

gulf gourmet

THE MAGAZINE CHEFS LOVE TO READ
volume 10, issue 6

EASTSIDE STORY

Chef **KAC Prasad**, Miramar's Culinary Director, has managed the impossible by turning East Coast Salon into one of the largest chef events in the region



PASTRY

Chamila Prasad, winner of Best Pastry Chef at SIAL Middle East, from Rosewood Hotel Abu Dhabi



POWER

Chamara Prasad, winner of Best Pastry Chef at Salon Culinaire, also from Rosewood Hotel Abu Dhabi



PASSION

Douglas Ratnayake, winner of Sweet Tartelettes - HUG, yup, also from Rosewood Hotel Abu Dhabi



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Dear fellow chefs, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the June/July issue of Gulf Gourmet. Our magazine is now in its 10th year. I believe we all agree that Gulf Gourmet has scaled new heights in bringing to the fore great stories of our colleagues. Congratulations Gulf Gourmet and thanks to Amaresh and Aquin for the great job.

Congratulations is also due to the winners of the UAE-World Chef final, to Thamara Kumari from St. Regis Sadiat Island who will represent us in the Global Chef, to Rahil Rathod from Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek who will represent us in the Hans Bueschkens, and Achala Weerasinghe from Madinat Jumeirah in the Global Pastry Chef semi-final from Middle East Africa in December 2015. Again, a big mabrouk from all of us and all the best for the next round.

We are proud of young chef Rahil Rathod who completed a Grand Slam 2015 by winning the Commis Rotisseurs UAE final after he had won the young chef at the Salon Culinaire and the Hans Bueschkens UAE final. It was the first time in the UAE that the Emirates Culinary Guild and Chain Des Rotisseurs joined together for the event. Chef Rahil will now represent the Baillliage National des Emirats Arabes Unis in world final in September 2015 in Budapest. The second place winner is Min Lee from Burj Arab and the third place went to Saravana Bhagavath from JW Marriott Marquis Hotel Dubai. Thank you to our partners International Center of Culinary Arts our host, Mitras, Barakat International and Baqer Mohebi our product sponsors.

Our Young Chef team has started to train for their trip to Malaysia in September and is being led by our Chairman Andy Cuthbert.

We have started the preparation for the Pastry World Championship in Milan which is scheduled from 23–27 October 2015. Our Team Manager for this event will be our Honorary Vice President



Andreas Kurfurst. Our Pastry team is made up of Achala Weerasinghe from Madinat Jumeirah, Kapila Aramatunga from Sheraton Dubai Deira Creek, Dammika from Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek and Rohita Kumara Kasthuriarchchi from Burj Al Arab.

All the best to both teams. I am sure that everyone is almost prepared for the East Coast Salon on June 8-9 hosted by Chef Prasad and his team at the Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort.

Along with the East Coast Salon we will also have our Annual General Meeting 2015 on June 8 at 14:00 at the Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort. I invite all Senior ECG Members to join and hope to see you all as your ECG Board will step down and will hold new elections.

After the AGM we will then invite all our corporate and junior members to join us in our monthly networking meeting with your new executive committee. The classes – rules and regulations for the La Cuisine du Sial in Abu Dhabi which will be hosted at Adnec from December 7-9 have been released and the registration is now open.

The next WACS Congress will now be in September 2016 in Greece. I recommend

members to start saving small amounts of money now and to join us in Greece. If you have missed any of our previous issues of Gulf Gourmet please visit www.gulfgourmet.net.

I urge all members to go onto the Guild website to see what is happening on the calendar at emiratesculinaryguild.net and also to visit the WACS Young Chefs Facebook page on [facebook.com/wacsyoungchefs](https://www.facebook.com/wacsyoungchefs) and encourage your young chefs to join that page so they can be in contact with over 4,000 chefs across the globe.

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

A final thank you to Chef Talal and the Radisson Blu Sharjah Team for hosting our May meeting. Thank you also to our corporate partners for all the great product tasting.

Culinary Regards,

Uwe Micheel

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

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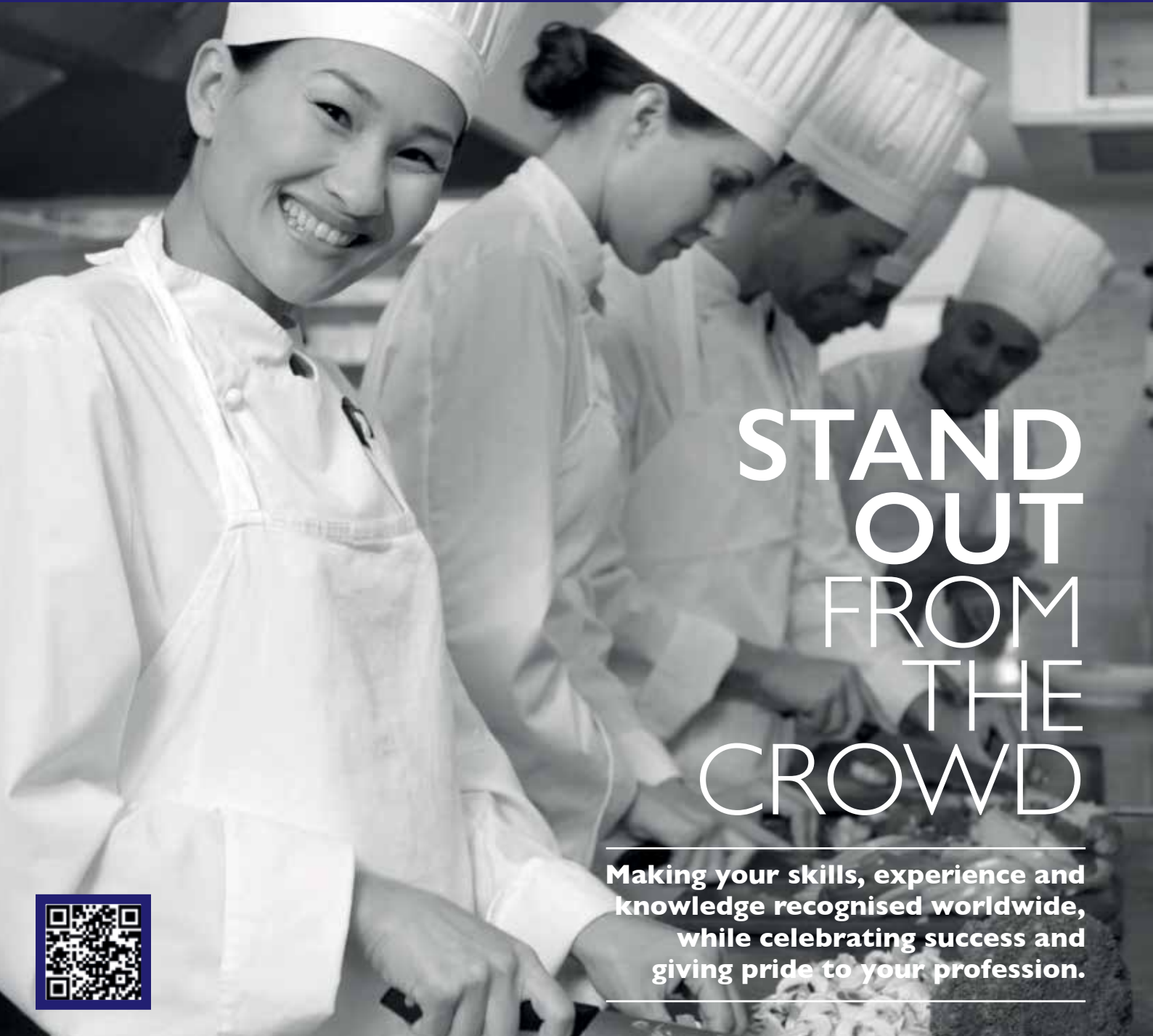


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editor'snote

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Just when you think you've seen and heard it all, comes surprises from within the chef community that you would've never thought possible.

One that surprised me a lot was that of the winners of the Best Pastry Chef awards at leading culinary competitions in the country in recent months. Since it was a different person each time, the common thread between them was something I admittedly overlooked. It wasn't until it was pointed out to me that I realised they all come from the same hotel!

Yes, Rosewood Hotel Abu Dhabi, which is a relatively brand new property has churned out not one, not two but three Best Pastry Chef winners in a span of just four months. Their Chef De Partie won the Best Pastry Chef award at La Cuisine by SIAL, their Pastry Chef won the Best Pastry Chef Award at Salon Culinaire and their other Pastry Chef won the trip to Switzerland by winning the HUG Sweet Tartelettes contest, also at Salon Culinaire. I can't even begin to imagine how awesome the desserts in that hotel must taste like.

But what I do know is that this is a

pastry team that is smart and raring to go. And they are being nurtured by an (again unexpectedly) young Executive Pastry Chef named Francois Leo, who is just 32-years-old. This issue talks a bit about the team and we'll feature the Executive Pastry Chef at length in one of our future issues.

Another story is of this smart youngster named Rahil Rathod from Radisson Blu Deira. If there is a young chef's competition somewhere, you can bet that the winner in all probability is Rahil. And in this issue you can sample his ingenuity as he participates in the Golden Chefs Hat contest and we share with you his recipe.

There are more such incredible chef stories within the pages of the issue you are holding. We hope you are enjoying these stories as we enter our 10th year of existence this June. It's been an incredible journey from a newsletter to the most powerful magazine for professional chefs in the region.

As we celebrate, we hope you enjoy the read and keep cooking with passion.

Aquin George
Editor

CREDITS

THE EMIRATES CULINARY GUILD **President** Uwe Micheel
Phone +971 4 340 3128
Fax +971 4 347 3742
Email theguild@eim.ae

EDITORIAL **Editor & Publisher** Aquin George
Phone +971 50 504 5033
Email editor@gulfgourmet.net

Associate Publisher Amaresh Bhaskaran
Phone +971 50 456 8161
Email amaresh@gulfgourmet.net

CREATIVE **Seeing Things Photography**
Phone +971 50 547 2477
www.seeingthings.ae
Amro Fahed Al Yassin

CONTRIBUTORS Lincy Varghese
Jehan Khan
Claire Watson
Content-Farm.com

ADVERTISING **Sales & Mktg.** Andrew Williams
Phone +971 4 368 6450
Email advertise@gulfgourmet.net

DESIGN **Art Director** PeeCee
Graphic Designer Natalie King

PRODUCTION Masar Printing & Publishing

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newsbites

Chef Pascal Sfara introduces bespoke menu in Abu Dhabi

Amalfi, the Italian restaurant in Le Royal Méridien Abu Dhabi has introduced a bespoke dining experience with Chef Pascal Sfara, who has previously worked at Michelin-starred restaurants. He will guide the diner through a delicious gastronomic journey to Italy with a menu fully tailored for couples or groups, whether it be a special occasion or romantic dinner for two, or a group of friends, family or colleagues wanting to do something really special and a bit different.

Originally from Montpellier in France, Pascal grew up in Italy, and began his career at his family-owned hotel and restaurant in Maratea, Italy, before hitting the headlines at four Michelin-starred restaurants situated throughout Italy and France: Open Collona, Agata e Romeo and The Pergola Tree in Rome, followed by Jardin des Sens in France.

In 2008, Pascal graduated from ALMA, the school of haute cuisine in Parma,



Chef Pascal Sfara

which is directed by the Italian Master Chef Gualtiero Marchesi. ALMA trains chefs from around the world, creating true professionals of Italian cuisine.

