



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president'sstation

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Dear fellow chefs, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the special Gulfood 2016 issue.

Our International Salon Culinlaire is just around the corner, I hope all competitors are ready and I wish all of them the best possible result.

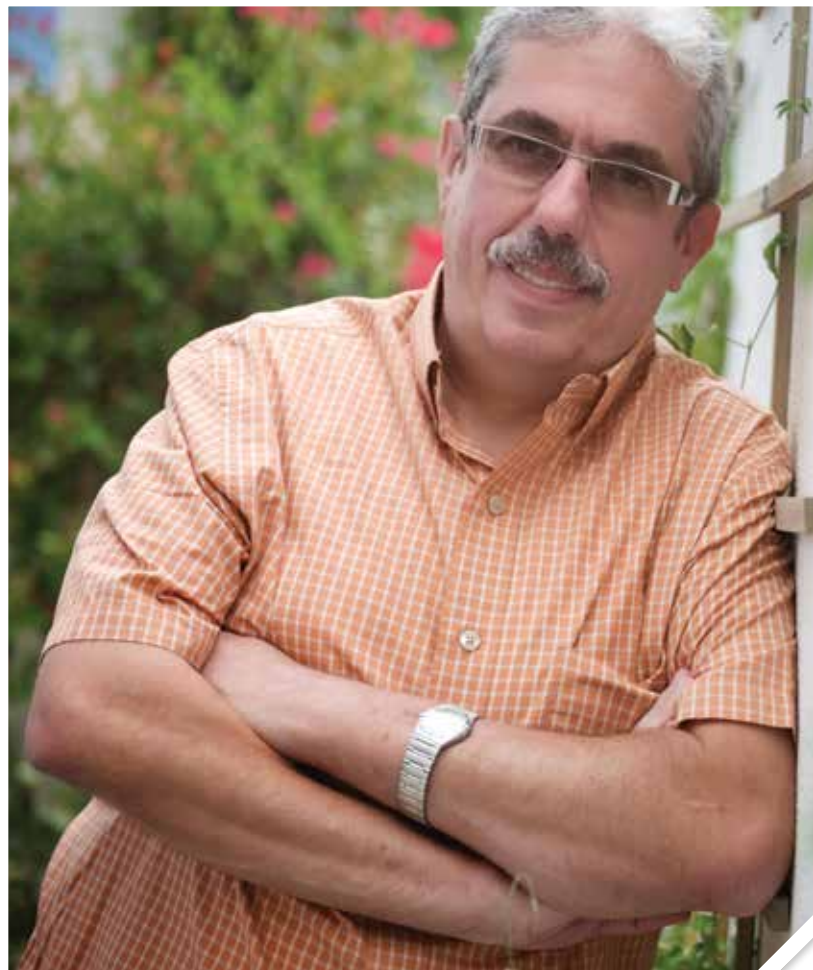
It's great to win a gold medal, the dream of many chefs. Not everyone can and will achieve it in his or her life. But as I always say winning is not the most important thing, the most important in any competition is that you learn from it, learn through training, learn from other competitors, and learn through feedback from our experienced judges. Make sure you do your best and gain knowledge. As long as you do your best and are happy with your dish, that is all that matters. Again, good luck to all of you.

On this stage, I would like to thank many companies and individuals. First of all our partners, Dubai World Trade Center, Nestle Professional, Meat and Livestock Australia, Masterbaker, US Dairy, US Poultry and Egg Council, Mitras International Trading, Fonterra, Convotherm- Monitowoc, Ginox, Barakat, Boecker and please forgive me if I have forgotten anyone.

In the next issue we will have an extra page showcasing our supporters, our hotel partners and food and beverage suppliers.

A big thank you as well to all our visiting judges who take the time to support us. Of course, a big thank you to all the ECG members who support with judging, marshalling, and towards the event build-up. I need to single out two individuals and thank them separately for their time given and the tremendous work, our Chairman Andy Cuthbert and our very own VP Administration Madam Josephine. Thank you.

If you have missed some of the previous



issues of Gulf Gourmet, please visit gulfgourmet.net.

I urge all members to check out the Guild website to know what's happening on the calendar at emiratesculinaryguild.net. Do visit WACS Young Chefs page on facebook. com/wacsyoungchefs and encourage your young chefs to join and stay 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 know who our supporters are.

A final thank you to Chef Talal Jaradat and his Team from Dubai Marine Beach Resort & Spa for hosting the January meeting.

Culinary Regards,

Uwe Micheel

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

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the finest chefs



*Majapahit empire seafood delights,
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Arctic surf clams*

Congratulations to **Komang Wirantawan from The Club in Abu Dhabi**, the winner of the first ever **Clearwater Innovative Shellfish Challenge**. Komang's winning recipe showcased Clearwater's range of high-quality, wild-caught shellfish to perfection. He created an exciting, innovative and sumptuous dish, both visually and on the palate.

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editor'snote

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One chef with three Michelin-stars from the United States, one chef with three Michelin-stars from Spain, the first and only female world pizza champion from Dubai, and three chefs from the UAE who will be representing the continent at the WorldChefs Congress in Greece. This is just a sample of the people whose life stories we bring to you in this edition of Gulf Gourmet.

As always, we have a power-packed issue filled with inspirational stories. Stories of people who too started out in their career by peeling hundreds of onions and along the way sharpened their skills enough to stand out from their peers.

Masayoshi Takayama, better known as Chef Masa, runs several restaurants across New York, Los Angeles and Las Vegas. His restaurant 'Masa' was the first Japanese restaurant in the United States to get three Michelin stars. We interviewed him in New York where he told us that he's bringing his food to Dubai soon. You heard it first in this magazine. Read his life story on page 14.

Chef Quique Dacosta, the founder and owner of one of the world's 50 best restaurants, too is in town dishing out specials at the Palazzo Versace. We bring you his life story on page 24.

Chef Floriana Pastore is the reigning queen of the pizza world by defeating a group of previous world pizza champions a few months ago in Las Vegas. She cooked for us some pizzas that were so amazing, I don't think I will ever enjoy a pizza like that again. We have her life story too on page 36.



All these and many more stories including those of chefs you've never heard of before, but some of whom will be renowned names in the years to come, are within the pages of this magazine you hold.

Don't miss the coverage from our event, the Clearwater Shellfish Challenge held at the Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management and find out who won the trip to Canada. Also don't miss the update from ICCA Culinary scholarship that sees 30 young chefs learning from the best teachers you could ask for.

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

Aquin George
Editor

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February 2016 **Gulf Gourmet**

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newsbites

Salon judges finalised

28 of the world's leading culinary judges will be flying in to Dubai this month to judge the dishes being prepared by culinary professionals at the Salon Culinaire during Gulfood. They will also be teaming with 20 local certified judges to ensure that every contestant is fairly judged and each contestant receives feedback.

The judging panel is led by the very capable Otto Weibel. The international judges include Andy Kurfurst, Bernd Uber, Ann Brown, Eric Roos, Karl Heinz Haase, Heinz Zucchelli, Markus Kalberer, Karl Heinz Ney, Kenny Kong, Tony Khoo, KK Yau, Patrick Lannes, Marco Bruschweiler, Michael Lee, Nick Vadis, Norberth Girth, Josef Oseli, Rainer Werchner, David Sosson, Thomas Gugler, Martin Kobald, Cornelia Elisabeth Volino, Prinsloo Sanet, JodiAnn Pearton, Tony Fernandes, John Retallick and Eric Iowe.

The senior UAE-based judges include Per Henrik Jonsson, Thomas Haller, Bruno Troesch, K.A.C Prasad, Majed Al Sabagh, Amro Al Yassin, Tarek Ibrahim, Suresh Babu, Atim Suyatim and Daniel Hiltbrunner. The new UAE-based judges certified by WACs include Romel Hernandez, Roderick Perdiguer, Rajesh Devadas, Mohamed Diri, Raghu Pillai, Haytham El Sayed, Luca Brambilla, Charbel Khachan, Daniel Mayor and Palitha Weerasinghe.

Thank you to all for taking the time out to judge and support our upcoming chefs.

Elia gets new head chef



Greek restaurant Elia has announced Poppy Kourkoutaki as their new head chef. She brings over 25 years of culinary experience which includes five-star properties in Greece and Michelin star restaurants in France.

Chef Poppy worked with Chef Baxevanis at the start of her career and trained at restaurants such as La Table d'Edgard and Auberge de L'ill. In her previous role she headed the kitchen at Océan restaurant in Daios Cove

Luxury Resort & Villas, Crete.

She is an active culinarian when it comes to providing healthy cooking demonstrations; she organised a 15-day Festival of Cretan Tastes at Hotel Barcarolle in Switzerland and won several awards. She is planning a similar festival in 2016 at Elia, to promote the products of her homeland and the benefits of Mediterranean diet.

"I'm looking forward to this next chapter in my culinary journey," says Chef Poppy.

Christian Pertl appointed Regional VP at Hyatt

Hyatt International EAME/SWA has announced the appointment of Christian Pertl as the Regional Vice President of Sales Operations for Hyatt Hotels & Resorts, Middle East and Africa.

With almost two decades in the hospitality industry, Pertl has extensive international experience in commercial operations and widespread knowledge of key feeder markets including Europe, USA, Middle East and Africa, and Asia Pacific. He has developed a global network of key industry leaders

and opinion makers within the luxury hospitality industry, and having worked in continuously evolving markets across a range of brands, he brings with him proficiency in hotel sales, marketing, revenue management and operations.

Ron Cusiter, Vice President Sales Operations, EAME/SWA, says, "Christian's appointment to this role is vital to continuing to strengthen our growing brand presence in the region, and will also be key to improving the performance of our existing portfolio.



RED MEAT ESSENTIAL IN A

Healthy Diet

MASTER CHEF TAREK IBRAHIM
EXPLAINS THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF
INCLUDING RED MEAT IN A BALANCED
HEALTHY DIET.

A wide variety of trimmed Australian beef, lamb and goat cuts and lean mince are available to suit different appetites, cooking styles and dietary requirements no matter what your age.

Iron-rich foods, such as beef and lamb, are important for growth and brain development and recommended by health experts from around 6 months of age.

Low iron levels are common in teenage girls, young women and busy mums. This can make them feel tired, making it difficult to be active and concentrate in their studies and their work. Having red meat, such as Australian beef and lamb 3 to 4 times a week, will help to maintain healthy iron stores.

As we get older, it becomes more important to maintain a healthy weight to reduce risk of diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease. Higher protein, low GI diets with beef and lamb 3 to 4 times a week keep you fuller longer, making it easier to lose weight and keep it off. These diets have been shown improve blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol, making them suitable for people with diabetes or cardiovascular disease.

Muscle health is critical for healthy aging and active lifestyles. Diets with beef and lamb 3 to 4 times a week combined with regular strength exercise have been shown to improve muscle health in older women.

It is the quality and amount of iron and zinc in beef, lamb and goat meats which make them excellent sources of iron and zinc and recommended in the Australian Dietary Guidelines 3 to 4 times a week. A proper dinner, with beef and lamb and plenty of veggies, provides around half their daily iron and zinc needs:

A serve* of beef, lamb or goat provides 10 essential nutrients we need for good health and wellbeing:

- It is an excellent source of good quality iron and zinc which has twice the iron and zinc of chicken, pork and fish and four times more iron absorbed than spinach
- A valuable source of omega-3 because Australian beef and lamb is predominantly grass-fed
- On average, only 550kJ/100g (130kcal/100g)
- Less than 4% saturated fat when trimmed of all visible fat, comparable to skinless chicken

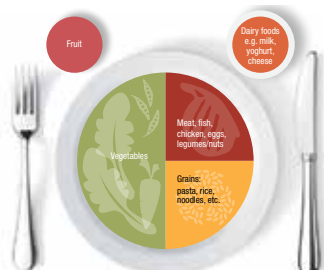
*A serve is 100 to 200g raw meat (on average, 65 to 130g cooked meat)



Because Australian cattle, sheep and goats are predominantly grass-fed, they mostly have low marbling and provide a valuable source of omega-3, after fish. At any one time, 97% of Australian cattle are grazing on extensive rangelands not suitable for other food production, and with little reliance on irrigation or fertiliser. During droughts and to meet market requirements, some cattle are raised on grass and then grain-fed for 70 to 100 days using grains such as sorghum, barley etc. For niche markets, longer periods of grain-feeding are required to meet higher marbling specifications.

Like the skin of chicken, most of the fat in meat is in the visible fat. When all of the visible fat is removed, fat content is similar to that of chicken.

RECOMMENDED PORTION SIZES



Use these as a guide for portion sizes.

100g (raw weight) meat, chicken or fish = palm of hand



1/2 cup (cooked) pasta = one small long full



20g chocolate = one row/four squares

1/2 cup (cooked) rice = four heaped tablespoons



For more information and recipe ideas, visit www.LambandBeef.com and [Facebook.com/LambandBeef](https://www.facebook.com/LambandBeef)





THE MASA OF SUSHI ARTS

By Zoja Stojanovic

Masayoshi Takayama, better known as **Chef Masa**, runs several restaurants across New York, Los Angeles and Las Vegas, among which his restaurant 'Masa' is considered by international food critics to be one of the best Japanese restaurants in the world outside Japan. What's more, in 2009 'Masa' was the first Japanese restaurant in the United States to get three Michelin stars. Chef Masa has also received the highest ratings from 'The New York Times' and 'Forbes Travel Guide'. This year, the talented master of the sushi arts is about to open his very first restaurant in Dubai!

Just like a fish runs through the waters of Japan, immense passion for food runs through Chef Masa's veins. Delivering fresh sashimi to neighbours on his bicycle, making hundreds of fish courses for wedding ceremonies, working at his family's fish company in the Tochigi Prefecture in Japan, food has remained an integral part of his life from early on. It's those little rituals that have defined Chef Masa's career path. And how!

In 1980, Chef Masa's need to explore the world outside Japan brought him to Los Angeles. There, he opened his first Japanese restaurant - 'Ginza Sushi-ko'. In the next three decades, Chef Masa established himself as one of the most authentic Japanese chefs in California, whipping up Japanese dishes that Americans had never seen before. He moved to New York in 2004.

When you enter his three Michelin star restaurant 'Masa', located in New York City on the fourth floor of the Time Warner Centre, don't expect any glitters. Simplicity, purity, clean air, branches of seasonal plants, subtle volcanic rock statues are just some of the elements of the decor. This same shibui, which in the Japanese culture represents aesthetics of an unobtrusive beauty, is also evident in his dishes.

The omakase experience Chef Masa offers to his guests every evening borrows from the concept of complete trust in a chef. There is no menu, the chef decides what he wants to serve. The guests are seated at the sushi counter for 10 made out of Hinoki wood, brought to New York straight from Japan and built inside Masa's little temple, or by the tables that can accommodate another 16 people. And so begins their two-hour culinary journey into Japan.

The experience starts with around eight appetizers, made of the best ingredients and teeming with some of the world's finest flavours. You can call the appetizers a sensory experience. This



It's not easy to train people, but as long as people have the sense of ingredients and what those ingredients could be, they can do it

introduction to gastronomy leads into a sushi sensation. Chef Masa prepares up to 16 different kinds of sushi in front of the guests. Each piece of sushi is to be picked up immediately after it is plated and eaten in a single bite to capture every essence it contains.

It's not just the magical taste that makes Chef Masa's dishes a gastronomic delight; it is also the great respect he has for food that reflects in his offerings. Only top-notch ingredients are used, right down to the fish that is shipped from Japan to the United States and personally selected by Chef Masa. Each bite is also paired with a different drink to complete the experience – from wine to other alcoholic drinks, and of course, sake. A sweet ending to the story comes from an assortment of fresh fruits, always served and garnished Masa style.

Chef Masa also owns other more casual restaurants such as 'Kappo Masa' and 'Bar Masa', which are a-la carte restaurants. Plans are underway also to open 'Tetsu', a special restaurant with a sizzling iron grill.

Chef Masa always has something on his



mind – a new dish, a seasonal menu, a new painting or a pottery design. Right now, he has a new destination for 'Masa' in mind – Dubai! This year, the fast-emerging culinary capital of the world will get its own 'Masa'.

In a chat, Chef Masa talks about his pet project...

GG: Are you set for the Dubai opening?

MT: Yes. Now that the big day is approaching, I think more and more about when I opened a restaurant in 2009 in the Aria Hotel in Las Vegas. It was a spectacular event and I expect Dubai also to be no less magnificent. Dubai is the next hub of food and every time I visit, I feel more inspired. Apart from the restaurants, local ingredients such as lamb, spices, pickled vegetables and rice caught my eye the most during my recent visit.



The menu for the Dubai 'Masa' will have the regular dishes and also some that use the local Emirates spices. I want to introduce real Japanese food to the UAE but I also want to try some ingredients from the Middle East, including seafood from Oman. I want to take what is the best from all over the world and bring it to Dubai.

GG: Moving from Japan to Los Angeles and then to New York City couldn't have been easy decisions. How did you manage?

MT: It was not a hard decision to move to the US from Japan because I was looking for something new. The hard decision came when I got my green card and I decided to open my own restaurant. At the time, it was very difficult to get all ingredients. So I started sourcing from Japan. Around that time, there was a big article in 'The Los Angeles Times', questioning how we could charge 250 dollars for sushi, and this was why. In the end, it turned out to be a big success and other local sushi restaurants also had to start looking for better ingredients. That was in the 1980s.



GG: Talking about changes, there seem



to be a huge one happening to sushi. Everyone is making it nowadays. Will this global trend dilute the tradition of sushi?

MT: Nowadays, you can find sushi in every country. People tend to embrace a healthy diet. That is why they like to eat sushi and fresh ingredients. But it doesn't have to be traditional. On the contrary, it has to be innovative. When I started my education in Tokyo, there were two generations of masters teaching me. The older master told me, "When you go back to your hometown and open your restaurant, even if you learn here in Ginza, you have to think about whatever ingredients you get in your hometown to make sushi." That taught me. Anywhere you go, you can create, you can make sushi, you have to keep moving forward.

GG: Has sushi moved forward?

MT: In the beginning, sushi was very different from the sushi we know today. This is a prime example of how tradition can evolve. In the past, sushi was called funazushi, and it originated from Biwa Lake in Shiga Prefecture. Back then, rice was used only to cause fermentation. The original preparation involved removing the guts from the fish, stuffing it with rice and curing it with salt for

three months in a barrel. It was like making pickles. After three months, they would open the barrels, take the fish and throw out the rice. They would slice the fish and eat it.

That was how sushi was invented. The sushi we know today was originally called hayazushi, meaning 'quick sushi'.

GG: You have a strong passion for food. How do you infuse this passion into younger chefs?

MT: It's not easy to train people, but as long as people have the sense of ingredients and what those ingredients could be, they can do it. Our staff is not only Japanese. We have people from China, Latin America, Turkey, Poland, the Philippines... We have a lot of people in the kitchen, but every person has that particular sense of ingredients. If not, then it's very hard to teach them.

GG: How did you come up with gluten-free noodles, which have become one of your trademarks?

MT: One day during the construction of 'Kappo Masa' restaurant in New York, I was standing on Madison Avenue and watching people passing by. Everyone was fashionable and thin, which gave me

an idea of their lifestyle. But I thought to myself, they had to eat something without gaining weight. The area on the Upper East Side has a lot of Italian restaurants, so people were mostly eating pasta and salad, but pasta has a lot of carbohydrates and doesn't go well with staying fit. I felt if I could offer them something similar in taste but much healthier, they would love it. Traditional fish noodles from Kyoto came to my mind. Originally, those noodles are made of hamo (pike conger eel) and only served in summertime. I used this as my starting point and eventually created a special kind of pasta using the sea bream. I made the noodle thicker and added a sauce of olive oil, bottarga (cured fish roe), cilantro leaf and some chili. I created a sauce made from sea urchin. It has become very popular now.

Chef Masa believes in an old Japanese proverb — every guest is like God. This is why, his culinary offerings are nothing short of a divine journey. Soon, food connoisseurs in Dubai will also be able to take this journey.

After all, Chef Masa knows that the way to everyone's heart is through their stomachs.

MEET UAE'S MOST INNOVATIVE SHELLFISH CHEF

Chef **Komang Wirantawan** from The Club, Abu Dhabi wins the '2016 Clearwater Innovative Shellfish Chef Challenge' organised by Gulf Gourmet; receives all-expenses paid trip to Nova Scotia, Canada

Chef Komang Wirantawan, from The Club, Abu Dhabi has been adjudged as the country's most innovative shellfish chef while Chef Oscar Montelongo of JW Marriott Marquis and Chef Anand Ramakrishnan from Burj Al Arab were bestowed with the first and second runner-up titles respectively. With this win, Komang has received the

coveted all-expenses paid trip to Nova Scotia, Canada!

The Competition

Clearwater, Canada's leading shellfish company, joined hands with Gulf Gourmet, the magazine with the highest readership among professional chefs in the region, to organise the '2016 Clearwater Innovative Shellfish Chef Challenge'.

The country-wide hunt for the most innovative shellfish chef began last August and culminated with a fierce live cooking battle at the prestigious Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management on January 23, 2016. The challenge saw close to 100 professional chefs submitting their completed entries along with their recipes and the images of their dishes.



The Judging Panel: (from left-right) Lead Judge Michael Kitts, Thomas Haller, Amro Al Yassin, Atim Suyatim, Michel Miraton and John Redding.



Participants and judges come together for a group shot.



First runner-up Oscar Montelongo and (below) 2nd runner-up Anand Ramakrishnan congratulated by John Ashmore, Marketing Director - EMEA, Clearwater Seafoods.



Chef Komang Wirantawan is elated to have won the all-expenses paid trip to Canada. On the left he's seen plating his winning dish.



The Short-Listing

With such an unprecedented level of interest shown in a specialised culinary event, it took three WACS-accredited judges six hours and intense debate to shortlist the top 20 chefs for the finals.

The judging for the short-list was held at the Radisson Blu Hotel Deira Creek where the three judges received printouts of the recipes and images of the dishes without the names of the participants or the hotels.

Chefs from the length and breadth of the country sent in their entries. The judging criteria was so strict that some of winners from previous editions of top culinary competitions did not even make it to the finals.

Surprisingly three out of the 20 finalists were young ladies; namely, Chloe, Thamara and Elfen.





The event's chief judge Michael Kitts being felicitated by Andrew Maharaj, Consul and Regional Agricultural Counsellor, Consulate General of Canada in Dubai.



Judges tasting each and every dish as it comes out of the kitchen



John Ashmore, Marketing Director EMEA, Clearwater Seafoods with Aquin George, Editor and Publisher, Gulf Gourmet



2nd



3rd



Thomas Haller thanking Abdul Rehmane



1st

The Judges

Eight out of the nine judges, across all stages of the challenge, are certified judges by the World Association of Chefs Societies.

For the shortlisting, the judging panel included:

- ♦ Corporate Executive Chef Romel Hernandez from Philippines
- ♦ Culinary Director Amro Al Yassin from Syria
- ♦ Executive Chef Suresh Babu from India.

For the finals, the judging panel included:

- ♦ Director of Culinary Arts, Michael Kitts from the UK
- ♦ Chairman of the Emirates Culinary Guild, Chef Thomas Haller from Switzerland
- ♦ Executive Chef Michel Miraton from France
- ♦ Executive Chef Atim Suyatim from Indonesia
- ♦ Corporate Executive Chef John Redding from the UK.



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Stand S3-D34-D40

The Finale

The challenge finale was hosted by The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, Jumeirah on January 23, 2016. The venue lent itself for a perfect backdrop with its legendary status as a hospitality school and a great kitchen set-up that completely caters to the needs of a truly professional chef.