Chef Pascal says, "My aim for Amalfi is to make it the Italian restaurant of choice in Abu Dhabi. I'm always looking at ways to differentiate Amalfi's menu and service, and The Amalfi Experience will enable me to put my Italian flair in a very interactive

and special way on the diner's experience. Simply let me know your cravings and I will fine-tune a special menu based on your wants and desires, created just for you."

Justin Galea, Executive Chef and Director of Food and Beverages at Le Royal Méridien Abu Dhabi, says, "We're always looking to do something 'out of the box', to offer our guests an elevated experience which is different and unique. Pascal's passion is evident in his creations and there is a story behind each of his dishes. The Amalfi Experience will provide guests with a Michelin-starred restaurant experience, both in terms of the quality of food and the service, and Chef Pascal, being the big personality he is and such an experienced Italian chef, will bring his unique touch to the dining experience."

Advance booking is essential, and at least 48 hours' notice is required to allow Chef Pascal time for consultation and for preparation of the bespoke menu.

Supporting Chefs during Ramadan

From the huge success of last year's campaign, UFS is continuing to build on their Ramadan promotion to support chefs through their challenges. Throughout the holy month, UFS is offering AED 5 voucher back on every UFS case sold in order to allow chefs the opportunity to redeem or donate the money to charity.

"From hundreds of conversations with chefs, we've understood that Chefs face even more challenges during Ramadan," says Lucas Dollfuss, Head of Marketing – Middle East, Pakistan & Sri Lanka explaining the reasoning behind the push.

"During Ramadan I need ingredients

that I can rely on and help me control my costs, as well as deliver consistent taste in all dishes," says Executive Chef Wassef Malaeb, when asked why he thought this was a good idea.

"Chefs tell us they face quite a challenge during Ramadan because they're open for fewer hours and depend heavily on Iftar and Sahoor. Chefs and their staff work long hours, they are under constant pressure and they need to manage food cost during this month. And so we found a way to support them during this time. Together with well-known local chefs we created solutions that help chefs to manage their costs in their top Ramadan dishes."





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Radisson Deira employs warriors

Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek must have the most fit and toughest employees. They even completed a 10km challenge in Abu Dhabi!

A team of four strong men were sent to Abu Dhabi for a challenge of their life. Achraf Benkirane (Recreation manager), Alder Vanzyl (Director of F&D), Pieter Liebenberg (F&D manager) and Lee Gaskell (Financial controller) dropped all their work, put their trainers on and headed to the Desert Warrior Challenge in Yas Island, Abu Dhabi. After training for two months in the hotel gym Blu2o,

they were ready to take Abu Dhabi by storm and cross the finish line stronger and faster than ever!

The 10km challenge was filled with twenty major obstacles, with rope climbing, ice cold pools, giant ladders, tarzan ropes and wet slides and this was just the beginning. They fought their fear and pushed forward faster than ever. There were tears, there were injuries and a lot of sweat. But most importantly - there was teamwork.

They crossed the finish line together in one hour and 15 minutes!

Masafi Enters Carbonated Drinks Category

Masafi, known for drinking water in the UAE, has announced the launch of a new sparkling juice called 'Fruitsss'. It will be available in three fruity flavors in 250ml packages - Apple Cocktail, Pomegranate and Tropical. The new addition to Masafi portfolio is available across the GCC market.

The new 'Fruitsss' drink will be a new introduction to the traditional carbonated soft drink sector in the region and is a natural expansion of Masafi's existing range of premium bottled water, flavoured waters, fruit juice and tissue products.

Reginald Randall, CEO, said he was confident this addition would prove popular across age groups. It also marks a significant milestone for Masafi as this is the first entry for Masafi into the carbonated drinks category since the company's establishment in 1976.

Mawasim Organic Market

The Mall at World Trade Center Abu Dhabi is inviting foodies and health enthusiasts to explore the recently launched 'Mawasim Organic Market'. The market runs every Friday from 2 – 8pm on the ground level and on offer are seasonal fruits and vegetables sourced from the EU organically certified, local farm 'Mawasim'.

Talal Al Dhiyebi, Chief Development Officer at Aldar Properties, says, "The Mall at World Trade Center Abu Dhabi is honoured to be working with Mawasim to

promote the importance of healthy eating and sourcing local, seasonal produce from the region. Located in the heart of the city, The Mall is the ideal location to host such activations as we work to ensure it remains a prime retail, dining and entertainment destination in the region."

Michiel ten Dui, Director Marketing of Mawasim says, "Our goal with this market is to raise awareness of the importance of eating locally by playing a leading role in supplying first-rate, sustainable fresh produce."



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Chef Francois Leo with Douglas Ratnayake, Chamila Prasad and Chamara Prasad

DESSERT ROSE

Rosewood Hotel in Abu Dhabi inspires sweet surrender. At least among any chef who dares to take on its pastry chefs.

With Executive Pastry Chef **Francois Leo** at the helm, Rosewood's pastry team of **Chamila Prasad**, **Chamara Prasad** and **Douglas Ratnayake** has won all the top pastry chef competition in the UAE in the last 12 months

Charlie's chocolate factory may not be real. But Francois Leo's chocolate factory is. It goes by the simple name of Rosewood Hotel in Abu Dhabi. Standing silently behind the swanky building of Rosewood and its sophisticated service is perhaps the most talented pastry team of the Middle East.

Chef Francois has trained his team to bring many a sweet smile to the faces of judges at competitions. Three of his sugar warriors – Chamila Prasad, Chamara Prasad and Douglas Ratnayake - have lifted coveted titles at some of the most prestigious competitions of the United Arab Emirates.

Yet, easy lies this head that wears the crown. Born in the world's desserts capital, France, Chef Francois knows it's a series of trials and errors that culinary artists must endure to churn out masterpieces.

When his Senior Chef de Partie Chamila won the 'Best Pastry Chef' title at the SIAL



The Rosewood team with their medals won at Salon Culinaire

Middle East last November, it was Chef Francois whose chest swelled with pride.

When his Pastry Chef Chamara was declared the 'Best Pastry Chef' at the Salon Culinaire in February, it was yet another feather that went straight into Chef Francois's cap.

And when Pastry Chef Douglas bagged a trip to Switzerland after beating out everyone at the HUG Sweet Tartlets Contest at the Salon Culinaire, it was Chef Francois who couldn't stop feeling a personal victory.

Just 32 years old, the Frenchman put in months of tireless efforts to put together a team to reckon with. Smarting from failure the first time his team participated in the Salon Culinaire, he decided the second time would be Rosewood's moment. "I can't forget the first time we participated in Dubai. After just three weeks of preparation, we were like 'we're gonna win it'. And when D-day came, we realised we were not gonna win it," he laughs.

But lessons were learnt. Chef Francois realised that competitions were no cakewalk. They needed months of training and fantastic products.

Come November 2014 at the SIAL competition they used the lessons learnt, and Chef Chamila went on to win a silver medal in live cake, a silver in

plated dessert and the much competed for gold in the petit fours category. "I made six kinds of petit fours, my cake was an apple cake and the plated dessert comprised one chocolate and one cream dessert," Chef Chamila says.

Petit fours seem to be closer to Chef Francois's heart than other desserts. A self-confessed perfectionist, he admits to wanting to nail the details right down to consistency in the size of each petit four. "The decorations, the flavours, everything has to be done with great precision. You have to get the weight and the length right for each of them," he says.

Chef Francois even suggested to the judges that they standardise the size specifications for the contests. He believes it's unfair to judge contestants when there are so many variations in the sizes of the desserts they make. "A petit four can't be more than 3-5 centimetres. But you can't expect a young contestant to know that."

It's this knowledge that helped Chef Chamara when he made eight kinds of petit fours at the Salon Culinaire. A three-layered chocolate cake and one chocolate also helped convince the judges he was the best pastry chef at the contest.

Chef Douglas won the best plated dessert medal at the Salon Culinaire in what was his first time in a Dubai

competition. His creation beat out more than 150 plated desserts entries.

Rosewood lifted as many as 21 medals at the Salon Culinaire this year, a feat made more admirable by the fact that the hotel had just 25 entries.

Chef Francois is not just a remarkable culinary artist and leader. He is also something of an entrepreneur. The executive pastry chef managed to get sponsors for his team, tying up as much as 80 percent of the cost of participating in these contests. "We spent about 15,000 dirhams on each contest because we had to organise transport, which is expensive. After we did so well, they want to sponsor us again," he elaborates.

Going forward, Chef Francois has much higher hopes from his team. He also wants to give other chefs of the hotel a chance to shine and further their careers. Besides teaching them the finer points of cooking, he has some words of advice. "You won't get there alone. Choose your people well and stay informed about the trends and needs of the market." Teamwork and motivation are key to making anything work. But more importantly, "don't forget to have fun doing what you do," he tells budding pastry chefs.

Sugar's nice with added spice. And Rosewood knows it!



CHAMARA PRASAD

> PASTRY CHEF, ROSEWOOD HOTEL

> 2015 WINNER OF BEST PASTRY CHEF AWARD AT SALON CULINAIRE

Sri Lanka-born Chef Chamara has worked in as many as six countries even though he's just 34 years old. A native of Negombo in Sri Lanka, he followed his friends into the profession and joined his country's top notch hospitality school – National Apprentice Board – where he secured a one-year diploma in pastry and bakery. Starting at the Negombo Club Hotel as a trainee, he went on to work at Maldives, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey and the UAE.

Chef Chamara's favourite part of bakery is plating. Besides teasing the sweet tooth of guests, he trains his colleagues. "Rosewood's pastry operations has about 12 chefs. I also help them learn how to keep consistency and quality intact," he says. For those looking to walk in his shoes, he has some pearls of wisdom to offer. "Cooking has to be done from the heart. If you don't like eating your own dish, don't expect anyone else to like it."

Feedback has always been very important to Chef Chamara. At the contests too, he did not hesitate from asking the judges for their honest feedback. "I found that texture and taste are the most important factors for them. Some chefs put a lot of gelatin in their desserts and the dish looks good but when you taste it, it's awful. I focus on the taste and then the decoration." Someday, Chef Chamara hopes to be an executive chef. Today, he's satisfied just doing his employers proud.

DOUGLAS RATNAYAKE

- > PASTRY CHEF, ROSEWOOD HOTEL
- > 2015 WINNER OF BEST CHEF AT HUG TARTLETES CONTEST AND WINNER OF TRIP TO SWITZERLAND

Chef Douglas shares his hometown Kalutara with Chef Chamila. He also shares his colleague's love for beautifully presented pastries and cakes. The 40-year-old Chef Douglas is the first chef in his family.

"When I was in college, we had culinary classes as a subject. The structures and colours of cakes and pastries and the decorations like flowers really fascinated me back then." Getting a three-year degree from the National Apprentice Board, he started his career in 1997 and specialised in pastry by the end of 2000.

Chef Douglas's first job was with the Oberoi in Sri Lanka. A year and a half later, he went to Qatar for the preopening of Intercontinental hotel. His tryst with competitions started in 2003 when he won a Nestle contest. Two years in Dubai later, he went to Saudi Arabia, where he worked for six years.

"Somewhere around then, I got chocolate training from Switzerland," he says. In 2012, he did his second stint with Rosewood, joining as a pastry chef.

Come August and he will head for Switzerland as part of his win at the HUG Tartlets contest at the Salon Culinaire. For his career, Chef Douglas has no hard and fast goals. "I wanted to keep doing a good job and move ahead in my career," is all he offers. Humility combined with talent, that's Chef Douglas in a nutshell.





CHAMILA PRASAD

> SENIOR CHEF DE PARTIE,
ROSEWOOD HOTEL

> 2014 WINNER OF BEST PASTRY
CHEF AWARD AT SIAL MIDDLE EAST

Yet another valuable import from Sri Lanka, Chef Chamila is Chef Francois's blue-eyed boy. Originally from Kalutara near Colombo, he was inspired by family members who worked in the hospitality industry abroad.