The finalists started trickling in at 7 am with their own crockery, plates and ingredients (except for the shellfish, which was provided by Transmed, a Clearwater distributor). Each chef had either a senior mentor, young assistant chef, or a spouse come along for moral support.

Chef Thomas Haller vocally reaffirmed the rules over and again to all four batches of five chefs each. Each chef was given strictly 60 minutes and there was a gap of 5-minutes between each chef's starting time so that no chef's dish would be tasted cold.

Looking out for hygiene, wastage and rules being followed inside the kitchen

were Chefs Thomas and Atim. No challenger was allowed to bring pre-cut vegetables or ready-made sauces, etc. No chef was allowed to have any support standing in the kitchen. Emirates Academy's Abdul Rehmane was at hand to help any chef who needed specific cooking equipment or help with the cooking equipment provided to them.

Each chef had to create 4 identical dishes (3 for tasting). Three challengers were disqualified because they took more than 60 minutes to complete their dishes.

In a separate room was the blind judging taking place where Lead Judge Michael Kitts along with Chef Michel Miraton and Chef John Redding were tasting each dish as it came out and were extremely conservative with their praises.

After each round of five chefs, they were called in to meet the judges and receive feedback on every dish created and what they liked and disliked about each dish.

In the end, all judges seemed to have

settled for Komang's dish as the best dish. It was a Japanese styled dish with shellfish cooked in various forms from sashimi to spicy that had all the judges bowled over.

Komang, who works as a Commis I, at The Club in Abu Dhabi managed to steal an upset victory over some very tough and seasoned challengers including senior chefs.

When asked how he managed to do it, he says, "My Executive Chef Peter De Kauwe saw my recipe and told me that I had a winning recipe in my hand and the challenge was mine to win if I practiced well. I spent day and night for weeks with my seniors helping me perfect my dish. I had practised so many times ensuring no wastage and getting the right consistency that I could recreate this dish in any environment."

Komang, hope you enjoy lobster fishing and taking in the sights of Nova Scotia, Canada later this year.



The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management was the perfect setting for hosting such an elaborate professional cooking challenge.

February 2016 **Gulf Gourmet**A portrait of a man with dark hair, a beard, and glasses, wearing a white shirt. He is looking slightly to the side with a slight smile. The background is a light, textured wall.

THE SPANISH CONQUEST

His restaurant is on the list of “must visit places before you die” for food connoisseurs the world over. **Aquin George** caught up with Chef **Quique Dacosta**, the founder and owner of one of the world’s 50 best restaurants, to find out his life story

Ask any chef what motivated him to become one and out tumbles the usual story of hanging around his mother's kitchen, soaking up the love for gastronomy.

Chef Quique Dacosta's story, however, has an entirely different twist. His reaction to the sight of his grandmother skinning the rabbit, filleting the fish and deboning the chicken? - "Ewww, I'll never do that!"

Years later, Chef Quique has been forced to 'eat' his words. His eponymous restaurant is today one of the world's 50 best, known for its avant garde Spanish cuisine. A strong sense of aesthetics from his mother and a farming background from his father have come together beautifully in Chef Quique, reflecting in every creation in his restaurants.

What also reflects in his cooking is his childhood in Jarandilla de la Vera, a region in southwest Spain close to the Portugal border known for its agriculture and animal husbandry.

"My mother was a model and her love of fashion and art has rubbed off on me," is Chef Quique's explanation for the art mixed in his craft. "How to dress, how to present myself. My father couldn't be bothered. My closeness to my mother reflects in my personality and also in my cooking."

The summer of '86 was the season of a new beginning. Having just finished his basic studies, a young Chef Quique, who had just stepped into his teen years, sought a part-time job for the vacations. "I worked in the fields, picking cherries and herbs. Coming from a modest family background, I needed something to fulfil my 'wants'."



I didn't go to a culinary school. Books taught me the basics and even gave me direction on where my cooking should go

At first, Chef Quique was heavily drawn to the idea of working in a nightclub as an assistant to a DJ. His mother, however, put her dainty foot firmly down. "She didn't want me hanging out in a nightclub all night at the age of 14."

Dejected at first, Chef Quique quickly moved on to find another option. "There was a place, Denia, close to where we lived. There were streets lined with restaurants and bars and I went hopping from one side of the street to the other asking for a job." As luck would have it, one chef took the teenager seriously, asking him what he could do. "Nothing special", was my honest answer," Chef Quique laughs. "Then he asked if I could wash pots and I readily agreed."

When there weren't any pots to wash, the head chef would give the youngster some other small chores - peel onions and potatoes, cut vegetables. "That was my first 'taste' of cooking. I also realised there were so many aspects to a restaurant - food, wine, ambience, customer service and even the 'internationalism' of food."

Not too keen on following in his father's footsteps, Chef Quique began to consider food as a career option.

A couple of years later, Chef Quique

joined a restaurant in the quiet seaside town of Denia as a chef, one that would eventually become his signature. How was he to know then that the restaurant, El Poblet, would become a 3-Michelin star wonder and catapult him into the big league?

Attention to detail, simple and traditional cooking and consistency were the hallmarks of El Poblet, principles that the restaurant still holds dear in its new avatar as 'Quique Dacosta Restaurant'. "Even something as simple as coffee had to be done in the exact same way, every time. They taught me that cooking was more than a job, it was a passion. It was something you could make a life out of."

And he did. Chef Quique became his own boss at 27, when he took over El Poblet in 1999. It wasn't easy to take a successful business and change its fare, from traditional Spanish cuisine to a more local Mediterranean modern deconstruct.

"We took a risk. We were trying to change the taste of the customer and initially they were not happy about us tampering with a successful idea." But eventually, the risk paid off.

Now on the cusp of launching his next big concept, Enigma at Palazzo Versace Dubai, Chef Quique feels as excited as he did when he went from being an employee to an entrepreneur. Enigma is the world's first restaurant to change its dining concept and Michelin-star chefs four times a year.

Instead of memories of great mentors, Chef Quique holds books as his greater treasure. "I didn't go to a culinary school. Books taught me the basics and even gave me direction on where my cooking should go." When he was working at the restaurant, Chef Quique would buy two

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copies of every recipe book. "One to take to the restaurant and one to keep at home. I knew people would borrow them and not return them. I didn't want to take a chance. I'm still possessive about my books."

Today, he's the author of four cookbooks, the latest '3.Quique Dacosta' being published in April last year. Chef Quique's other notable restaurants include the 1-Michelin star El Poblet, Vuelve Carolina and Mercatbar restaurants in Valencia, Spain.

Local sourcing is a quality his restaurants are known for. Traditionally, Chef Quique used ingredients sourced within a 75-km radius of where the restaurant was located. That could be a challenge in Dubai, given that the city depends almost entirely on imported products for its culinary needs. "The percentage of local sourcing is falling somewhat even in our other restaurants though, because we travel and bring

back products. Using products from different places also widens the expression of our food. So it's not an alien concept to us anymore."

With the evolution of his restaurants, Chef Quique has also evolved as a chef. "The fantastic thing is that our customers travel the world over but they are happy to let us be ourselves. They just want an experience that they won't forget."

The journey has been long and challenging. Did Chef Quique ever reach a point when he felt he should quit and do something else? "Yes, every time something goes wrong!" he laughs. "This job is as hard and difficult as it is rewarding. I had some really awful moments and I will have them in the future too because that is life. But there have been great moments too – getting a 3-Michelin star, becoming my own boss, the satisfaction that comes with doing your own thing."

Giving advice to young chefs is something he shies away from. Different styles, different strengths, different visions make it difficult to give a one-size-fits-all advice. That said, he's willing to share what worked for him in building an illustrious career. "Passion for the job and reading a lot of recipe books. They opened my mind up to the possibilities I did not know existed. I even tell chefs with decades of experience to read recipe books and keep learning."

What Chef Quique is doing is not something everyone can. Avant-garde cuisine might be exclusive but it's also something "that has to come naturally to you". "You can't force it. Not everyone has to do it or become obsessed about it. Innovation can be anywhere. You can also innovate with traditional things. Do what works for you. If you try too hard, it won't work."

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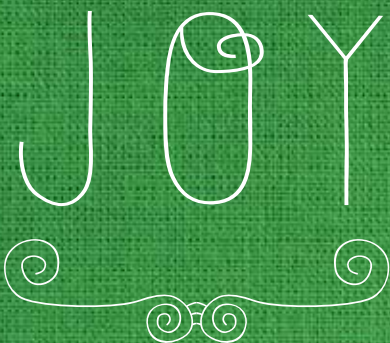
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February 2016 **Gulf Gourmet**

THE TRINITY OF HOPE

Meet the three UAE chefs preparing to represent our continent at the World Chefs Congress in Greece this September



2016 promises to be a busy year for adrenalin junkies. Sports enthusiasts will head for Rio in August for Olympics. Politics watchers will keep their eyes peeled for the grand finale of the United States Presidential elections in November. And culinaires across the globe will make a beeline for Greece in September, where the world's best gastronomists will fight it out for top titles, one plate at a time.

The kitchens in Thessaloniki will hot up for the event, the Worldchefs Congress, which runs September 24-27. Three jewels in the UAE's crown have already started sharpening their knives.

Representing the Africa and Middle East region in the prestigious competition are CHEF THAMARA KUMARI, CHEF ACHALA WEERASINGHE and CHEF RAHIL RATHOD.

While Chef Thamara will take on the best of the best in the Global Chefs Challenge, Chef Achala will look to convince judges he's the world's best candyman in the Global Pastry Chefs Challenge. The young and budding Chef Rahil will race against several other aspiring culinaires aged 25 or lower to prove his potential in the Hans Bueschkens Young Chefs Challenge.

The trio has already gone through several trials by fire to get thus far. They beat out several others in local competitions, made their way to the national platform and won out in the regional semi-finals before becoming the faces of Africa and the Middle East.

What makes their feat even more special is that none of the three are natives of the region, proving their love and loyalty towards their adopted country. Chef Thamara and Chef Achala are Sri Lankans by birth, while Chef Rahil is Indian.

The three know that they're carrying not just their own hopes and dreams on their shoulders when they go up before the judging panel. They're the torchbearers of an entire geography, tasked with the Herculean responsibility of doing the region proud.

We think, they're up to the challenge.



When I was a kid, my mother would shoo me out of the kitchen because she didn't think it was safe. Later, when she wanted me in the kitchen, I wasn't interested


— Chef Thamara Kumari





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Here's finding more about the people behind the names and the faces...

CHEF THAMARA KUMARI

Strong-willed, stubborn, strict but soft-spoken. And hugely successful. These are just some words you can use to describe Chef Thamara Kumari. The list of words is exhaustive though. We'll borrow one more from it – special. Chef Thamara smashed the rather thick glass ceiling in the UAE culinary industry with multiple firsts under her belt – the first female chef to bag the 'Best Cuisiner' title at SIAL, then again at the Salon Culinaire and in the process becoming the first ever chef in history to win both 'La Cuisine' by SIAL and Emirates Salon Culinaire back-to-back. A feat no man had achieved yet.

Which is why, her win at the Global Chefs Challenge semi-finals will not come as a surprise to anyone who knows her.

Her entry into the culinary world was a reluctant one. Now the senior demi chef de partie at St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort in Abu Dhabi, she stepped out of the comfort of her native country also with not much enthusiasm. Those events belong to a different lifetime now.

Then a shy, homely girl in the tiny town of Wennappuwa in Sri Lanka, Chef Thamara wasn't much of a kitchen kid. "When I was a kid, my mother would shoo me out of the kitchen because she didn't think it was safe. Later, when she wanted me in the kitchen, I wasn't interested," recalls the chef, who has spent most of her waking hours in the kitchen in the past decade.

Chef Thamara explored a career in the hospitality industry with a six-month course but that too failed to interest her in the business of food. When a friend suggested applying for a job in Kuwait in 2000, "I declined, saying it would be boring."