"They would send me these photos of cakes and desserts they made. I loved the pictures!" Chef Chamila spent three years at a hospitality school before joining the Blue Water five-star hotel in Sri Lanka. The 34-year-old chef started at Rosewood in Saudi Arabia, where he worked for four years.

"I then went to Crown Plaza in Oman and joined Rosewood in Abu Dhabi later because it was pretty much the same team that I had worked with in Saudi Arabia." All Chef Chamila wants to be now is a good chef. Too late for that, he's an excellent chef. "Chamila is very talented and he has a big heart. He's always been very helpful and very positive and I really wanted him to succeed," says Chef Francois about Chef Chamila.

According to the French executive pastry chef, Chef Chamila's strength lies in his attention to detail.

"Whenever I give Chamila something, he takes care to do it exactly how I want. He will ask questions, he's motivated and he understands the requirements. Plus he works really hard," Chef Francois says.

Recently, Chef Chamila became a father. And so, he couldn't participate in the Salon Culinaire. But Rosewood is looking at him to add many more medals to its trophy collection.

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June-July 2015 Gulf Gourmet



THE CHEF FOR ALL KITCHENS

He's no red caped crusader. Rather, he's a white-jacketed rescuer. Executive Chef **Jean Westhuizen** of Unilever Food Solutions is the go-to guy for any chef who is feeling burdened by the innumerable challenges of the kitchen. With the company's products and services, Chef Jean is trying to make life "just a little bit easier" for his fellow men. And he's succeeding...

He's the chefs' chef – the guy the white jackets turn to for their most basic needs. Chef Jean Westhuizen of Unilever

Food Solutions is the person you go to when your tomato sauce is not thick enough or your marination is not quite turning out the way it used to or your demi glaze is showing no signs of being ready but the customer is yelling for his meal. As someone who has spent time in various kitchens, Chef Jean is very aware of the challenges that his modern-day counterparts face - high attrition, fierce competition and demanding guests.

Conceptualising products and services for kitchens in the smallest of restaurants to those in the biggest of five-star chains, he's spending hours and days on finding solutions that can make a chef's life easier.

A number of UFS products today help chefs cater to customer needs with much less stress and much more productivity, freeing up their time and creativity for larger goals.

South Africa-born Chef Jean's own culinary journey started at 13 when he wanted some pocket money to indulge his sartorial needs. "I asked my mother for some money to buy fashionable clothes and shoes and she told me to get a job if I wanted those fancy things," recalls the now 31-year-old chef.

Frustrated with her reply, he went out and got a job as a waiter. In the two weeks that he spent working, Chef Jean looked into the kitchen and saw "these fascinating guys in white jackets". "I asked the chef if I could explore the kitchen and he invited me in. That's when the passion for cooking kicked in."

Chef Jean's college was going through a bit of a transformation at the time. A home science course was being turned into a hospitality management course. Chef Jean enrolled and found that kitchen was where he enjoyed being the most.



From doing big parties to packing simple meals for game drives, I did a lot. It was challenging because I had just two helpers and calling for fresh produce and having it delivered to you immediately was not an option

After spending his formative years in Johannesburg, Chef Jean moved to Cape Town to get a formal education in hospitality. "The culinary scene there was much more vibrant in terms of creativity than Johannesburg. I joined the International Culinary Academy, which was a prestigious school for chefs." In the three years that he studied at the academy, Chef Jean got to know the different aspects of the culinary industry Cape Town had to offer. "I worked in restaurants, touristy places and fine dining. It was tough but really inspiring."

Among his more memorable assignments were Cape Grace restaurant and Rueben's Franschhoek, "a trendy little restaurant that still exists". "The chef there would throw you to the deep end and you learnt to swim."

Much as he was enjoying himself in Cape Town, Chef Jean moved back to Johannesburg "because the pay there was better". He worked at the Saxon hotel, which placed him in a game farm in the northern parts of South Africa. The environment was rather stressful, with little support or "luxuries" of a five-star hotel. "From doing big parties to packing simple meals for game drives, I did a lot. It was challenging because I had just two helpers and calling for fresh produce and having it delivered to you immediately was not an option. The

suppliers were far but I got to cook with some exotic ingredients and interesting meats like crocodile."

That experience perhaps made Chef Jean more sympathetic to the challenges that chefs in less privileged restaurants and hotels work in.

The need to spread his wings brought Chef Jean to Dubai. The lure of different cultures and cuisines was hard to resist. He joined Zuma restaurant at the DIFC. "A fabulous restaurant in terms of back office operations, the ingredients you are exposed to, the discipline of working with Japanese chefs. It was exciting to pick up sushi skills and the dynamics of so many nationalities working together in the kitchen." The precision behind Japanese cooking and the level of sophistication and technique that the cuisine required taught him the importance of detail.

Later, Chef Jean joined hands with two local entrepreneurs to open an Arabic restaurant. "That's when I got more involved with Arabic cuisine. People fail to understand that there are differences in the cuisine in different countries of the Middle East. Each region does the same dish differently."

Two and a half years ago, Chef Jean left the kitchen to join the corporate setup of UFS. "I thought this job would be a great way to diversify my skills."

It was. Today, Chef Jean connects with the different elements of the food business, from research and development to marketing to customer development. He travels to different kitchens to understand what chefs need and comes up with products that fulfil those needs. "I have to reach out to the chef communities out there and also ensure that our communication makes sense to them."

Speaking to chefs "who stand behind stoves day in and day out" is thrilling for this lover of different cultures. "I have to

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understand the work that they do, the customers they serve. You can tell a lot about people through their food."

Pleasing customers consistently is quite a challenge for chefs, more so in Dubai which has such a diverse mix of cultures. "Catering to every person's need is quite hard. Staying authentic, staying consistent and meeting the customer's needs given the massive growth in Dubai is quite an effort."

UFS products aim to cut back on waste and complexity in kitchens without compromising on the quality. "The time that chefs save, they can spend on training

their staff and indulging in their creativity."

Some chefs fear that dishes will lose their uniqueness if convenient products are used. But Chef Jean dismisses these concerns. "Our products provide only the base ingredient. Chefs can still decide which way they want their dishes to go and be creative."

To address other concerns over safety and health, UFS is moving towards additive- and preservative-free items. "We are launching ingredients suitable for vegetarians, ingredients that have no colourants, basically healthier and natural products."

UFS is also involved heavily in the sustainability movement. "Recently, we moved our packaging to the 'euro container'. It drastically reduces the impact on the environment in terms of transportation and shipping. It fits better, it is recyclable plastic and reusable. Many of our sustainability efforts are based on raw materials used in our products."

Up next for UFS is a health and safety drive in collaboration with the Dubai municipality to target 4,000-5,000 chefs at mid-tier restaurants and hotels. "We will use graphics and stickers to teach them about these things. It will be in different languages to address all kinds of chefs."

Playing the kitchen superhero is an unenviable task. But Chef Jean appreciates the fact that a corporate chef leads an easier life than a kitchen chef. "Kitchen chefs work holidays, weekends, festivals, whenever everyone else is enjoying a day off. I don't have to."

However, he does miss the energy of the kitchen. "The adrenalin, the hustle and bustle and the pressures of a real live kitchen. I miss the 'family' that you create in a kitchen, you can't find that anywhere else."

Making up for this are the moments of deep satisfaction that come with having helped someone. "My favourite story is of this chef in an Italian restaurant. He had major problems with the consistency of his tomato sauce because he would train young chefs and then in less than a year, they would move on. We gave him a tomato product and all he had to do was add garlic or whatever herbs he wanted. He then had a consistent tomato sauce and he was overjoyed that his pizza didn't taste different every week! His gratitude was heartwarming."

With competition intensifying and customer demands becoming overwhelming, Chef Jean is set to be the rescue hotline for many a harassed chef.



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RADISSON RETURNS

They made it to the top three teams during the last season of Golden Chef's Hat. However, it is the best or nothing for this duo as they return with more power-packed recipes and a hunger to win

Rahil Rathod and Faizur Rahman from Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek was edged out by team Madinat Jumeirah last season of Nestle Professional Golden Chef's Hat Competition. And the two have been having sleepless nights ever since.

Both in their twenties and with a competitive streak that's ongoing, they have returned with newer more creative ways of using the ingredients that were provided. Before their recipes, here's a bit about the two.

Rahil Rathod

Those who have known of him for these

past couple of years know him as the youngster who's made a culinary mark amongst young chefs. As far as young chefs are concerned, he remains the Middle East's poster child at culinary competitions the world over.

He won the Hans Bueschgens World Junior Chefs challenge semi-finals two years ago in Namibia and was among the top 4 at the world finals in Norway last year. This year he came second at the S.Pellegrino Young Chef 2015 semi-finals in South Africa. Three years ago he even won the coveted BurJuman Junior Chef award and has been featured on the cover of this magazine for winning two of the biggest Junior

competitions in the region back to back. You get the drift.

The lad who hails from Gujarat in India and completed his culinary education at a coveted institute in Goa is pretty excited with his dish for this contest. "We learnt from our mistakes last year and we have returned with a bang. I hope the judges see the added effort and find our recipes the most innovative and yet practical," he says with confidence.

And yes, he's 24 years of age.

Faizur Rahman

Two and half years ago this Delhi youngster came to Dubai and landed in



Faizur Rahman



Rahil Rathod

the right hands of the exceptional pastry team at the Radisson Blu Deira. The 27-year-old Chef De Partie has been six years in the industry spending a majority of it working across five-star properties in Indian metros.

Born and raised in Patna in India, Chef Faizur is the youngest of four siblings and found out about the industry through his eldest brother who works in Dubai as a restaurant manager. "My brother was the one who advised me to become a chef," he says.

He has competition experience in the UAE and in India and has won a few medals over the years. The aspiring Pastry chef loves all things chocolate and even better if it's something to do with cakes

Talking about his dish for the contest he says, "This year we used all the ingredients provided by Nestle Professional and I have been even more innovate. My dish includes a three flavour panna cotta and strawberry crème brulee. And I am pleased to have gotten this chance to prove myself again."