Her friend persisted and asked her to at

least think about it. "Then I wondered what working abroad would be like. Initially, my mother wasn't too keen but she relented when I promised that I won't stay away from home for more than a couple of years."

Joining a banquet kitchen company as service crew in Kuwait, Chef Thamara graduated to helping out in the kitchen. Her Indian and Lankan dishes became a hit with the chefs and learning Arabic proved to be an icebreaker. "I was accepted easily into the kitchen," Chef Thamara says.

When her father passed away a couple of years later, she had to return home to deal with familial issues, but later went back to the same company, spending a total of five years in Kuwait before leaving it for good.

Back in Sri Lanka, she again ventured out when a vacancy in Dubai came up. "I applied and got the job and joined Cafe Moka restaurant at the Dubai Ladies Club in mid-2006."

Moving to Cafe Moka in the Abu Dhabi Mall, she returned home yet again after three years. But in a few months, Chef Thamara made her way to the Qasar Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara Abu Dhabi. Over the next three years, she honed her skills at the Al Waha restaurant and the Grill and Bar, before joining St Regis Saadiyat.

Chef Thamara refuses to accept that there is gender bias in the culinary industry. "I think the reasons there are fewer female chefs are the long hours and the pressure-cooker environment chefs work in. It's not for everybody."

Perseverance, the ability to stay calm under pressure and refusal to give in to adversity have earned Chef Thamara the respect of chefs, young and old alike. Her Executive Chef Daniel Nuss and Executive Sous Chef Kushan Perera swear by her talent.

Much has changed over the years.



I have spent a lot of money on recipe books and I still do – even 400 dirhams for one book! The recipes form the base for my experiments

– Chef Achala Weerasinghe

What has not, is that Chef Thamara is still very much a mama's girl. She is looking forward to calling up her mother with some good news after the Global Chefs Challenge.

That is not an impossibility. In the four years that she has been participating in culinary competitions, she's notched up some really impressive wins.

Although she's effortlessly fallen into the role of a manager of a high-pressure kitchen, Chef Thamara nurses no dreams of being an executive chef. "What I really want to do is open a banquet kitchen in Sri Lanka because cooking is what makes me the happiest."

She might yet surprise herself. It won't surprise us though, when she brings back the crown from Greece.

CHEF ACHALA WEERASINGHE

He's a sweet guy – in more ways than one. An affable personality, a creative bent and oodles of charm, Chef Achala Weerasinghe offers way more sweetness than the pastries he plates up. The executive pastry chef of Madinat Jumeirah in Dubai, Chef Achala is the regional choice for the Global Pastry Chefs Challenge.

He's not a newbie to contest wins. For



three years straight between 2009 and 2011, the Sri Lankan chef walked off with pastry chef honours at the Salon Culinaire. Working under pressure in the spotlight is not alien to him either. What's more, he's also a self-learner with the ability to think on his feet.

All these qualities make him a strong contender for the world title, a fitting milestone in a journey that began nearly two decades ago in a sleepy little village near Colombo.

The illustrious journey didn't even start in the kitchen. It started with a notepad and a tray at the Holiday Inn hotel in Colombo circa 1999, waiting on tables. But it took less than a month for Chef Achala to realise that wasn't what he wanted to do for the rest of his life.

The hot kitchen proved too 'hot', literally, for his sensitive nose. Like a moth to fire, Chef Achala was attracted

to the scent of baking and he managed to convince the head chef to place him in the pastry section.

He hasn't looked back since.

A chef from Dubai served as the key to opening the door for Chef Achala. Unfortunately, a job here required him to take a demotion on the designation. "I joined Emirates Towers as a commis III," he says.

It didn't take Chef Achala too long to claw his way back up the pastry kitchen. A couple of years later, he moved to Dusit hotel as a chef de partie. Two years more went by and then he moved on to the Renaissance hotel, where he was promoted to pastry chef after a few years.

Ask him who his mentor was and he points to his bookshelf. "I have spent a lot of money on recipe books and I still do – even 400 dirhams for one

book! The recipes form the base for my experiments."

In addition to talent, a pastry chef needs a strong sense of aesthetics, he believes. "Pastry is not just about taste, it's also about presentation."

Chef Achala's talent will be tested when he locks horns with the world's best pastry chefs in September. Should he win, he will inch closer to his ultimate wish – settling in Australia. "I dream of opening my own pastry shop or even a culinary school there."

He's definitely ready for the world stage. Is the world stage ready for him? Time will soon tell.

CHEF RAHIL RATHOD

Unlike his fellow travellers to Greece, Chef Rahil Rathod is hot off the oven. He's young, rather inexperienced, but that

hasn't stopped him from aiming for the sky. Working at the Radisson Blu Hotel Deira Creek, the youngster has won two of the biggest competitions for budding chefs.

He's different from other chefs in other ways too – Chef Rahil has studied both hospitality management and business management.

When he faces the judging squad at the Hans Bueschkens Young Chefs Challenge in a few months, he will be trying to prove not just his own potential but also that of the Africa and Middle East region. That shouldn't be too hard. He sailed through the Young Chefs Challenge at the WACS Regional Finals in Namibia and bagged the 'Young Chef of the Year' title at the BurJuman Treat 2013 in Dubai.

Most people go down the wrong road when they rebel. For Chef Rahil, rebellion was what took him down the right career path. If it wasn't for his need to do his own exploration, he would have been sitting in an office in the western state of Gujarat in India, balancing accounts instead of flavours.

Chef Rahil's father, who owns a transport business, hated watching his son hanging around in the kitchen. "He would drag me out of there, telling me that's not the place for a boy," laughs the young chef.

When he chose to study hotel management in India and Scotland, his father was rather disappointed. Today, the mood is different in the Rathod household. "He is proud of my achievements in this short span."

Chef Rahil may not have listened to his father on a career choice, but he blindly follows the words of his mentor, Uwe Micheel, the executive chef of Radisson Blu. "He knows what's needed to succeed and I accept whatever he says without question."

As for his own development strategy, plugging gaps in his cooking tops the priority list. Lately, Chef Rahil has been trying to learn to cook with liquid



nitrogen and focusing on pastry, which he considers "my weak point" His father will be happy to know that someday, the prodigal son will return to the family business. "What I would like to do is evolve the business to make it something food-related."

That can wait for now. Chef Rahil has to first grab the opportunity of a lifetime that is now staring him in the face. Restless, relentless and refreshingly new, the youngster has our vote.



Uwe Micheel knows what's needed to succeed and I accept whatever he says without questions

— Chef Rahil Rathod

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1. Olive Oil is high in vitamin content:

Olive oil contains a high content of antioxidants such as vitamins E and K. Antioxidants help strengthen the immune system and prevent diseases.

2. Olive Oil helps fight breast cancer:

Olive oil contains oleic acid, the major fatty acid component of the oil. Oleic acid stunts the development of a particular protein that encourages the growth of cancer cells.

3. Olive Oil reduces risk of stroke:

Olive oil reduces the risk of stroke by 41 per cent. This is mainly due to the fact that it contains monosaturated fats rather than saturated fats, which are a major contributor to artery-clogging, which results in strokes. Furthermore, olive oil lowers LDL (low density lipoprotein) cholesterol. High levels of cholesterol are a known contributing factor towards strokes.

4. Healthy skin:

Olive oil bath: Add five tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil into your bath and enjoy silky smooth skin after. (Could be altered to an olive oil massage prior to the bath.) **Make-up remover:** Olive oil acts as a great make-up remover as, along with removing make-up, it also hydrates your skin. Apply to a wet or dry cotton pad and gently wipe away the make-up. Then rinse with warm and then cold water. This will stimulate blood circulation. **Masks:** Mix an egg yolk with one tablespoon of olive oil along with three drops of lemon juice and apply to (clean) face. Leave for 5-10 minutes and rinse off with warm water. Then splash your face with cold water as this will help close the pores of your skin. This mask will nourish and hydrate your skin.

5. For healthy and shiny hair:

Extra virgin olive oil is beneficial for all hair types. It prevents hair loss and makes your hair silkier and shinier.

Hair masks:

Mix five tablespoons of olive oil for every one tablespoon of honey and massage the mixture into your hair. Cover your hair with a shower cap and leave it in for 90 minutes. Rinse with water and shampoo.



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THE QUEEN OF PIZZA

From the shores of Italy to the hallowed halls of Dubai, Chef **Floriana Pastore** is the reigning queen of the pizza world. **Aquin George** met the first ever female chef to win the World Champion Pizza Maker title in Las Vegas, and she packs quite a power punch, just like her cheesy, crunchy delights....

“Italy, the spring and first love, all together should suffice to make the gloomiest person happy,” British philosopher Bertrand Russell said in one of his mood moments.

Unfortunately, you can't order Italy, spring or first love in a restaurant. What you can, is a bite of Italian happiness straight out of the oven. A round piece of flat bread baked to perfection, layered with golden crusts of cheese, topped with the best of meats and veggies, this mood-lifting dish is today perhaps the most loved snack across the world.

And with good reason.

We all know that the humble pizza is sheer bliss on toast. Serving it up in all its glory is Chef Floriana Pastore, the undisputed queen of pizza. The daintiness of the ultra-feminine Italian belies her iron will and her mettle in the kitchen.

She's the first ever woman chef to have donned the title of World Champion Pizza Maker. At the Pizza Expo in Las Vegas last year, she yanked the honour right from under the noses of many a male chef. It wasn't even beginner's luck.

Rare is a time that Chef Floriana participates in a contest and doesn't win. In 2013, she shook the world of pizza,



I was just 18 at the time and a friend of mine asked me if I would like to help him set up a restaurant. I agreed and we established it with a team of five people

becoming the first ever female winner of the title. And there's no stopping her.

Today, as the pizza chef of Emirates Snack Foods, she spreads the message of her favourite food, educating chefs across the region on the nuances of Italy's pride and joy.

But hers was an unusual beginning to an illustrious career. While most chefs begin as trainees in someone else's kitchen, Chef Floriana started out with owning a restaurant. “I was just 18 at the time and a friend of mine asked me if I would like to help him set up a restaurant. I agreed and we established

it with a team of five people,” reminisces the now seasoned chef.

What's even more interesting is how she found her passion – through an accident in the kitchen! “Our pizza chef burnt his hand and it was difficult to find someone to substitute for him at such a short notice. I had to step in for two-three weeks and I really started enjoying it.”

Growing up in Salerno in south Italy near Naples, Chef Floriana had never given culinary career much of a thought until this happened. “There were no chefs in my family. My father worked in security in a company and my mother was a homemaker. The only exposure I had to food was when I watched her make pasta from scratch.”

Many other surprises were in store. At 20, Chef Floriana participated in a competition “just for fun”. “It was a qualifier competition for a national contest. I was shocked to have won it! There began my interest in contests.”

Three years of running the restaurant went by quickly. Along the way, Chef Floriana felt the first stirrings of wanderlust and the urge to study hospitality. “We had to shut the restaurant down then because we couldn't find anyone reliable to run it.”



The young chef moved to north Italy, where a bowling alley hired her for opening the pizzeria section. Chef Floriana spent three years there and six years more in another restaurant in Italy, before mustering the courage to test foreign shores in 2012.

"At first, I went to Australia. Then I moved to the US. Pizza is a very different concept outside Italy. A more Americanised version with a thicker base and a different method of preparation." Initially, her customers found it difficult to accept the authentic Italian pizza. With time, however, the real deal found many takers.

In 2013, Chef Floriana was in Las Vegas when she heard of the Pizza Expo. "It



In my first competition, there were a 100 chefs and I was the only female! But things are changing now. More and more women are joining the industry

had been nearly 10 years that I had participated in my last competition. 2004 was the last one I participated in and the fourth straight year that I won. I wanted to experience the rush again."

Her best shot turned out to be the best of the best. Chef Floriana's pizzas won the votes hands down, from the taste to the presentation to the baking, everything was impeccable. "The judges were looking at not just the taste but also the visual appeal. The base had to be baked to perfection, not too brown and not too white."