BEEF STRIPLON ROULADE WITH BRESOLA INSIDE AND MUSHROOM WRAP, SMOKED HANGER TENDER, BRAISED BEEF BLADE, CRAB AND COCONUT MASH, CRAB CAKE WITH TOMATO & BASIL COULIS, HONEY GLAZED PUMPKIN, GLAZED CARROTS AND ASPARAGUS WITH MUSHROOM FOAM

Beef Striploin Roulade with Mushroom Wrap

Striploin	400 gms
Bresola (thinly sliced)	100gms
Porcini mushroom	200 gms
Egg yolks	3no.
Breadcrumbs	50 gms
Shallots	50gms
Olive oil	10gms
Salt & Pepper	As required

Smoked Hanging tender

Hanging tender	200gms
Salt & Pepper	As required
Cherry woods chips	30gms
Fresh chopped herbs	30gms
Dijon mustard	1tsp

Braised beef blade

Beef blade	200gms
Olive oil	20gms
Carrots	1no.
Celery	1 stick
Onion	2no.
Leeks	1no.
Garlic	10gms
Bay leaf	1 piece
MAGGI® Tomato coulis	100gms
Chef® reduced stock	200gms
MAGGI® Chicken Stock	300ml
Salt & Pepper	As required

Soft shell crab

Soft shell crab	2 pieces
Chef® shell fish stock (Diluted)	1 liter
Salt & Pepper	100gms As required

Coconut and crab mash

MAGGI® Mashed Potato	180gms
Nestle coconut milk powder	70gms
Crab boiled with chef stock	100gms
Salt & Pepper	As required
Butter	50gms

Crab Cake

Crab boiled with chef stock	150gms
Nestle mash potato powder	100gms
Bread crumbs	50gms
Eggs	2
Flour	30gms
Salt & Pepper	As required

Tomato basil Coulis

MAGGI® Tomato coulis	100gms
Shallots	1no.
Garlic	2 cloves
Olive oil	1tsp
Lemon juice	10ml
Sweet basil	2 leaves
Xathan gum	3gms
Salt & Pepper	As required

Honey glazed pumpkin

Pumpkin	100gms
Honey	50gms
Salt & Pepper	As required
Butter	50gms
Vegetables stock	40gms

Baked Turnip

Turnip	2 pieces
Salt & Pepper	As required
Olive oil	1tsp

Glazed carrots and Asparagus

Baby carrots	8 pieces
Asparagus	8 pieces
Vegetable stock	200ml
Butter	50gms
Salt & Pepper	As required

Mushroom foam

Mushroom stock	100ml
Milk	50ml
Salt & Pepper	As required
Soy lecithin	5gms

METHOD

- ♦ Cut Striploin into small loins. Lay Bresola in between, join it and wrap tightly with cling film. Use the trimmings to make



a mushroom wrap. Sauté shallots in olive oil, dry the mushrooms as much as possible, cool it down and blend it with striploin trimmings. Add egg yolks and breadcrumb along with it. Make a fine mousse and spread it on the striploin with bresola. Cover it with aluminum foil and cook it on slow heat till internal temperature is 62°C.

- ◆ Season the meat seared on a pan and cook it till medium. Put cherry woods chips in a smoking gun and smoke it for two minutes. Apply Dijon mustard on top and wrap it around with fresh herbs.
- ◆ Season the beef blade and sear it till it becomes brown from all sides. Cut

mirepoix of onion, celery, leeks, carrots and garlic. Brown it in a pressure cooker and add rest of the ingredients. Let it cook on high pressure for about 35 minutes. Season the jus.

- ◆ Boil the crab in chef shell fish aromatic stock and cool it down with ice water.
- ◆ Finely chop the crab and make coconut mash potato with nestle mash potato powder and nestle coconut milk powder. Add chopped crab and finish with butter and season it as required.
- ◆ Mix boiled crab with chef stock and mix it with nestle mash potato powder and season it. Make round balls and crumb fry it.

- ◆ Sauté the shallots and garlic in olive oil add Maggi tomato coulis and let it cook well. Add basil and lemon juice with xathan gum and blend it till it is smooth. Season it.
- ◆ Cut cubes of pumpkin make glaze of honey, vegetable stock and butter. Season it and cook the pumpkin in it.
- ◆ Season the turnip with salt and pepper and olive oil. Cover it with aluminum foil and cook it for 30 minutes.
- ◆ Blanch the baby carrots and asparagus in vegetable stock and glaze it with butter. Season it well.
- ◆ Mix all together heat it up and make foam with help of hand blender.

TRIO OF DOCELLO PANACOTTA, STRAWBERRY CREAM BRULEE, DOCELLO CHOCOLATE MOUSSE WITH NESTLE AERO CHOCOLATE WITH FRESH FRUITS

Aero Chocolate mousse with KitKat crunchy

Docello® Chocolate Mousse	125gms
Milk	65gms
Nestle Aero Chocolate	1 piece
Dark chocolate	50 gms
Kit Kat® Mix In	50 gms

Strawberry Crème Brulee

Docello® Crème Brûlée	65gms
Milk	250gms
Cream	125gms

Strawberry puree	30gms
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Panacotta

Docello® Panna Cotta	40gms
Milk	125gms
Cream	125gms
Raspberry puree	25gms
Mango puree	25gms
Pistachio paste	25 gms
Smarties® Mini Mix In Quick	6 pieces

Glazing Panna Cotta

Raspberry puree	150gms
Liquid glucose	110gms
Sugar	35 gms
Pectin NH	4gms
Gelatin	10gms
Mango puree	150gms
Liquid glucose	110gms
Sugar	35gms
Pectin NH	4gms
Gelatin	10gms
Pistachio puree	150gms
Liquid glucose	110gms

Sugar	35gms
Pectin NH	4gms
Gelatin	10gms

METHOD

- ♦ Method for Kit Kat crunchy: Melt the dark chocolate and let it cool for some time.
- ♦ Add in the Kit Kat crunchy and mix it well
- ♦ Pour it on a butter paper and roll it till it gets in a thin layer.
- ♦ Once its set cut it with a round cutter.
- ♦ Method for mousse: - Put the cold milk into a bowl. Mix the powder with milk using a whip until a homogeneous mixture has been obtained. Whip with the mixture for 2 min on low speed and 5 minutes at high speed.
- ♦ Chop the Aero chocolate and mix into the mixture. Take it out from the bowl and pipe it on the KitKat crunchy.
- ♦ Boil the cream and milk in a bowl.
- ♦ Once boiled remove it from the heat and add the crème brulee powder and stir well for 3 minutes. Add the strawberry puree. Portion and chill for a minimum of 1 hour.
- ♦ Boil the cream and milk. Remove from the heat and add the Nestle panna cotta powder and mix with the hand and whip, then bring it back to boil for 2 minutes. Take it out from the heat and divide it in 3 bowls equally. Add a single puree in each bowl and mix well. Pipe it in a mould and drop in the same colour Nestle smarties. Let it set in the blast freezer. Once it is set glaze with the same flavor glaze to resemble smarties.
- ♦ Put the gelatin in cold water.
- ♦ Boil the raspberry puree and glucose together. Mix sugar and pectin then add into the puree mix and boil.
- ♦ Once boiled put in the gelatin.
- ♦ Put the gelatin in cold water.
- ♦ Boil the mango puree and glucose together. Mix sugar and pectin then add into the puree mix and boil.
- ♦ Once boiled put in the gelatin.
- ♦ Put the gelatin in cold water.
- ♦ Boil the Pistachio puree and glucose together. Mix sugar and pectin then add into the puree mix and boil.
- ♦ Once boiled put in the gelatin.



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EASTSIDE STORY

The UAE East Coast couldn't have asked for a better ambassador than Chef **KAC Prasad**. With his brainchild East Coast Salon chefs competition, the culinary director of Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort has been toiling tirelessly to give the region its own spot under the world's hospitality sun...

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We have a very strong backing from the Emirates Culinary Guild. The trust it inspires among chefs gave us a strong start

East meets West and how! The East Coast Salon chefs competition has in just four years grown into one of the top culinary events on the UAE calendar.

Leading the revolution is Chef KAC Prasad, the culinary director of Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort in Fujairah and the vice president of Emirates Culinary Guild for the East Coast. An industry veteran for more than two decades and a UAE resident for 18, this Sri Lanka-born go-getter has taken it upon himself to give the East Coast its own distinct identity.

A simple idea that he turned into an inspiring reality, the East Coast Salon chefs competition will turn four this year and celebrate its second year as an international contest. The thought struck Chef Prasad's boss, Miramar's General Manager Ashraf Helmy, when he saw how hard Chef Prasad worked to get a team of chefs from the resort to participate in the Dubai culinary contests. Impressed with his team for the Young Chef competition in 2009, Mr Helmy suggested that a contest only for the East Coast would be a great way to give the region some recognition. "At first, I refused because I did not think we were ready at the time," recalls the 39-year-old Chef Prasad.

However, Emirates Culinary Guild President Chef Uwe Micheel was a lot more enthused by the idea. Urging Chef Prasad to take on the adventure, he promised to extend all the support required. "Then I had another talk with my boss and we decided to organise our first East Coast Salon in 2012 for hotels around the East Coast and also from Dubai."

The event was a big hit. Moreover, it emboldened more than 100 East Coast chefs to participate in the Salon Culinaire the following year. A couple of years after its inception, the East Coast Salon went international.

The year 2014 was perhaps the first big hint of the potential that the contest

100

East Coast Salon in 2012 was a big hit. Moreover, it emboldened more than 100 East Coast chefs to participate in the Salon Culinaire the following year

carries. More than 400 contestants from over 30 hotels in the UAE and four other countries participated. The event also attracted the attention of the World Association of Chefs Societies' regional director and more than 65 executive chefs. Government officials and visitors thronged the event and suppliers and sponsors rushed to be a part of it. "We had a very strong backer in the Emirates Culinary Guild. The trust it inspires among chefs gave us a strong start."

In line with the guild's vision, Chef Uwe now wants Chef Prasad to use the East Coast Salon to give younger chefs more opportunities for development. "We would like a special event only for young chefs, locally and internationally. The idea is to have senior chefs impart their knowledge to the younger lot and help in their development to keep our legacy alive," Chef Prasad says.

A few changes to the contest's format are on the cards – this time around, it will span two days instead of one. "Last year, a few sponsors told us that they did not get much time with the chefs because it was a very busy one-day event. So this time, we will run it through two days."

Chef Prasad also wants to involve friends and families of chefs to make some of

the events more personal. "We expect more than 300 people for the barbecue dinner on the first day. This will give our sponsors a chance to show their products not only to the chefs but also to others." In addition, there will be four Arabic cuisine classes this time instead of two and the number of live cooking counters will be increased to six from four. "We are expecting more than a 100 competitors in live cooking."

A contest of this scale naturally takes up a lot of Chef Prasad's time and energy. It's endless support from Mr Helmy that makes the going a little easier. "We have been working together for almost eight years now. He has a culinary background and a great love of food. We have the same set of values when it comes to work." The two also bond over the environment, a pet project of Miramar towards sustainability, involving a plethora of initiatives such as composting and waste management. Miramar has even won the Green Globe certification thanks to the efforts of the two.

From funds to staff to ideas, Mr Helmy provides Chef Prasad all that he needs to stay ahead of the curve. "He also knows most of the key people in the chef community and he does not hesitate to call general managers of other hotels, inviting them to send their participants for the contest," laughs Chef Prasad.

The popularity of the East Coast is growing. Hotels are now making a beeline for the area and it's fast gaining recognition as the next big thing in the UAE. More brainstorming meetings of chefs being held in the East Coast could be a good step towards making the region more popular. Chef Prasad is also looking to invite suppliers and sponsors for product trainings in his hotel, with participation from representatives of other hotels in the area. "The more often we do this, the better it will be because not all hotels have the resources to travel to Dubai for these kinds of events."

Making time for all these initiatives will be Chef Prasad's big challenge. He's been travelling a lot around the world with the young chef UAE team and as an integral part of the Emirates Culinary Guild, he has his hands full with work on the fast-growing Salon Culinaire. "The guild is doing very well and we are sure 2015 will be much better year for us. We are organising a lot of training and the annual general meeting of the guild will be in our hotel on the first day of the East Coast Salon competition on June 8."

Today, Chef Prasad is indispensable to the guild and even to the UAE culinary industry. This fact becomes more remarkable when you consider that he's made it in an industry dominated by chefs from Europe and other parts of the West. But Chef Prasad dismisses concerns that Asians don't stand much of a chance for success in this industry. He firmly believes that it's talent and not the colour of your skin that takes you forward. "Discrimination is mostly in people's mind. People who think they are either better or lesser than the others are setting themselves up for failure. If you

are honest, straightforward, hardworking and talented, you can survive the worst of situations and still come out shining."

Never one to indulge in corporate politics, Chef Prasad advocates avoiding "drama" and sticking to the job.

Miramar has benefited immensely from Chef Prasad's focussed approach. This year, the hotel won the title of the Best East Coast Resort at the 'World Travel Award 2015'. In 2013, it won the Middle East and Africa Best Lobby award at the Hotelier Awards. A couple of years before that, a butcher working at Miramar won the Hoteliers Award for the Best Young Chef. Last year, the resort opened its long-awaited 600 person banquet hall and had its first international East Coast Salon event there. On the cards now is the opening of the beach restaurant. Miramar is also on track with its expansion plans. "We bought land in Sri Lanka for a luxury hotel and next year, we plan to open in Jordan."

On a personal level, Chef Prasad is rather satisfied with the way things have turned out for him. Starting at

the age of 17 right at the bottom of the ladder, he climbed his way up steadily and surely. Luck lent a hand but hard work was a bigger mentor. "My life hasn't been a walk in the park. But discipline and perseverance are qualities that have helped me and I expect the same qualities in the people I deal with."

Hygiene, good quality and service should be inherent to people working the hospitality industry, he says. "Attention to detail is non-negotiable in our industry. That's what sets one hotel apart from another." He would know. Chef Prasad's career profile is rather enviable with top brands such as Taj Palace, Sheraton and Oberoi embellishing his curriculum vitae.

On the home front, there's much joy that his family of three gives him. Wife Nilu understands and supports him and daughter Sanoli and son Chenith are the best stress busters after a hard day's work.

His other 'family' in the East Coast is also vying for his attention. Chef Prasad is not complaining. After all, he's determined to put the 'east' in 'feast'.



Attention to detail is non-negotiable in our industry. That's what sets one hotel apart from another



BEHIND THE SCENES

Ashraf Helmy, the General Manager of Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort and the main supporter behind the scenes for making East Coast Salon a reality, talks to Gulf Gourmet in a quick chat

Could you tell us a bit about the competition last year and where it's headed?

Well, the competition last year was quite successful. We saw high participation from chefs compared to the year before that. Looking at the interest this year, we are expecting an even larger turnout for the event. The annual event has been scaling newer heights with each year and we are glad it is garnering such acceptance.

What for you stood out at last year's contest?

The quality of participants is what quite clearly stood out for me. Usually with a growing event, maintaining quality becomes tough. But here the skilled chefs were only better than the year before. The competition was therefore quite tough too. And this year should be even better.

Why have you expanded the event to be two days this year?

The reason being the event is of an international nature and we did not want to rush through the competitions. Also we wanted to make it fun. People should enjoy and network when such an opportunity arises is what I believe. We are therefore encouraging people to come and stay. It is about enhancing the feeling of camaraderie. We want it to be an annual fixture for culinary knowledge, presentation and networking.

You and your Chef are the main drivers of this event. How do you manage?

It is indeed a tough job to get sponsors to chip in, invitations to go out, managing the logistics, having all the prizes, etc. Will we need help from other people in the future? Sure. So far we



are doing well. And I believe we will keep on doing this. My dream is to keep this event going at Miramar even after Prasad and I leave this place.

What makes you want to this? What drives you?

We believe that this industry needs individuals who are growing by learning from others. Experience shows that such competitions will keep chefs on their toes all year long. It pushes them to do

better. For Miramar, the advantage is that it helps the hotel to market itself as well and create a more powerful brand name. And finally, it is our social responsibility to give back to the community of chefs.

What is your advice to the chefs?

Life is a competition. We should keep doing everything to strive towards perfection. Being competitive is a good thing. It's very healthy.

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TAKING THE CAKE

When most of his friends were busy gorging on gorgeous three-layered cakes, Chef **Elia Hasabou** would instead be wondering how it was made. Even today, the executive pastry chef at Dubai's Byblos Hospitality Management, the operator of La Gaufrette coffee shop chain, has lost none of his fascination with food...

Please tell us something about yourself. What inspired you to become a chef?

I am originally from Syria. My father has a farm in a village there. There are no chefs in my family and my inspiration came from my friend, who loved cooking. I used to watch him work and I was fascinated by the photos of cakes that he would show me. There were three-layered cakes that looked really exquisite and I would wonder how the chefs made them so perfectly.

Did your parents approve of your decision to become a chef?

Initially, no. In Syria, once you finish high school, you can choose what degree course you want. When I told them I wanted to go to a hospitality school, my parents thought I was making the wrong choice. They offered me many other career options but I was adamant I wanted to be a chef. I moved to a city to study hotel management. Today, my parents are very proud of me.

How did you decide pastry was what you wanted to do?

There, I got a chance to work both in the hot kitchen and the pastry kitchen. But when I entered a five-star hotel, I fell in love with the pastry kitchen. My first job was also in a pastry shop. The hospitality school would send us for training to hotels and even outside of that, I worked

for some hotels for free just to gain experience.

How did Dubai happen?

I came here in 2003 and two years later I joined Byblos Hospitality. I've worked up the ranks to become the Executive Pastry Chef here.

You have worked in a hotel and now you work for a catering company. Which is more exciting?

From the outside, hotel jobs always seem more glamorous. But there, you are stuck to very defined roles. As a chef, your learning is a lot more in a pastry shop or a catering company because you don't use readymade ingredients. In a hotel, as much as 70 percent of the ingredients used in foods are readymade products. In a pastry shop or a catering company, you make everything from scratch – be it croissants or ice cream or compote. You don't just put things in the oven and pull it out as soon as it's done. Everything we supply to our coffee shops and other restaurants are made from scratch by us.

Which are the restaurants you supply to? How do you ensure quality is maintained?

I can't name our customers but there are a few. And of course, we supply to our own three outlets.

As for quality, we keep abreast of what our customers need and keep experimenting with new ideas and ingredients. Training is also an important aspect. I travelled to Brussels to learn how to make croissants, chocolates and breads and to Paris to train in cake decoration and French pastries and to learn to work with icing. Europe is known for its pastry and desserts and we stay in touch with chefs there to bring the best trends here.

How big is your team?

We have around 70 chefs, including those at our coffee shops.

What are you making for us today?

Puff pastry. It was one of the first things I learnt to make and it is still in the market. I believe this dessert will be around for a long time. Today, I will make two kinds of puff pastries – one with chocolate and caramel and another with vanilla.

What is your advice to young chefs?

Don't be in a hurry to succeed. It takes time to learn the basics, to fine-tune your skills and technique. Don't think you can snap your fingers and a promotion will come. First, make the effort required to show everyone what you are capable of and get noticed.



Edlin Harabawi
Executive Chef

PUFF PASTRY CHOCOLATE

FOLDING BUTTER

Anchor unsalted butter bakery sheets 1200 gm

Cocoa powder 100% 75 gm

To be mixed together and placed in the chiller.

THE DOUGH

Flour 1500 gm

Salt 30 gm

Anchor Butter 180 gm

Cold Water 750 gm

Dark Chocolate 70% 120 gm

THE STUFFING PASTE (Caramelia Creamy)

Anchor Cream 500 gm

Fresh Milk 500 gm

To be mixed and boiled

Egg Yolk 200 gm

Sugar 100 gm

To be mixed



Caramelia Chocolate 600 gm

Gelatine 10 gm

♦ Mix the egg yolk and sugar and pour it into the boiled mixture of Anchor cream

and milk. Then put in the caramelia chocolate and the gelatin mix with the hand blender. Then place it in a chiller for use the next day.



♦ Put butter in the cake mixing machine



♦ Add cocoa powder to the butter



♦ Mix it to create a chocolate butter paste



♦ Place the mix in a nylon sheet and press it into a sheet



♦ Put flour to a mixing machine



♦ Add sugar to the flour



- ◆ Then add the butter



- ◆ And melted chocolate and mix it into a dough



- ◆ Take it out of the machine and continue mixing with your hand



- ◆ Roll the dough and place the chocolate butter sheet on it. Fold it and roll it 3 times



- ◆ Roll the final dough and fork it to avoid any bubbles



- ◆ Bake it at 170 degrees for 20 minutes



- ◆ Mix the fresh cream, egg yolk and the sugar



- ◆ Add it to the chocolate



- ◆ Add the gelatine leaves



- ◆ Mix it until a smooth creamy texture



- ◆ Pipe the chocolate custard to the baked base



- ◆ Then will cover it with baked base on top

WORK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN

From the land of the Pharaohs to the city of the tallest manmade structure in the world, Chef **Mohamed Abd Salam** of Saleh Bin Lahej Hospitality Division has had an interesting journey. Along the way, he has been teasing the palates of food lovers with his refreshingly different menus. Meet the chef behind popular restaurants such as Chili's, El Chico and Pizza & Co in the region...

Walk like an Egyptian, they've been telling us for so long. But after meeting Chef Mohamed Abd

Salam, we'd say you should also work like an Egyptian. The director of culinary operations at Saleh Bin Lahej Hospitality Division has his fingers in a number of pies. And yet, each of those pies tastes delicious, for which you can thank his perseverance, attention to detail and unconditional love for his profession.

At a time chefs in his home country were struggling for career options, Chef Mohamed got his big break with the first ever American casual dining concept to enter Egypt - Chili's in Cairo. What's more, his hard work impressed the bosses so much that he was made a trainer soon. It wasn't the lure of big bucks or the glamour of working for an American concept that attracted Chef Mohamed. "I was working at a hotel at the time and we supplied to Chili's. I went there to finalise a deal, saw how the trainers were working hard but still having fun at the job and I realised I wanted in," recalls the now 42-year-old chef.

Chef Mohamed did not hesitate to ask the recruiters at Chili's if they had a place for him. Nor did they hesitate to say 'yes'.

Interestingly, hotel management was not something Chef Mohamed had

aspired for as a child. It just happened. "My country was quite a tourist destination at the time and doing hotel management was something of a trend. I just jumped on the bandwagon." That was the 1990s, when donning the white jacket was something of an adventure.

Chef Mohamed did way more than just don the white jacket. He even showed others how to. Initially, he was awed by the work culture that American trainers brought to Egypt. "The way they worked was totally different from the way we did."

Being brought up in a different, stricter culture did not prevent him from blending well with the ideologies of Chili's. Chef Mohamed was the chosen one when the restaurant chain wanted to expand in other parts of the Middle East. "I was sent to open the branch at Dubai and I have visited all the countries in the Middle East such as Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and also the United States, Turkey, Malaysia, Singapore. I opened branches of Chili's all over. If I had to go back and choose again, I would choose the same job."

A loyalist to the core, Chef Mohamed has stuck to his first employer, a rarity in the hospitality world. With good reason. The company spent time and resources to send him to the United States for training across its brands. Today, he

handles the culinary operations of Silver Fox, Chili's, El Chico, Pizza & Co, Cantina Laredo, Romano Macaroni Grill and Black Canyon brands in four countries - Bahrain, Oman, Egypt and the UAE.

Even as most chefs prefer the comfort of working in five-star hotels, Chef Mohamed loves the challenges that a job at a casual dining chain throws his way. "For restaurants, consistency is very important. You can eat in another outlet of the same restaurant and the food will taste the same across outlets. But in a hotel, the food can be different at various properties within the same hotel chain. When a chef creates a restaurant menu, he's thinking about the ingredients available across countries, adjustments that may have to be made and other factors. He has to make sure that the taste and the flavours are standard across countries." Meeting these challenges is immensely satisfying, Chef Mohamed says.

How does he ensure consistency? "There are many processes involved in creating a restaurant menu. We have specific guidelines for the food we use - the fat content, which type of tomato, and so on. We sign supply contracts and try to minimise human error. The recipes are drawn up to the minutest detail and the chefs in different outlets have to follow them."





There are millions of ingredients in the world. Add a little something, remove a little something, cook a little longer or a little less and you will have something else altogether, perhaps tastier



The biggest risk to consistency is in countries where ingredients are not easily available, such as India or Egypt. "In such situations, we have the leeway to change about 95 percent of the menu. In countries where governments are against import of all ingredients, the situation becomes tough."