A year later, when Chef Floriana was offered a chance to come to Dubai, she let adventure guide her again. "This is a good place for food lovers on both sides – the foodie and the cook. I couldn't say no."

She now educates chefs across the region about each and every aspect of pizza – the flour, the cheese, the meat and vegetable, herbs, spices, oils, the list is long.



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"Mistakes start right from the flour level. Sometimes, chefs put too much sugar, sometimes not enough. Maybe there's too much butter in it or the flour is all wrong. You can't substitute one flour for another. Each type has distinct qualities that reflect in your pizza."

Being a female in an industry dominated by males makes her achievements all the more special. "In my first competition, there were a 100 chefs and I was the only female! But things are changing now. More and more women are joining the industry."

Passion and curiosity have been Chef Floriana's secrets for success. The power of observation is yet another quality that stands chefs in good stead, she feels.

Then there's love for the job, the most important ingredient in any chef's success story. "This is not a job you can do if you don't love it unconditionally. It's like a marriage. You spend so much time

in the kitchen. You can't survive it if you don't feel the love."

Chef Floriana began her career as the owner of a restaurant. That's how she wants to end it too. "I would like to open a restaurant eventually – maybe in Dubai or in the US."

But on her plate for now is judging the next Pizza Expo competition in Las Vegas this year. "It's a great honour, given that I have no formal training in judging a contest. It will be another first and I know I am up to the challenge."

Chef Floriana's connection to pizza is deeper than just being her professional specialisation. "It's a comfort food that both children and adults love. I see it as my responsibility to produce a top quality dish that satisfies all the senses, making the person feel secure and nice."

Happiness on a plate, that's what Chef Floriana serves up best.

FLORIANA'S TITLES

2016	Judge at the World Champion Pizza Maker in Las Vegas.
2015	World Champion Pizza Maker "The Best of The Best" Pizza Expo' Las Vegas (NV)
2013	World Champion Pizza Maker 2013 Pizza Expo' Las Vegas (NV)
2004	Italian champion Pizza Maker "Traditional Pizza", Roma, Italy
2003	Italian champion Pizza Maker "Pizza Dessert", Venice, Italy
2002	Italian champion Pizza Maker "Traditional Pizza", Italy
2001	Italian champion Pizza Maker "Pizza Dessert", Italy
2003	Certified Pizza trainer, Master Pizza Chef, Venice, Italy

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ENDEARING AJMAN

This month's competitors for the Nestlé Professional Golden Chefs Hat competition - UAE are two youngsters from the The Ajman Palace Hotel and Resort. They've raised the bar quite early in the competition and have prepared some absolutely stunning dishes with the ingredients provided to them. Here's a bit about the two competitors.

Chef Jayanta Rabha

This 25-year-old from the north-eastern state of Assam, India has always had a thing for cooking. With his high school studies having finished, he decided that pursuing a degree in a specialised course had to be the way forward. He moved to the metropolitan city of Kolkata, where he spent three years pursuing a

bachelor's degree in Hotel Management & Catering Technology from the reputed Govt. Institute of Hotel Management.

During his studies he completed a six-month industrial training programme at the Golden Palms Hotel and Spa in Bangalore and went on to work his first role with one of the world's best properties, The Oberoi Rajvilas in Jaipur.

He later moved to The Ajman Palace Hotel and Resort where he now works as Demi Chef de Partie. For this competition he's made us a Sous vide lamb rack with braised lamb ragout tortellini and plum compote with pomegranate emulsion.

Chef Rimpa Shill

For this young lady from Mumbai, the pastry

kitchen was the ultimate destination. It's just that she never realised it. Following her graduation, she pursued a diploma in Aviation, Hospitality & Travel Management and much later joined the pastry section of the Armani hotel's pre-opening team.

Her skills were so in tune with the job at hand that she soon grew up the ranks and joined Oryx Rotana in Doha as Demi Chef de Partie. However, she soon returned to the UAE to join The Ajman Palace Hotel and Resort where her hard working nature was rewarded and is now Sr. Chef de Partie.

Her natural talent at creating amazing desserts is evident in the blood orange caramel cream with vanilla brûlée served with chocolate ice cream. Here are their dishes.





Chef Jayanta Rabha



Chef Rimpa Shill

Sous vide lamb rack with braised lamb ragout tortellini and plum compote with pomegranate emulsion

SOUS VIDE LAMB RACK

Lamb rack	800 gm
MAGGI® Coconut Powder	as required
Sea salt	15 gm
Olive oil	10 gm
Rosemary	10 gm
Crushed black pepper	10 gm
Pistachio	100 gm
Parsley	40 gm

Preparation

- ◆ Trim the lamb and cut it according to the portion size.
- ◆ Season the lamb with sea salt, olive oil, rosemary and crushed pepper.
- ◆ Put it in the vacuum bag and seal it.
- ◆ Cook the lamb in sous vide style in oven at 60°C for 60 minutes
- ◆ Make a crust of parsley, pistachio and parmesan.
- ◆ Take a pan, add butter and give the lamb rack a nice golden crust.

PLUM COMPOTE

Fresh plum	150 gm
Mint	10 gm
Rice vinegar	100 ml
Butter	50 gm
Brown sugar	20 gm
Pepper	5 gm

Preparation

- ◆ Wash the plum.
- ◆ Cut the plum into wedges.
- ◆ Take a pan, add butter, add plum wedges and give it a nice colour.
- ◆ Add rice vinegar and brown sugar.
- ◆ And finish finally with mint.

CARAMELISED PARSNIP PUREE

Parsnip	100 gm
White onion	50 gm
Coriander seeds	5 gm
Sea salt	5 gm
Olive oil	20 gm
Bay leaf	2 gm

Preparation

- ◆ Wash and peel the parsnip.
- ◆ Cut into small dices.
- ◆ Take a pan, add olive oil, coriander seeds and bay leaf. Then add white onion and parsnip together and caramelise it until evenly coloured. Blend it with vegetable stock.

- ◆ Season the puree as needed.

POTATO MASH

MAGGI® Mashed Potato	200 gm
Water	200 gm
Salt	5 gm
Nutmeg	1 gm
Cream	30 gm
Butter	30 gm

Preparation

- ◆ Mix potato powder in a pan of boiling water making sure there are no lumps.
- ◆ Finish with cream and butter, and season accordingly.
- ◆ Finally, add a dash of nutmeg.

DEMI-GLACE

Chef® Demi Glace	50 gm
Water	200 ml
Rosemary	5 gm
Salt	10 gm

Preparation

- ◆ Add demi-glaze to a pan of boiling water with rosemary infused in it.
- ◆ Reduce the sauce as per need and consistency.

GLAZED VEGETABLE WITH TOMATO COULIS

Asparagus	100 gm
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Baby zucchini	100 gm
Yellow zucchini	100 gm
Shallot	50 gm

MAGGI® Tomato Coulis	15 gm
MAGGI® Chicken Stock	15 gm

Preparation

- ♦ Cut all the vegetables and cook separately.
- ♦ Season with chicken stock.
- ♦ In a pan, add all the vegetable and finish with little tomato coulis.

POMEGRANATE AND MINT EMULSION

Pomegranate juice	100 ml
Salt	5 gm
Pepper	5 gm

Lecite (Texturas)	5 gm
Dry mint powder	3 gm

Preparation

- ♦ Gently warm the pomegranate emulsion.
- ♦ Add salt, pepper and mint powder.
- ♦ Add lecite to the warm mixture.
- ♦ Blend it with a hand blender until you get a stiff foam.

BRAISED LAMB RAGOUT TORTELLINI

Lamb	250 gm
MAGGI® Tomato coulis	100 gm
Onion	70 gm
Leek	70 gm
Celery	70 gm

Fresh tomato	50 gm
Salt	10 gm
Chef® Demi Glace	50 gm

Pasta dough

Flour	200 gm
Salt	5 gm
Olive oil	10 gm
Egg	150 gm

Preparation

- ♦ Take the trimming from the lamb marinate it with rosemary and slowly braise it for 3 to 4 hours.
- ♦ Add tomato coulis to it slowly and stuff into pasta dough.
- ♦ Finish the pasta with tomato coulis
- ♦ Assemble on the plate as show in the image.

Blood orange caramel cream, vanilla brûlée served with chocolate ice cream

BLOOD ORANGE MOELLEUX

Eggs	125 gm
Sugar	50 gm
Butter	25 gm
Gelatine	5 gm
Blood orange puree	250 gm

Preparation

- ♦ Soak gelatine in cold water.
- ♦ Mix the egg and sugar in a bowl.
- ♦ Boil the puree up to 90°C and pour on egg and sugar mixture.
- ♦ Cook the mixture further up to 82°C.
- ♦ Add soaked gelatine and butter.
- ♦ Blend and strain. Pour in to a mould and freeze it.

CARAMEL MOUSSE

Sugar	114 gm
Fresh cream	157 gm

Milk	214 gm
Egg yolk	90 gm
Gelatine sheet	15 gm
Whipping cream	147 gm

Italian meringue

Egg white	60 gm
Sugar	125 gm
Water	25 gm

Preparation

- ♦ Caramelize the sugar, add cream and milk, then boil again.
- ♦ Pour in the egg yolk and cook up to 85°C
- ♦ Add gelatin then let it cool down.



- ♦ Make meringue by boiling sugar, water (125c) then pour it on the egg white.
- ♦ Mix meringue with (30c caramel mixture)
- ♦ Then fold the whipping cream into that.

CARAMEL GLACE

Sugar	150 gm
Water	200 gm
Dextrose	110 gm
Glucose	60 gm
Condensed milk	190 gm
Gelatine sheet	9 gm
Cocoa butter	70 gm
Neutral glaze	150 gm

Preparation

- ♦ Soak gelatine in cold water.
- ♦ Caramelise the sugar at 185°C.
- ♦ Pour warm water on the caramel to stop cooking.
- ♦ Add dextrose, glucose and heat to 102°C
- ♦ Add condensed milk, neutral glaze, the gelatine and bring to boil.
- ♦ Add the liquid melted cocoa butter in several goes until glossy and elastic, signifying the emulsification process.
- ♦ Blend to finish.
- ♦ Leave to rest overnight in the fridge.
- ♦ Melt at 27°C, then glaze.

KIT KAT PRALINE CREPE

Milk chocolate	90 gm
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Pate de noisette	180 gm
Butter	35 gm
Kit Kat® Mix In	100 gm
Paillette feuilletine	40 gm

Preparation

- ♦ Melt chocolate and add noisette
- ♦ Add soft butter
- ♦ Add feuilletine and the Kit Kat mix in

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE ICE CREAM

Cream	75 gm
Milk	150 gm
Docello® Chocolate Mousse	50 gm
Valrhona Chocolate 70%	25 gm
Egg yolk	1 ½
Sugar	60 gm

Preparation

- ♦ Boil cream, milk and pour on chocolate 70% and chocolate mousse powder.
- ♦ Cook up to 82°C
- ♦ Strain and put in a paco jet, freeze it overnight.
- ♦ Turn the chocolate mousse ice cream, as required.

VANILLA CRÈME BRÛLÉE

Docello® Crème Brûlée	60 gm
Milk	250 gm
Cream	125 gm
Vanilla bean	1

Preparation

- ♦ Boil milk and cream with vanilla bean.

- ♦ Add the crème brûlée mix.
- ♦ Mix well and strain it.
- ♦ Spread in a flexi pan and freeze it.

BLOOD ORANGE CHIPS

Water	250 gm
Glucose	75 gm
Sugar	50 gm
Orange zest	1 peel
Lemon zest	1 peel
Blood orange	1 (sliced)

Preparation

- ♦ Boil all ingredients together except the blood orange slice.
- ♦ Then soak the sliced blood orange in to a syrup. Arrange in flexi pan.
- ♦ Bake for 3 hours at 75°C.