Dubai is refreshingly different in that sense. All kinds of ingredients are easily available here, says Chef Mohamed. However, every country including the UAE has its own palate. Does he feel the pressure to tweak the menu to include more Arabic tastes? "Earlier we did that but then we realised that a country like the UAE has some 250 nationalities living here. Everyone likes beef or chicken or seafood, it just depends on how you cook it. We test limited time items that are heavy on local flavours. At one time, we test some 4-5 items. And at the end of the year, we have about 20 such items. The successful ones make it to our regular menus."

At the moment, Chef Mohamed is working on a new concept freshly imported from California. Joe's Crab Shack will soon open its doors to food

lovers in Dubai Mall. The restaurant will serve crabs with different flavours and all the ingredients will come from the States. "About 50 percent of the items in this brand are already a part of the menu in our other restaurants."

As delicious as his food is, don't bother asking Chef Mohamed for recipes. He doesn't believe in the written word when it comes to cooking. What he does believe in is using a traditional method to create a base and then adding and removing ingredients to come up with a signature dish. "Remember that a recipe is one person's way of doing something. There are millions of ingredients in the world. Add a little something, remove a little something, cook a little longer or a little less and you will have something else altogether, perhaps tastier."

Trying different techniques and ingredients has become key these days because of the food trends sweeping the world. Low calorie, organic, gluten-free, healthy, restaurants have to grapple with so many new fads. "That's why we change our menu every year. We try to stay updated with the needs of our

customers. We recently changed our Alfredo sauce to make it trans fat-free. We made it less cheesy to cut calories. We changed our burgers to make them low calorie. Earlier, the oils we used were heavy on trans fats, now they are not. This is a continuous process."

Many a times, menus of global chains also have to be tweaked to suit local needs. "For example, menus in the US carry wine and alcohol. We have to come up with other drinks to cater to local tastes."

While Chef Mohamed loves to go out and meet people and orchestrate the operations of his restaurant brands, his first love remains cooking. Someday, he hopes to have his own cookery show on TV. "Most channels here show you how to cook Arabic food and pretty much the same recipes. I want to introduce international dishes that are simple to cook. So many international dishes can be made in very little time. I would like my cooking show to take such dishes to Arabic homes."

When he does, we will definitely be glued to the small screen.



GOLDEN TICKET

The winners of the 2014 Nestle Professional Golden Chef's Hat Competition took off for a study tour to Malaysia as part of their prize winning. They had the opportunity to visit interesting places and explore the country. Ruchi Shueng-Li Thammitage and Fodil Baghal of Madinat Jumeirah, who edged out the nine other competitors came back with these images from the trip.



June-July 2015 Gulf Gourmet



HANS BUESCHKENS UAE FINAL

Rahil Rathod owns the young chefs competition space with yet another win. He was adjudged the best young chef at the Hans Bueschkens UAE final. Here are some images from the event.



THE GUILD MEET

Last month's Emirates Culinary Guild meeting was held at the Habiba ballroom of Radisson Blu Hotel in Sharjah and was hosted by Chef Talal Yousef and the team. Some of the country's top chefs as well as young chefs came together to discuss the exciting events that lay forward for chefs to display their skills. This included topics on the East Coast salon being held this month, the SIAL Middle East pre-planning in Abu Dhabi and more. The biggest announcement was that this was the final meeting being presided by the current elected members of the Guild to give way to fresh elections prior to the East Coast Salon in Fujairah. The meeting was also attended by corporate partners including UFS, Nestle, ANGT and others; many of whom also took the opportunity to showcase their latest products and the advantages it offers in terms of cost, time and quality. Here are some of the moments captured at the event.

June-July 2015 Gulf Gourmet





EAST-COAST CULINARY & COCKTAIL COMPETITION 2015

RESUME OF CLASSES FOR ENTRY

1. Three-Course Gourmet Dinner Menu
2. Tapas, Finger Food & Canapés
3. Three – Course Arabic Dinner Menu
4. An Arabian Feast
5. Friandise/Petite Four/ Pralines & Nougatines
6. Three Plates of Desserts International
7. Three Plates of Desserts Arabic
8. Bread Loaves & Showpiece
9. Three-Tier Wedding Cake
10. Cake Decoration – Practical
11. Open Showpiece
12. Practical Fruits & Vegetable Carving
13. Beef- Practical cookery
14. Arabic Mezzeh – Practical cookery
15. Cocktail Championship

Gastronomic Creation

Class 01: Three - Course Gourmet Dinner Menu

1. Present a plated three-course meal for one person.
2. Suitable for dinner service.
3. The meal consist of:
 - An appetizer or soup
 - A main course
 - A dessert
4. To be prepared in advance and displayed cold on appropriate plates.
5. Total food weight of the three plates should be 420/480 gms.
6. Food coated with aspic or clear gelatin for preservation
7. Typewritten descriptions and recipes required.
8. Maximum area 60cmx60cm.

9. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 02: Presentation of Tapas, Finger Food and Canapés

1. Exhibit six varieties.
2. Six pieces of each variety. (total 36 pieces)
3. Three hot varieties.
4. Three cold varieties.
5. Hot food presented cold.
6. Food coated with aspic or clear gelatin for preservation.
7. Presentation on suitable plate/s or platter/s or receptacles.
8. Six pieces should correspond to one portion.
9. Name and ingredient list (typed) of each variety required.
10. Maximum area 60cm x 75 cm
11. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 3: Three Course Arabic Dinner Menu

Present a plated three-course meal for one person.

1. Suitable for dinner service.
2. The meal consists of:
 - a. *An appetizer (Mezzeh) or soup*
 - b. *A main course*
 - c. *A dessert*
3. To be prepared in advance and displayed cold on appropriate plates.
4. Food coated with aspic or clear gelatin for preservation.
5. Total food weight of the three plates should be 520/580 gms.
6. Typewritten descriptions and recipes required.
7. Maximum area 60cmx60cm.

8. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 4: Arabian Feats

1. Exhibit a Traditional Arabian Wedding Feast would serve in standard hotel in UAE.
2. Suitable for 10 people.
3. Free style presentation.
4. Hot food presented cold.
5. Six cold mezzeh.
6. Three Hot mezzeh.
7. A Whole Ouzi (08 – 10 kg maximum weight) presented with rice & garnish.
8. A Chicken main course- (Emirati Cuisine)
9. A Lamb main course- (Emirati Cuisine)
10. A Fish main course- (Traditional dish)
11. A Vegetable dish- (Traditional dish)
12. Three types of Kebabs (Chicken, Beef & Lamb) with appropriate accompaniments.
13. One hot dessert. (presented cold)
14. Three cold desserts. (one must be Emirati Cuisine)
15. Only above dishes are allowed to present.
16. Maximum available space 180cmx 75cm.
17. Competitors must ensure their exhibit is presented neatly in above space.

Pastry Display

Class 05: Friandises Petites-Four Pralines Naughtiness

1. Present the exhibit to include a small showpiece; the showpiece is for effect only and will not be judged as part of the class.



2. Exhibit six varieties.
3. Six pieces of each variety (36 pieces total) plus one extra piece of each variety on a separate small platter for judges' tasting.
4. Freestyle presentation.
5. Written description mentioning the theme is required.
6. Typewritten recipes are required.
7. Maximum area 70cm x 75 cm.
8. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 06: Three Plates of Dessert (International)

1. Prepare three different desserts, each for one person.
2. Each dessert presented singly on an appropriated plate.
3. Total food weight of one plates should be 80/100 gms.
4. Presentation to include one hot dessert (presented cold).
5. One of the above desserts must use DOCELLO (panna cotta, crème brulee or chocolate mousse) desserts powder as main ingredient.
6. Typewritten description and recipes are required.
7. Tasting will be part of the judging process if deemed necessary to determine quality and authenticity.
8. Maximum area 60cm x 60cm.
9. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 07: Three Plates of Dessert (Arabic)

1. Prepare three different Arabic desserts, each for one person.
2. Each dessert presented singly on an appropriated plate.
3. Total food weight of one plates should be 120/140 gms.
4. Presentation to include one

- hot dessert (presented cold).
5. Typewritten description and recipes are required.
6. Tasting will be part of the judging process if deemed necessary to determine quality and authenticity.
7. Maximum area w90 cm x d75 cm.
8. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 08: Bread Loaf & Bakery Showpiece

1. The entire exhibit must comprise baked goods and must include the following:
2. Bread is to be displayed with a baked bread showpiece.
3. Four types of bread loaves (competitor's choice) minimum of two pieces of each loaf to be displayed.
4. Four types of bread roll (competitor's choice) minimum four pieces of each roll to be displayed.
5. Four types of baked sweet breakfast items (competitor's choice) minimum four pieces of each item to be displayed.
6. Four types of baked savoury/salt breakfast items (competitor's choice) minimum four pieces of each item to be displayed.
7. Doughs prepared and breads baked at place of work and brought to the competition for judging.
8. Tasting will be part of the judging criteria
9. Typewritten recipes are required.
10. Maximum area 90cm x 75cm
11. Maximum height 75cm
12. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 09: Three-Tier Wedding Cake

1. All decorations must be edible and made entirely made by hand.

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

Practical Pastry

Class 10: Cake Decoration

1. Decorate a pre-baked single cake base of the competitor's choice.
2. Two hours duration.
3. Free-style shapes
4. All decorating ingredients must be edible and mixed on the spot.
5. No pre-modelled garnish permitted.
6. Chocolate and royal icing can be pre-prepared to the basic level.
7. Competitors must provide all ingredients, cake base, utensils, and small equipment required.
8. The cake base must a minimum size of 30cm X 30cm or 30cm Diameter.
9. A standard work table with a 13 amp power socket is

provided for each competitor to work.

10. Water and refrigeration will not be available.
11. The cake will be tasted as part of judging.

Artistic Display

Class 11: Open Showpiece

1. Freestyle presentation.
2. Only showpieces made of edible food material will be accepted for adjudication.
3. Maximum area 60cm x 60cm.
4. Maximum height 75 cm. (including base or socle).
5. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 12: Practical Fruits & Vegetable Carving

1. Freestyle.
2. Two hours duration.
3. Hand carved work from competitor's own fruits & vegetables.
4. Competitors to use own hand-tools and equipment.
5. No power tools permitted.
6. Pre-cleaned, peeled material is allowed, but pre-sliced/ carved will result in disqualification.
7. Each competitor will be supplied with a standard buffet table on which to work.
8. One participant per entry is allowed.

Notes on the Practical Cookery Classes (13 & 14)

These notes pertain to all practical cookery classes. They should be read in combination with the brief of the class entered. Due to the fact that timing of complete the competition; competitors are allowed to bring with them an extensive mise-en-place; however, there are restrictions on how much pre-preparation the judges will tolerate. In all cases,

the preparation, production and cooking skills of each competitor must be demonstrated during her/his time in the kitchen.

1. All food items must be brought to the Salon in hygienic, chilled containers: Thermo boxes or equivalent. Failure to bring food items chilled will result in disqualification.
2. All dishes are to be served in a style equal to today's modern presentation trends.
3. Portion sizes must correspond to a three-course restaurant meal.
4. Dishes must be presented on individual plates with appropriate garnish not exceeding 250g total food weight excluding sauces.
5. Unless otherwise stated, competitors must supply their own plates/bowls/ platters with which to present the food.
6. Competitors must bring with them all necessary mise-en-place prepared according to WACS guidelines in the hot kitchen discipline (www.worldchefs.org).
7. Competitors are to provide their own pots, pans, tools and utensils.
8. All brought appliances and utensils will be checked for suitability.
9. The following types of pre-preparation can be made for the practical classes:
 - Vegetables/fungi/fruits; washed & peeled – but not cut up or shaped.
 - Dough can be pre-prepared.
 - Basic stocks can be pre-prepared.
 - Meat may be de-boned and the bones cut up.
 - Pastry sponge, biscuit, meringue- can be brought but no cut
 - Fruits pulps- fruits purees

may be brought but not as finished sauce

- Décor elements- 100% made in the salon
 - Basic ingredients may be pre-weighed or measured out ready for use.
10. No pre-cooking, poaching etc. is allowed.
 11. No ready-made products are allowed.
 12. No pork products are allowed.
 13. No alcohol is allowed.
 14. If a farce is to be used for stuffing, filling, etc., at least one of the four portions of the farce must be prepared in front of the judges to show the competitor's skill
 15. Within 10 minutes after the end of the competition, competitors must have the kitchen thoroughly cleaned and tidied and ready for the next competitor to use.
 16. Two copies of the recipes typewritten are always required.
 17. Submit one copy of the recipe to the duty marshal at the cooking station.

Practical Cookery

Class 13: Beef - Practical Cookery (US Beef Only)

1. Time allowed for 40 minutes.
2. Prepare and present two identical main courses using US Beef as the main protein item.
3. No other Meat Allow otherwise US beef, Supplier purchased & badge number required.
4. Any cut of beef with the exception of tenderloin, Rib eye and Sirloin can be use.
5. Present the main courses on individual plates with appropriate garnish and accompaniments.
6. Typewritten recipes are required.



7. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 14: Arabic Mehheh - Practical Cookery

1. Time allowed for 60 minutes.
2. Prepare and present for two persons.
3. Three types of Hot mezzeh & Cold mezzeh.
4. Only one of following mezzeh allowed to present (hummus/ tabouleh/ babganug Fattoush)
5. The Mezzeh can be representative of any of following countries:
 - Egypt
 - Lebanon
 - Syria
 - Morocco
 - Tunisia
 - Jordan
6. Dishes must be represent a variety of cooking methods and the use of ingredients use in Arabic restaurants.
7. Present the mezzeh in equal portions
8. Typewritten recipes are required.
9. One participant per entry is allowed.

Class 14: Cocktail of the day

We'll be sending the full detail this event once the sponsors finalized with organizers well prior to the event.

Addendum: East-Coast Culinary & Cocktail Event 2015

VENUE & ENTRY

1. East- Coast culinary & cocktail competition will held 08th & 09th of March 2015
2. The venue is "Iberotel Miramar Beach resort Al Farah Ballroom" Fujairah
3. Free entry fees for all classes

Closing Date:

4. Closing date for entries is 15th of May 2015. However, many are often fully subscribed and closed before the closing date

TROPHY ENTREES:

5. Entrance to best trophy awards, must enter and finished all mentioned classes
6. Best individual awards, Highest Medal points in mentioned category
7. Champions Trophy: Best Effort by Individual Establishments (calculated only meddle points)

Best Gastronomic Chef: (Maximum 03 entries for single hotel)

- Class # 01: Three course gourmet dinner menu
- Class # 13: Beef Practical cookery by US Beef

In order to qualify for inclusion in the points tally for best Gastronomic Trophy, competitor must win medals for both categories.

Best Arabic Cuisenaire: (Maximum 03 entries for single hotel)

- Class # 03: Three course Arabic dinner menu
- Class # 14: Practical Mezzeh

In order to qualify for inclusion in the points tally for best Gastronomic Trophy, competitor must win medals for both categories.

Best Pastry Chef: (Maximum 03 entries for single hotel)

- Class # 05: Friandise/ Petit Four/ Pralines & Nougatines
- Class # 10: Practical Cake decoration

In order to qualify for inclusion in the points tally for best Gastronomic Trophy, competitor must win medals

for both categories.

Best Kitchen Artist: (Maximum 03 entries for single hotel)

- Class # 11: Open Showpiece
- Class # 12: Practical Fruits & Vegetable Carving

In order to qualify for inclusion in the points tally for best Gastronomic Trophy, competitor must win medals for both categories.

Best hygienic Chef: By Our Hyg. Sponsor

- Class # 13: Beef Practical Cookery

Best Hygienic Trophy will awarded to heights medal points winner of Beef Practical cookery

Highest Medal points awards for Non best category classes

- Class # 02: Tapas, Finger food & canapés
- Class # 04: Arabian Feast
- Class # 06: Three plates of desserts (International)
- Class # 07: Three plates of desserts (Arabic)
- Class # 08: Bread Loaves & Showpiece
- Class # 15: Best Bartender

Champions Trophy:

Champions trophy awarded to the establishment whose competitors gain the highest total combined medal points won from all of their entries.

Judging Guidelines and Awarding System

A team of WACS Approved Judges will adjudicate at all the classes of competition. After each judging session, the judges will hold a debriefing sessions at which each decision. Competitors will not be competing against each other rather they will be striving

to reach the best possible standard. Judges will then apportion marks that accord with their perception of the standard reached. The competitor will then receive an award commensurate with his/her points tally for the classes. In theory, therefore, everyone in the particular class could be awarded with gold medal. Conversely, it could be possible that no awards at all are made.

The scaling for awarding all classes is as follows:

- 100 - Gold medal with distinction with Certificate.
- 99 – 90 - Gold medal with Certificate
- 89 – 80 - Silver medal with Certificate
- 79 – 70 - Bronze medal with Certificate
- 70 – 50 - Certificate of merit

RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR CULINARY COMPETITION

(Organized by Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort with Advice & Guidance of Emirates Culinary Guild)

NB:

1. Please read the following regulations carefully. The instructions contained herein are mandatory. Non-compliance with any of the points mentioned could lead to loss of marks or complete disqualification.
2. The Briefs of the Classes for Entry document also forms part of these Rules and Regulations and must be read in conjunction with this document.
3. Other regulations relevant to a particular competition would appear on the last page of this document.

PARTICIPATION

4. Participation at competition is open to anyone professionally employed in the preparation of food within UAE and Internationally.
5. All classes are for entry by a single competitor.
6. Competitors are restricted to one entry per class.
7. Competitors are restricted to entering a maximum of three classes.
8. Competitors entering to win must participate fully in every class entered in order to qualify.
9. Competitors must attend and participate on the time allotted to them.

COMPETITION ENTRY

10. Competition Fees: East-Coast Culinary & Cocktail Events is Free entry to anyone Professionally employed in the preparation of food within UAE and Internationally.
11. Please note that there are different forms for different classes; ensure that the correct form is being used.
12. Complete the entry form according to the instructions on the form.
13. Completed entry form must send though by Emirates Culinary Guild.
14. Submit the completed form to the organizer before 15th of May 2015.

CERTIFICATES AND LETTERS OF PARTICIPATION

15. Ensure that your name (clearly written in block capitals) appears on your entry form exactly as you would wish it to appear on any certificate, letter of participation or posting of

results.

HYGIENE

16. Competitors must bring their items according HACCP standard.
17. As the event will be held in the Al Farha Ballroom of the organizer, official Hygiene Officer will judge all the live cooking participants.

THE SECRETARIAT

18. Iberotel Miramar Al Aqah Beach Resort & Emirates Culinary Guild is the soul responsible for the organization and administration of the competition.
19. The competition is governed by ECC according to the rules of the organizing committee
20. Competitors acceptance of participation in the competition will mean as confirmation of their undertaking to submit unconditionally to the jurisdiction of the organizer.

COMPETITORS & HELPERS

21. Each competitor is allowed to have one helper to assist in carrying equipments. No other help is allowed in preparing/ presentation area.
22. Competitor & helper must wear appropriate uniform.
23. Competitors must register on their given time.
24. Competitors & Helpers must not entered apart from salon area (Hotel lobby, Hotel restaurants etc...)
25. Competition area will be monitored by East-Coast Event committee

EXHIBITS

26. Each exhibits must be completely original work, it must not have been



- displayed previously.
27. All exhibits must be of edible substance except for framing and stands.
 28. It is forbidden to use any living entity, depicts religion, nude, seminude or political themes in an exhibit.
 29. All exhibits must be suitable for presentation as a decorative item in a restaurant.
 30. An exhibit must not carry any logo or mark of identification however; they should identify their own work, if needed.
 31. Competitors are responsible for their exhibits and should ensure that they are available in their proper place for judging on the day and time specified.
 32. No preparation or finishing of exhibits is allowed in any area except designated preparation area.
 33. Finished exhibits must be placed in the position indicated by the organizer, It has submitted for judging.
 34. Competitors must leave the judging area as soon as their exhibit is in place or when instructed to leave.
 35. Failure by competitor to register at the specified time will result in to disqualification.
 36. Exhibit which is removed by competitors without permission will not qualify for any awards.

COMPETITION MARSHALS

37. A Marshall-at-arm will recognize by the badge displaying the logo of the organizer.
38. Marshalls are instructed

to ensure that the rules and regulations of the competition are observed by all concerned.

39. Competitors, helpers and visitors are all obliged to cooperate with the marshals.

AWARD

40. Gold, silver and bronze medals and certificates are awarded solely at the discretion of the judges.
41. Decisions made from the judges is final and each competitor is required to abide.
42. The medals will be present at the end of the competition. Certificates will be present after the Event (10 days of maximum) by the organizer.
43. Special awards will be given to all category winners.
44. Competitors must be dressed with complete uniform when collecting medals.
45. Incorrectly dressed competitors are not allowed to access in awarding area.

DISCLAIMER

46. The organizers are entitled to cancel or postpone the East Coast Culinary Competition or alter the duration, timing or schedule of any event.
47. The organizer reserved the right to cancel any classes or limit the number of entries or extend.
48. The organizer will not under any circumstances be held liable or responsible for the loss, Damaged of any exhibit, equipment, goods or

personal effects.

ENQUIRY

49. All enquiries must submitted by email to (theguild.eim.ae. / kacprasad@iberotel.ae) To continually raise the standards of UAE's East Coast Culinary excellence and to promote camaraderie and educational opportunities among culinary experts and Professionals. To act as a staging area for development of culinary concepts by:
 - A) *Encouraging new and innovative styles in culinary.*
 - B) *Bringing the traditional styles up to date.*
 - C) *Nurturing the creativity of individuals by encouraging their participation.*
 - D) *Providing a showcase for individual skills, techniques and styles.*
 - E) *Providing example and inspiration for new professionals.*
 - F) *Providing recognition from fellow professionals.*

Allowing the public to observe the current "state of the art". This insight and learning experience of the public is of great importance because new trends, styles, techniques and philosophies progress with public acceptance, by promoting a greater understanding of sound culinary philosophies. Competitors provide an excellent forum for the public's education.

newmembers



Mr. Sulieman of Black Iris receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

Black Iris is one of the fastest developing companies in the trade and brand-building field, specializing in the trade and distribution of diversified goods locally, regionally and internationally through its six subsidiaries in UAE, KSA and USA. Black Iris is experienced in introducing and building new exclusive quality food brands and products across wholesale, retail, HORECA and Food Service segments. The company's entire business operation is HACCP certified, including substantial warehousing infrastructures and distribution fleets.

Established in the UAE in early 2010, Black Iris is one of the fastest developing companies in the trade and brand -building field, having rapidly grown into a group of six regional and international subsidiaries.

Our three main Black Iris subsidiaries are strategically located in the Jebel Ali Free Zone Area (JAFZA), Dubai Investment Park (DIP) and Abu Dhabi. Regionally, we have two sister companies in Saudi



BLACK IRIS
بلاك آيريس

Arabia, as well as an international subsidiary in Florida, USA.