CARAMELISED HAZELNUT STICK

Glucose	100 gm
Sugar Fondant	100 gm
Hazelnut peeled	6

Preparation

- ♦ Boil glucose and sugar fondant until caramelised.
- ♦ When its caramelised, put the pot in ice cubes.
- ♦ Leave it for 2-3 minutes, then dip the hazelnut with toothpick and start making the sticks.
- ♦ White chocolate rings, gold leaf to finish the dessert.

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BAKER'S DOZEN

Pride, prejudice and parents, Chef **Taha Boudhib** has had to fight a lot to become the culinaire that he is today. Not that the Chef Pâtissier of Dubai World Trade Centre has any regrets. His bittersweet victory is the kind of stuff sweet dreams are made of...

A chef is neither seen, nor heard. But gastronomists know that you can draw the portrait of a chef through his creations – the colours, the textures, the flavours. In that, Chef Taha Boudhib is a very colourful personality.

Chance upon his Instagram handle or his Facebook page and that's enough to make you ravenously hungry. An authentic French cake balancing the light

delights of macarons with the freshness of strawberries, a sinfully chocolatey three-chocolate verrine begging for attention, cupcakes, wedding cakes, red-coated croissants, his pages are a veritable treasure trove of sweetness.

So is he, something you realise the minute you meet him.

In broken English, he enthusiastically narrates his culinary story, stopping only

to find the right words to express himself.

Born in Nice in France to a French father and a Tunisian mother, Chef Taha took years to convince his parents that food was his calling. "When I would try to learn to bake from my mother, she used to throw me out of the kitchen, saying that cooking was not a man's job," says the 13-year veteran of pastry.

Living above a pastry shop with his



father, a construction industry executive, and his mother, who worked in hospitality, made Chef Taha all the more determined to pursue his dream.

The ambition met resistance not just from his parents but also his teacher. "My teacher once asked me what I wanted to do when I grew up. When I said I wanted to be a pastry chef, she asked me if I was crazy!" The teacher went to the extent of summoning Chef Taha's parents and telling them she was assigning him to an accounting course because he was good in math. "My mother wanted me to be a doctor or an engineer or an architect. But off I went to do accounting."

After studying accounting for two years, he got a diploma. But stubbornly clung to his dream of being a pastry chef. "My mother gave in and allowed me to work for a pastry chef. For the first three months, I didn't tell my father what I was doing." Sneaking in and out of home in the wee hours of morning, he kept the secret until one day, his father went searching for him around the house early morn. "I had to tell him when I returned home. He felt bad for stopping me and said he would support me in whatever I chose to do."

A chocolate expert that Chef Taha worked with taught him to bake and the finer techniques of pastry. He also encouraged the young chef to head out to Monaco in Monte Carlo. "I did and worked for a really influential lady. I also worked in some high-end hotels including the Meridien and many pastry shops. That gave me a chance to make desserts for celebrities like Michael Schumacher, Elton John, Brad Pitt."

Around 2005, Chef Taha formalised his culinary education with a 'Complémentaire Pâtisserie Chocolaterie Glacière Confiseur' diploma from Nice. He kept building on his abilities by taking short courses on different kinds of desserts and techniques. One of these courses took him to Qatar in 2013.



By then, Chef Taha had managed to win a sizeable number of followers on his social media accounts. Impressed with his creations, a Duba-based company offered him a job in Dubai. A couple of years later, Chef Taha secured a position at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

"Here, I get to work across a cross-section of clients – from royal families to restaurants. The basket of events spans from weddings to parties to banquets and catering. It's very exciting because I have to make desserts and cakes that can be elaborate or can be prepared quickly and yet are tasty and visually appealing." From croquembouche to showpieces to desserts, he experiments with them all. Chef Taha loves mixing and matching French flavours and styles with Arabic influences. "The results

are pretty fantastic!" he enthuses and thanks his Executive Pastry Chef and his Executive Chef for their support.

The French chef loves the variety of products that are available in the Dubai market for his experiments. "I especially like Anchor butter and cream. The softness and consistency are ideal for texture-heavy items such as ganache and mousse."

Chef Taha loves his job so much that he didn't even hire someone else to do his own wedding cake. "Yes, I made it myself. There were 400 people at my wedding but there was no way I wasn't going to make the cake. Becoming a pastry chef was a hard-earned victory."

Browse through his creations and you can't help but feel grateful for it.

FANTASTIC CHOCOLATE ORANGE HAZELNUT

Composition: Guanaja Chocolate Cremeux, Manjari Chocolate Orange Ganache , Chocolate Joconde Sponge, Chocolate Dentelle, Hazelnut Crumble, Hazelnut Parfait, Hot Chocolate & Orange Sauce, Lavender Coulis.



CHOCOLATE JOCONDE SPONGE

EGGS	0,500 KG
ALMOND POWDER	0,360 KG
ICING SUGAR	0,400 KG
COCOA POWDER	0,110 KG
FLOUR	0,090 KG
EGGS WHITE	0,350 KG
SUGAR	0,050 KG

ANCHOR BUTTER

0,090 KG

Preparation

- Whisk eggs and powders. Add Anchor butter melted, add the meringue. Cook at 200C during 8 minutes



CHOCOLATE CREMEUX

ANCHOR CREAM	0,400 KG
MILK	0,400 KG
YELLOW	0,150 KG
SUGAR	0,110 KG
COUVERTURE CARAIBES	0,275 KG
COUVERTURE GUANAJA	0,275 KG

Preparation

- Cook the Anchor Cream, milk, yellow eggs and sugar at 75 C. Add Chocolate Couvertures. Blend and Reserve at 4 C.

CHOCOLATE & ORANGE GANACHE

ANCHOR CREAM	0,750 KG
MILK	0,170 KG
ORANGE ZESTE	0,010 KG



INVERTED SUGAR	0,130 KG
BUTTER	0,150 KG
COUVERTURE CARAIBES	0,750 KG

Preparation

- Boil Anchor Cream, Milk and inverted sugar. Add to Orange Zeste, Caraibe Chocolate and Anchor Butter. Start the emulsion. Mould at 4cm.

HAZELNUT CREAM

YELLOW EGGS	0,32 KG
SUGAR	0,14 KG
GLUCOSE	0,100 KG
VANLIA BEANS	0,002 KG
HAZELNUT PASTE	0,150 KG
WHIP ANCHOR CREAM	0,900 KG

Preparation

- Realize the sabayon with eggs, sugar, glucose and vanlia beans. Add hazelnut paste. Add the Anchor Whip Cream. Mould at 3cm. Reserve in the freezer.



ANCHOR BUTTER	0,150 KG
BROWN SUGAR	0,070 KG
WHITE SUGAR	0,090 KG
HAZELNUTS POWDER	0,030 KG
COCOA POWDER	0,030 KG
FLOUR T55	0,090 KG
DARK COLORANT LIQUIDE	0,002 KG

Preparation

- ♦ Mix all ingredients. Reserve 1 hour in the chiller. Cook at 180C.



HOT CHOCOLATE & ORANGE SAUCE

ANCHOR CREAM	0,150 KG
COCONUT MILK	0,070 KG
COCOA POWDER	0,090 KG
GUANAJA CHOCOLATE	0,030 KG
MANJARI CHOCOLATE	0,030 KG
ORANGE ZESTE	0,090 KG



Preparation

- ♦ Boil Anchor Cream, coconut milk. Add to

Guanaja, Manjari Chocolate and Orange Zeste. Mix. Reserve at 75 C.



CHOCOLATE DENTELLE

- ♦ Temper the chocolate, mould in the silicone mould. Paint with gold powder. Reserve.



Dressage

- ♦ In a chocolate ball at 7cm, put a layer of creamy, add the insert with the ganache, put some broken crumble, add a disc 5cm of Joconde biscuit, smooth, add the perfect hazelnut and cover with lace cage. Garnish with raspberry, crumble, lavender coulis and gold silvers. Serve the dessert with the Hot Chocolate and Orange Sauce.

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Creative Food & Beverage Solutions

DELIVERING EXCELLENCE

When the chefs at Hilton Doha were approached to partake in the Nestlé Professional Golden Chefs Hat Competition for Qatar, they said yes in a heartbeat. This despite the fact they had just three days to prepare, train and

cook. And they delivered better than you could have expected. Here is a bit about the team.

Chef Mohamed El Sayed

This Egyptian Sous Chef at Hilton Doha did not start very young when pursuing

his dreams in the kitchen. However, his skills in Oriental cooking has helped him come up the ladder faster than he would have imagined. Following his studies, he joined Hilton Nile as a trainee chef where he spent two years learning everything he could possibly could. From



**Chef Mohamed El Sayed**

working late nights to doing the most menial jobs, he spent most of his time inside the kitchen.

He then joined the Marriott in Cairo where he spent another two years excelling at his job and climbing the career ladder.

His first big break came when he was recruited to join Atlantis The Palm as Chef de Partie in 2010. He spent four years working for one of the more demanding kitchens in the UAE and even made a name for himself when he won a Gold medal at the Dubai World Hospitality Championship.

He then joined his first employer group Hilton in Dubai as Junior Sous Chef and was soon promoted to Sous Chef and sent to work for his current employer, the Hilton Doha. Here he's getting his first real taste at what it takes to manage a group of chefs and loves cooking himself.

**Chef Mohammed Shahid**

Chef Mohammed Shahid

This 29-year-old from New Delhi, India grew up knowing he would be a Chef someday. Soon after his high school he completed a diploma in computer applications based on the feedback he received from those around him.

He however had decided that cooking was the way forward for him and ended up successfully completing his Diploma in F & B production (a year-long food craft course) from the B.C.I.H.M. Institute of Hotel Management in New Delhi.

During his studies he even completed a six-month industrial training programme at the Ramee Group of Hotels in Mumbai. He heard about the Group having properties in the Gulf and that chefs receive a greater exposure to multicultural work environments here.

While he thought that would be a good idea, he was soon recruited to join the team of the much renowned Grand Hyatt Hotel in Mumbai. His first fulltime job as a Commis could not have had a better head start. He learnt the finer nuances of working in a renowned 5-star property before making his way to Abu Dhabi a year later.

He worked in the UAE capital for Intercontinental, Shangri-La and Traders Hotels for five years before heading to Qatar to join his current employer. As Chef de Partie, he reports to the head chef and is required to be ready to take charge in his absence.

During these years he has notched up a few awards at culinary events as well as best employee awards. For this competition he's made Date Panna Cotta and Coconut Chocolate Mousse.

Lamb Rack

Ingredients

Lamb rack, frenched	220 gm
MAGGI® Mashed Potato	800 gm
Chef® Demi Glace	30 ml

Vegetables

Baby carrot	1
Asparagus	1
Beetroot	1
Portobello mushroom	1
Garlic	2 cloves crushed
Olive oil	2 tbsps
Salt	to taste
Black pepper	to taste
Rosemary	to taste
Cheddar cheese	25 gm
Soy peas	20 gm
Vegetable oil	2 cups
Mashed potatoes	3 cups

Cheddar cheese	1 cup shredded
Cayenne pepper	1/2 teaspoon
Eggs, beaten	2 large
Panko	1 ½ cups

Method

- ◆ Heat oven to 200°C and line a large oven tray with baking paper.
- ◆ Place racks on oven tray and brush evenly with 2 tablespoons of oil over each rack; season to taste.
- ◆ Roast lamb for 10 minutes or until cooked to your liking; rest for 15 minutes.
- ◆ Mix the demi-glace with water until boiling and keep stirring.
- ◆ Mix mash potato powder in boiling water until cooked.
- ◆ Add 2 tablespoons of olive oil and season to taste.
- ◆ Mix boiling salt water with carrot, asparagus, and cooling it on ice water

- ◆ Cook the Portobello mushroom for 5 minutes.
- ◆ Heat vegetable oil in a large stockpot or Dutch oven over medium high heat.
- ◆ In a large bowl, combine mashed potatoes, cheese, chives.
- ◆ Using a small cookie scoop, roll the mixture into 1 -to-1 ½ -inch balls, forming about 25.
- ◆ Roll the carrot and asparagus with the mash potato and herb
- ◆ Working one at a time, dip balls into eggs, then dredge in Panko, pressing to coat.
- ◆ Working in batches, add balls to the Dutch oven and cook until evenly golden and crispy, about 2-3 minutes.
- ◆ Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate.





Date Panna Cotta and Coconut Chocolate Mousse

Prep time 40 Minutes - Serves: 4

FOR PANNA COTTA

Docello® Panna Cotta	80 gm
Milk	150 ml
Cream	150 ml
Gelatine sheet	1
Dates	as required

Method

- ◆ Soak the gelatine in cold water and dissolve.
- ◆ Mix all ingredients and whip in a mixer

as per instructions on the panna cotta pack.

- ◆ Add gelatine and keep aside.

FOR COCONUT CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

Docello® Chocolate Mousse	160 gm
Milk	250 ml
MAGGI® Coconut Powder	30 gm
Gelatine sheet	1

Method

- ◆ Soak the gelatine in cold water and dissolve.
- ◆ Mix all ingredients and whip in a mixer as per instruction mention on the mousse pack.
- ◆ Add gelatine and keep aside.

To assemble

- ◆ To assemble spoon off the mousse mix into a cone shape.
- ◆ Spoon panna cotta over the mousse.
- ◆ Then gently spoon the mousse over the top.
- ◆ Cover and chill.

To serve

- ◆ To serve, turn the cone upside down on to a serving plate.
- ◆ Cover with chocolate sauce.
- ◆ Decorate with berries, Florentine ring.



EMPOWERING THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY

CCA Dubai Culinary Scholarship, the One Million Dirham continuing education award for UAE young industry chefs, a first-of-its-kind industry scholarship programme has now progressed through 70 per cent of its journey of knowledge, empowering its first batch of 25 deserving upcoming culinary talent.

The scholarship is being executed in strategic partnership with the Emirates Culinary Guild, World Association of Chefs Societies (WorldChefs) – Young Chefs, and City & Guilds, London.

The 52 week 'Day Release Programme', which is ICCA Dubai's International Chef Training Program (ICTP) with City & Guilds, International Vocational

Qualification (IVQ) Level 2 Diploma in Food Preparation & Culinary Arts (8065-02), is progressing well and empowering candidates to move to the next level in the world of culinary, by providing a unique learning experience through hands-on training delivered by the most experienced Chefs in the industry.

This comprehensive and intensive training program focuses on training and equipping the scholarship student Chefs with the knowledge, skills and best practices aligned to industry needs for quality delivery.

Chef Andy Cuthbert, Chairman ECG & Young Chefs Development Team for WorldChefs and Chef Uwe Micheel, President of ECG are delighted with the

impact that the programme is having on the candidates. The evidence is clear from the passion and commitment that the candidates are showing towards the programme and from the increased levels of confidence that has changed their outlook towards their profession and themselves.

This hands-on and dedicated scholarship programme has not only broadened their opportunities, but has also uplifted the quality of output at the work environment. "When I started my scholarship programme, I thought I knew it all, as I had worked with so many hotels before and was now getting to learn the very basics of culinary at the school. It has been very beneficial for me to have a walkthrough the basics,

it makes me feel more confident to put things to work in the kitchen now," says Abdul Hamid Raddawi, Sous Chef, Marriott Courtyard Hotel.

The programme started right from the very basics, with most candidates expressing the immense benefits of learning the fundamentals of culinary. It is helping them to deal with their current work, with a lot more application of knowledge and also giving a clear understanding of what is being done. "Learning while I am working is helping me a lot, especially when I am going through the basics again. This opportunity, is not only building up my confidence but I am also able to help my colleagues in the kitchen," says Pradnya Nikam from Radisson Blu Hotel, Deira Creek.

The program has provided a tremendous



source of knowledge support to the candidates, as most of them are not from a culinary school background and have learnt or are still learning on their jobs from senior chefs and colleagues.

Michelle Asiddao Gabay from Emirates Flight Catering says, "I have never been to a culinary school before and

I started working in the kitchen by peeling potatoes and onions when I was doing the job of a waitress. As I never had a chance to get a qualification in culinary before, it is great to have this opportunity to earn my professional qualification now while I am working. I feel so blessed that I have been selected for this programme by the selection panel and thankful to my Executive Chef for nominating me for this scholarship programme."

For some, the scholarship programme is a great way to earn a qualification while working, but for others it's a lifetime dream come true. "The scholarship programme has changed many things in

my professional life. I got promoted at work after joining the course, and the best part is the senior chefs have trust in my work and ask me to share my knowledge with my fellow kitchen mates. This is nothing less than a dream come true," says Jennah Sanchez from Atlantis The Palm.

The training is application focused with emphasis on commercial cookery skills, product creativity, presentation, multitasking abilities, interpersonal skills, supervisory and leadership strength required for the industry.

"Every Tuesday when I come to ICCA Dubai for the scholarship programme classes, I get to know something new which I did not know before. I am more confident now when I am in the kitchen by gaining more knowledge in a



systematic way," says Chammika Perera, Radisson Blu Hotel, Deira Creek.

The candidates driven by passion for food and for the industry have been further strengthened by this programme. "My mom's cooking skills inspired me to choose culinary as my career, and also I think 'Chef' is a very small word but at the same time it's very powerful and I feel really proud when someone calls me 'Chef'", says Ajit Paste, Demi Chef De Parte, Media One Hotel.

If it is mom for Ajit, then it is Dad for Mithun Chamika, Demi Chef De Parte, Radisson Blu Hotel, Deira Creek. For Mithun, cooking came naturally. His father being the first chef in the family, he followed in his father's footsteps.

Chef Mithun Chamika, 'Best Chef of



the Year' at the La Cuisine Du SIAL Abu Dhabi 2015 sees this scholarship programme as the best opportunity he has got in his life, which he thinks will open many more doors for him around the world.

Top of the line guest lecturers and trainers from the industry who have taken classes for the candidates so far

include; Christian Gradnitzer (Madinat Jumeirah), Sascha Triemer (Atlantis the Palm), Michael Kitts (Emirates Academy), Sebastian Nohse (JW Marriott Marquis), Osama El Sayed (Celebrity Chef), Harald Oberender (DWTC), Thomas Haller (Nestle Professional Middle East), Patrick Bischoff (Cleveland, Abu Dhabi), Marco Torasso (Grosvenor House), KAC Prasad (Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort), Nugraha Wardhana (Banyan Tree), Dirk Haltenhof (Madinat Jumeirah) and Suriya Abeysekara (Radisson Blu), along with ICCA's Chef instructors Daniel Hiltbrunner, Aziz Rajab, Vinod Radhakrishnan, Ashwini Kumar, Francois Giussani and Marco J Morana.

The programme is now gathering more momentum as the candidates are feeling more confident about the application of their knowledge and skills, and are dreaming big about their future as great industry chefs.

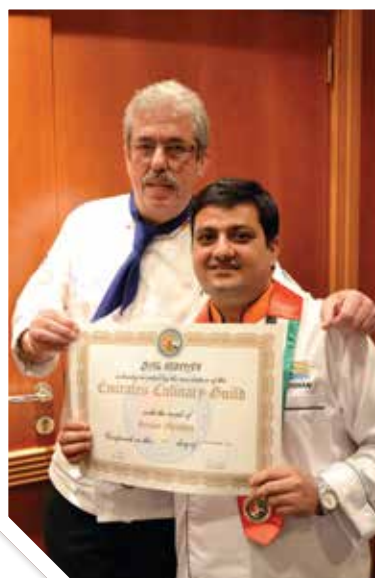
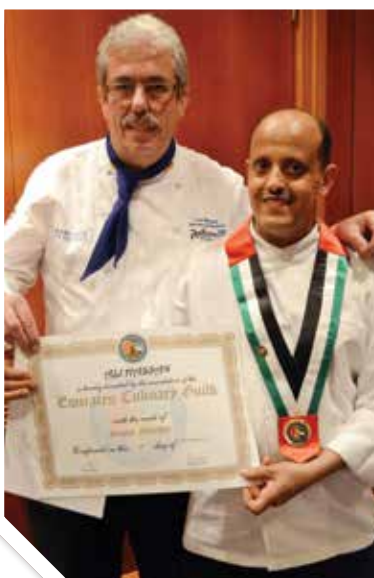


I never had a chance to get a qualification in culinary before, it is great to have this opportunity to earn my professional qualification now while I am working

— Michelle Asiddao Gabay





February 2016 **Gulf Gourmet**

NEW SENIOR CHEF ECG MEMBERS

The recent Guild meeting saw the induction of new senior chef members. This further strengthens the Guild's membership and allows for furthering the culinary standards and to make our cities among the world's top destinations for global cuisine. Among the new chef members are Adinto Sasongko, Ali Hassan, Mazen Khadour, Asep Arochmat Arsy, Bal Kishan, Firas Abukhreibe, Ismaeel Mohammad, Ismaeel Mohammad and Sufyan Alkebata.





February 2016 **Gulf Gourmet**

TRAINING SEMINAR ON RAW FISH

The Electrolux – WorldChefs and ICCA conducted the chef-to-chef industry training seminar on raw fish cooked differently. The hands-on workshop held last month at ICCA with senior members of the Emirates Culinary Guild in attendance, focused on making raw sea food, safe to cook. Here are images from the event.





PREMIUM ICE CREAM

*Crafted with the finest ingredients
from around the world*



The foodservice industry in the region depends on just one dedicated partner. At IFFCO, we deliver great service, high quality products and superior value across several product categories.

IFFCO Foodservice. Your partner who delivers.

P.O. Box 2299023, Sharjah, UAE. Tel. +971 06 1234567. Email: info@iffco.com

February 2016 **Gulf Gourmet**

The Guild Meet

The last Guild meeting in January was hosted by Chef Talal Jaradat and his Team from Dubai Marine Beach Resort & Spa. The turnout was great and allowed chefs the opportunity to network with their peers and industry colleagues.



newmembers



Silvia Persico – Business Development Manager – La Marquise International and Olga Mirtova- Marketing Manager receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

Being a distributor for over 20 brands of top quality Food & Beverage products and Professional Equipment to HORECA since 2002, La Marquise International is well established on the market and have an extensive number of customers. We service over 2000 clients in the GCC region and beyond, among which you find Rotana Group, Marriott International, Jumeirah Group, Emirates Flight Catering, Olayan Group that operates Burger King, Texas Chicken and Buffalo Wild Wings, and many more.

La Marquise International major focus is within the following areas: Pastry & Bakery, Gelato, Coffee and Non Alcoholic Beverages. Here we provide complete solutions, starting with the products and equipment, followed by outlet fitting suggestions and robust after sales support, including comprehensive training, menu creation service and 24/7 technical support.



Hotel segment certainly has our robust focus, where we keep Chefs and F&B Professionals satisfied with the vast range of pastry, bakery and chocolate items from Italian brand IRCA and Healthy Focused range, Gluten, Lactose and Eggs Free from Palais du Chef. For catering purposes we supply ready-to-fill French pastry from Jean Ducourtieux. In addition to the baking needs we supply ovens from Convotherm and Merrychef, shock freezers and blast chillers from Irinox, customized pastry displays from IFI.

Satisfying the gelato needs La Marquise holds portfolio of gelato

ingredients from MEC3, professional gelato equipment from Carpigiani and ice-cream displays from IFI.

For the front house, restaurants and bars we supply unique water filtration systems Nordaq Fresh that cleanses tap water to Michelin star quality one. It's widely used for outlet sales as well as in cooking. Moreover, we hold in our portfolio Manitowoc ice machines, FB Faba bar and counters equipment, coffee machines from La Cimbali and WMF and extensive range of beverages solutions, including Pellini coffee, 1883 Maison Routin syrups, teas and tisanes from Te Reval and JAF Tea, Pellorce & Jullien ready-to-use Pure Fruit Purees, Smoothies and Frappes from One&Only, and many more.

In 2016 La Marquise have ambitious plans to open offices in Oman and Qatar within the first two quarters of the year.



Akil Yassine - Business Development Manager – La Patisserie and Fadi Rammal –General Manager receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

La Patisserie is an international chain catering of Arabic Sweets and Pastries. It is a HACCP Certified company as per GCC requirement. Established in the year 2005, it has grown rapidly since then building its image in the ho-re-ca market. The main customers are Palaces, Airlines and 5-star hotels and Imminent Catering services in United Arab Emirates.

La Patisserie has a goal of supplying the best quality product at an affordable price to the customers and that obtain the market majority.

The factory is located in Al Quoz



Industrial Area, Dubai, and is designed for the production of Arabic Sweets and Pastries. It has 4 products divisions as: Oriental Sweets; Moroccan Sweets; and the Lebanese Snacks & Appetizers. Each division employs skilled staff to do the best homemade products.

Our unique asset lies within our team. More than 138 of very well educated and professional employees run the show. Sales, Telesales, Marketing, Logistics,

Warehouse, Supply Chain, Food Producers, Quality Assurance, Finance and Administration compose all the departments who are in turn the reason of creating the best quality products and services.

Understanding the customer needs is La Patisserie priority, thus, food safety is a commitment. All the products are made under strictest measures of quality and hygiene.

La Patisserie is looking for reliable partner to distribute its new retails products in the Retails Market in UAE & Oman.



Hany El Saigh, Food Service Manager-Lower Gulf at Fonterra receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Mischeel.

Our Foodservice business provides customers with dairy products and chef-led solutions designed specifically to support their culinary needs. We work behind the scenes to deliver exciting new tastes and products for Chefs, Bakers, Caterers, Commercial Kitchens, Hotels, Restaurants, Quick Service Restaurants and Cafes in 50 countries around the world. Our expertise in dairy enables us to meet the evolving needs of the Foodservice industry across a range of products including Cheese, Butter, Cream Cheese, Yogurt, Cream and Beverages. Together with our customers, we work to find chef-led solutions that will improve productivity in the kitchen, increase yield, reduce wastage, improve nutritional outcomes, enhance taste and texture, and deliver new menu options.

Fonterra is committed to the growth of the Foodservice industry and to



providing customers with tailored products and solutions that support their business needs. In 2005, Fonterra Foodservice was established as a dedicated sales division to meet the specialised demands of customers in Quick Service Restaurants, Fast Food outlets, Cafés, Restaurants, Hotels, Bakeries, Commercial and Institutional Catering, and Manufacturing.

Fonterra provides Foodservice operators with a range of branded dairy products, as well as core dairy ingredients, including ready-to-serve creams, beverages, butter, yoghurt, cultured dairy, and cheese.

We bring together both consumer and ingredient products to provide a comprehensive suite of products for the modern commercial kitchen. Today's foodservice professionals face ever increasing consumer demands for high quality and tasty food. They need to present good value for money, with a high degree of choice and customisation, and products need to be delivered rapidly, in a variety of forms. They are challenged to provide fresh, quality, nutritious food, as fast and efficiently as possible while keeping costs down and continuing to surprise and delight consumers. Fonterra Foodservice have a team committed to working behind the scenes where people eat out, working with chefs and caterers to create solutions, tailored products and innovations in taste and experience. With its expertise in dairy, Fonterra is able to meet the vast range of needs for today's foodservice professional.



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US\$ 3 billion

what's your GCC market share?

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

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

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

Now you do the maths.

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

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

Gulf Gourmet is the only magazine endorsed by the ECG.

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

Take advantage of our platform.

Positively impact your market share!

Contact us now

advertise@gulfgourmet.net / 050-5045033

REACH

ENGAGE

INFLUENCE

ABOUT GULF GOURMET

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

WHO READS IT?

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

REACH BY COUNTRY

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

MARKET SEGMENTATION

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

gulf
gourmet

Quality has no Alternative



La Marquise International is one of the leading distributors in Professional Equipment, F&B Products and Ingredients for HORECA.

Our area of focus is Pastry, Bakery, Gelato, Coffee and other non-alcoholic beverages. We pride to provide our customers with full after-sales service, including 24/7 technical support, product training and menu creation support.



www.lamarquise.ae | tel. +971 4 3433478





Application Membership

Date of Application:

Family Name: (Mr./Ms./Mrs.)

First Name/s:

Nationality:

Civil Status:

Date of Birth: dd/mm/yy

Name of Employer:

Address in Home Country:

Work Address:

Tel:

Web Address:

Email:

Telephone Office:

Professional Title:

Fax Office:

Type of Membership Required: (Please tick one)

Tel. Home:

Corporate ☐

Senior Renewal ☐

Fax Home:

Senior ☐

Junior ☐

Email:

Declaration to be Signed by all Applicants

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

Signed:.....

Proposed By:

Sig:.....

Seconded By:

Sig:.....

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Remarks:

Payment received?

Certificate Given.

Pin Given.

Medal & Collar Given

Approved

Approved

President.....

Chairman.....

Fees:

Young Member: Junior members will receive a certificate.

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

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

150/=per year thereafter.

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

Corporate Member Dhs. 20,000 per year

DJ OF YOUR LIFE

"To give life to beauty, the painter uses a whole range of colours, musicians of sounds, the cook of tastes – and it is indeed remarkable that there are seven colours, seven musical notes and seven tastes." — Lucien Tendret

I love food and when dining out or at an event while having your food the ambience becomes mesmerising with great music. Music is amazing, it can get you on a high or completely low. Music and food go hand in hand.

Especially, when you are in an event and the DJ plays those awesome tracks it gives a blissful edge to the whole experience. The food and drinks seem amazing in such a setup. A DJ is such an integral part to that high and carefree experience.

Similarly, your life is a grand event and you are the DJ who is playing the records at this phenomenal gig. In fact, you will need to develop your awareness to see what kind of "DJ of Your Life" you would prefer to be. You can either play the music that benefits no one or nurture yourself in playing music that uplift yours and others entire life.

Firstly, you could be a DJ who just creates a playlist with a simple pause after each track. And guess what, it is not interesting to the ear, it's just music playing in the background. Neither you nor anyone else could care less about the music. There is no wish to enjoy the music. In other words, you could just let life pass by without awareness, consciousness and non-productively use your energy.

Or you can decide to be the DJ who creates a playlist with tracks blending together seamlessly. More importantly, such a DJ enriches and enhances the enactment through creative and innovative mixes. It is amazing how such

MORE THAN A CHEF

ROHIT BASSI



a DJ adapts and manages the handling of vinyl recordings, CD, or digital files. In other words, for your life you could develop your awareness, consciousness thus productively use your energy. You learn from every experience and cultivate a better version of yourself throughout your life.

To be that awesome phenomenal "DJ of Your Life" there is four things you could do for yourself, these being:

1. Select songs to play for your own life. As some would say, discover the purpose of your life and with passion fulfil that purpose.
2. Transition between songs seamlessly, with style. So, learn to ensure to take the ups and downs of life by never giving up; keep your focus. Yes, you will fall but get up so you can move on.
3. Make sure the audio output levels across the entire equalisation spectrum are correct from song to song; know that levelling which makes you a totally professional DJ. In other words, you foster the art of balancing and integrating every aspect of your life
4. Playing songs that are pleasurable, enjoyable and will affect the listener in a specific fashion. So, in essence serve yourself and others with great pleasure. Do this with your mind, heart and soul.

With the advancement in technology you can be a DJ who is a glorified button pusher or you can be the uniquely classy DJ who has learnt the art through vinyl records.

To say it in other words you can go live your life with minimum or no awareness, attention and focus. Or you can take a stand to be true to yourself and love yourself. Stop letting others dictate you. Stop being what others want you to be. Stop being second-rate. You know you really hurt yourself by following another.

Celebrate yourself. Be yourself. You have been given a beautiful life, so live it. Every one of us sometime or the other feels insecure and hurt. Being in this state just can be extremely painful. Being angry and stopping communication never resolves the matter. So, keep the doors of your heart and mind open and always carry a smile on that face of yours.

Laugh and smile, be carefree. Have an attitude of gratitude. Remember this is your life. You are the mystery. You are the journey. You are exquisite. You are magical. You are beautiful.

By being the "DJ of Your Life" be ready to release the magic you have from within and touch peoples mind, heart and soul.

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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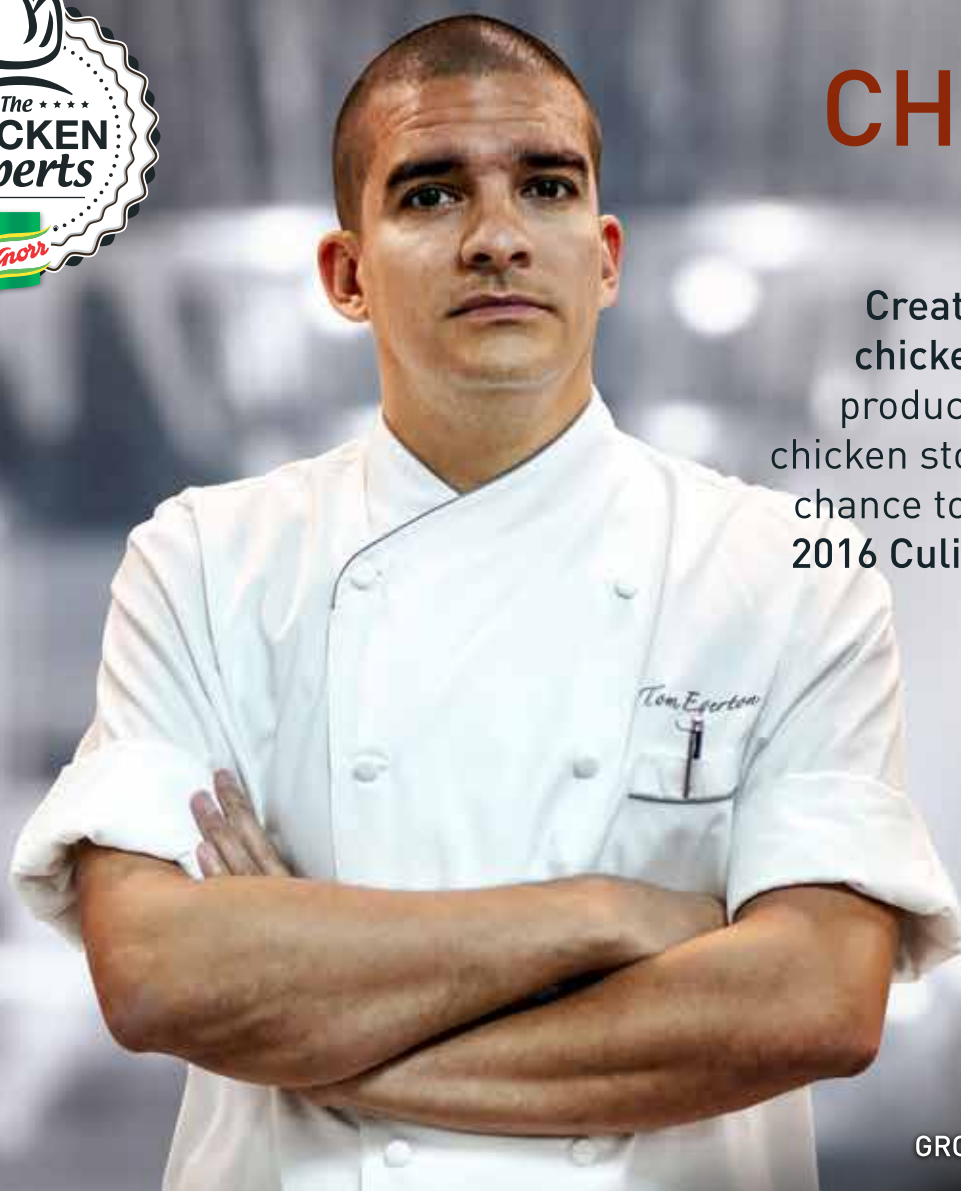


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