Black Iris and its subsidiary companies strive to be pioneers in trade and distribution to the middle east. Our key focus areas include trading and distribution of exclusive products and private labels of frozen, chilled, fresh and dry foods.

We are experienced in introducing and building new exclusive quality food brands and products across wholesale, retail, HORECA and Food Service segments. Our brand portfolio includes over 900 SKU's of exclusive products from the Arab Region, Africa, Europe, America and Asia markets, including products from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, Holland and Belgium.

To name a few, Black Iris the exclusive

agent for Fakieh Poultry Farms in the UAE and Oman. Black Iris has also been appointed as the official and exclusive UniPro distributor in the UAE, with a long-term vision and strategic partnership to grow Unipro's business in the UAE and beyond.

Through BLACK IRIS's efforts and network, our exclusive brands gain strong local presence and exposure, enhanced equity and higher sales volumes in the region. The company's entire business operation is HACCP certified, including substantial warehousing infrastructures and distribution fleets.

Our sizeable fleet in the UAE includes our own fully equipped distribution trucks, vans and warehouses for frozen and chilled products, and cars for the sales team and merchandisers. With this energetic network, our dedicated sales, distribution and merchandising teams cover all major hypermarkets and A-class supermarkets, as well as the retail, wholesale, catering, HORECA and Food Service segments.

June-July 2015 Gulf Gourmet



Frederique Simon (Marketing Manager Chef Middle East LLC) and Bruce Woolner (Operations Manager) receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

Chef Middle East is one of the most well known Food service company's within the region and needs little introduction within the market. Since its inception in November 1995 we have been a service driven business, where emphasis is placed on a commitment to professionalism, reliability and consistent stock availability which has made us the company for hotel and restaurant establishments to turn too. Supreme quality products and services without compromise are also hallmarks of our business.

We believe, above all, that our business is not about the things we create, but rather the people who create them and the people who believe in our creations. Our team comprises of 180 associates, who we believe are our greatest asset. Followed closely by our loyal and long standing client portfolio and the strong



brands that we proudly represent, including Valrhona chocolate, Boiron fruits and purees, Premier meat products, Olmeda Spanish specialties, La Corvinia Italian products to mention just a few.

Chef Middle East is equipped with professional temperature controlled warehousing to ensure products are kept at their optimum quality supported with distribution facilities and a fleet of refrigerated vehicles within Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Umm Al Quwain, Muscat and Doha providing a comprehensive reach across these nations.

Our reputation goes further afield

with our ability to provide an extended range of products through our Export department. We have the capabilities to consolidate the range of products with temperature control packing and being able to air freight/sea freight to anywhere the customer may require.

In everything, our sincere endeavor is to be forward thinking and to offer a fresh approach to the sector in which we operate, thereby being rapidly responsive to the ever changing market. The culture within Chef! Middle East is dynamic, engaging, hospitable and trustworthy, offering our clients a high quality experience very few can match.

As we say "repeat orders are a measure of our success"

Visit us at www.chefmiddleeast.com or e-mail at chefdip@chefmiddleeast.com



Rosario Fernandes (Sector Lead - Hospitality) and Samit Sanyal (Marketing Director - MENE) receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

Sealed Air creates a world that works better by re-imagining the industries we serve. By uniting ingenious ideas and diverse expertise, we discover new possibilities and create new approaches that enhance business and the world we live in. Where we thrive is transforming sustainable, end-to-end solutions into business-changing results. By uniting ingenious ideas and diverse expertise, we discover new possibilities and create new approaches that enhance business and the world we live in. Where we thrive is transforming sustainable, end-to-end solutions into business-changing results.

Food Care - Ensuring the safety and quality of what we eat and drink is essential for sustaining healthy communities. To help the world thrive, Sealed Air's Food Care division commits its expertise to create packaging



and hygiene solutions that increase operational efficiency, extend shelf life and reduce resource use and waste throughout the global food and beverage supply chain. From farm to fork, we improve food safety and build brands for better tasting and nutritious experiences every day.

Product Care - Sealed Air's Product Care division resolves the demanding protective and specialty packaging challenges of our ever-changing world through tailored, practical solutions. Across a wide range of industries, we apply our expertise to maximize performance and efficiency while also

reducing the amount of energy and raw materials needed to get precious assets through the distribution chain—safe and secure

Diversey Care - The well-being of people everywhere depends on a sustainable world. Sealed Air's Diversey Care division offers solutions for infection prevention, kitchen hygiene, fabric care, building care and consulting. Our solutions protect brands, deliver efficiency and improve performance for our partners in health care, food service, retail, hospitality and facility services. Our leading expertise integrates product systems, equipment, tools and services into innovative solutions that reduce water and energy usage and increase productivity. By delivering superior results, we help create profitable, sustainable enterprises for a cleaner, healthier future.



Edgard Chalhoub – Sales Manager/Food Service receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

Greenhouse witnessed a change of management in 2014 headed by Mr. Daniel Chidiac, who maintained the momentum and legacy that the company prevails across the UAE, Qatar and Oman markets. By setting up a category management and reinforcing the customer service department, Greenhouse today is serving its customers with professional, knowledgeable, and highly motivated personnel. The company works exclusively with leading multinational brands and focuses on building brands rather than general trade.

Greenhouse Foodstuff LLC, a UAE based company, has been leading in the culinary service industry for over three decades as distributors of premium food brands. Greenhouse prides itself with clients ranging from hospitality airlines, fine dining restaurants and supermarkets. With visionary management and knowledge,



Greenhouse has been consistently growing since its humble beginnings in 1977. Its strengths lie in the import of food categories such as Bakery, Dairy, Grocery, Italian & Thai foods and other exclusive food items.

Greenhouse constantly innovates and upgrades its services; one of the reasons for its success with clients is a proactive business philosophy to solving problems before they arise by using pragmatic management methods. Greenhouse operates on an optimized time supply chain and uses the latest WMS system for both perishable and non-perishable goods. Greenhouse Foodstuff LLC consists of two separate specialist sales teams namely: Food service & Retail so as to cater to all the varied demands of

its customers and clients while giving total customer satisfaction and ensuring quality service to its clients.

At Greenhouse, the aim is to maintain the status of a preferred supplier for these premium brands across the region. The company believes that customer service and client satisfaction are the key ingredients that create the perfect recipe for success. Greenhouse Foodstuff LLC HQ is located in Sharjah, UAE with a wide distribution center network spread across Sharjah, Dubai and Abu Dhabi. However, by the end of 2015, it will move to a state-of-the-art infrastructure located in Dubai Investment Park. A 7000 sq. meters facility with unique features, notably an in house demo kitchen. It will not only provide a platform for its corporate chefs to showcase their skills and expertise using Greenhouse products but also an opportunity for industry experts to watch, meet and share their experiences and insights.



Mr. Elias Rached Regional Director, Sales Middle East & Africa and Elssy Zeini, Office Manager receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

MKN is the German specialist in premium thermal professional cooking technology! More than 65 years ago the MKN factory was founded by the engineer Kurt Neubauer. Today, MKN is a strong medium-sized enterprise and is still owned by his family. The factory is located in northern Germany, in the town of Wolfenbuettel in Lower Saxony. Here in the very centre of Europe almost 460 experienced specialists, including the motivated MKN offspring of more than 40 apprentices, develop and produce professional cooking technology of the highest quality in an area of approximately 80.000 m².

Products from the German market leader inspire in particular, with high quality, durability and economic efficiency. Whether with modern multi function cooking technology such as the new FlexiCombi Combi Cooking and



FlexiChef Pressure Cooking Technology, or the tailor made uniqueness of the Premium Class KÜCHENMEISTER and modular appliance range, MKN has won lots of prizes. Customers from all over the world value the outstanding practicality of innovative professional cooking technology from MKN, in catering, the hotel industry, gastronomy and community catering. Each and every product in the extensive MKN product portfolio fulfils highest demands. Freely combined, multi-function and special appliances, including the energy system from MKN, melt into a highly functional integrated answer to all professional

cooking needs. Exactly coordinated, to meet the individual demands of the user, an ideal mix!

MKN has been repeatedly awarded prizes for its innovative technology, design and as a proficient partner of specialized trade. Some examples of the last two years are the "Superpartner" prize of the GGKA Professional Association for Gastronomy and Industrial kitchen equipment, the "Kitchen Innovation Award" for the innovative automatic cleaning system WaveClean, the "Catering Star" for the

KÜCHENMEISTER and the "Star Award" from the magazine Top Hotel for the HansDampf Compact Combi Cooking Technology. All these prizes prove MKN's outstanding achievement as the specialist for premium professional cooking technology.



Simon Parke-Davis receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

RATIONAL is the worldwide market and technology leader in thermal preparation of food for commercial catering and haute cuisine, with a 54 % world market share. In 1976 RATIONAL invented the first combi-steamer which fundamentally changed the way large-scale and professional kitchens operate. Today more than 600.000 RATIONAL combi-steamers are in use worldwide, this means practically every second unit installed is made by RATIONAL. Approximately 120 million meals are produced with RATIONAL units every day.

With the launch of the new



SelfCookingCenter® 5 Senses
RATIONAL has set another milestone in the development of thermal cooking appliances. The SelfCookingCenter® 5 Senses replaces almost all the appliances traditionally found in a professional kitchen. It can grill, steam, gratinate, bake, rise, roast, braise, simmer, stew, poach or blanch. The unit independently determines, controls and monitors the optimum cooking process – just by the push

of a button. It is the first cooking system with five senses as it senses, recognises, thinks with the chef and ahead, learns from the chef and even communicates with him. On the same time the SelfCookingCenter® 5 Senses requires significantly less energy, water and raw materials. It is not only a standard for Western food but also for Indian and Arabic cuisine.

The comprehensive service of RATIONALS "ServicePlus" package ensures that the customer derives the maximum possible benefits from the investment right from the start – and continues to do so for the entire product life.



Sharon Black – General Manager/Renarte General Trading LLC & Ranjan Salis – CEO/ Renarte General Trading LLC receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Mischeel.

In late June 2006, the final plans were crystallized, the logistics were put in place and Renarte LLC was born in Dubai, UAE. Of course, our growing success from the very outset can be attributable to several factors but above all, we credit it to the first task we ever gave ourselves: our motivations.

Whereas profits and reputations and success and growth are all definite and valid motivations, we know that at the core, the reputations and successes of our clients, hinge on the products and services we deliver to them. We wrote that down on a piece of paper, stuck it to our desks and began to work.

And it has paid off. We've now opened branch offices in Qatar and India. The American and the African continents are next on our horizon. From two employees in 2006, we've grown to employ the



full-time services of 20 specialized professionals. And to lead them from the front, we've persuaded the charming, dynamic Sharon Black – a 20-year veteran in the industry to join us as General Manager effective January 2014.

We're now averaging between 6 and 7 million US dollars in turnover every year. And we're well on course to realize our vision to be the finest product / service provider for the HoReCa sector. We can confidently assert that we're probably the only company in the HoReCa sector who

can comprehensively furnish operating supplies for an entirely new venture. Our secret is so simple, so basic that it eludes most others: work with the best brands and offer the best in terms of price and quality. This is how we can boast core products in each and every category. In Chinaware, we deal with Tafelstern, Dudson and Revol. And no, none of these overlap nor duplicate one another; rather they complement one another for they're made of different materials and are meant for different applications.

In Flatware & Hollowware, we have Guy Degrenne and Corby Hall. In Glassware we bring elegant, handmade, colourful, signature glasses from perfectionists like Spiegelau and Union Victor. For Housekeeping & Front Office we source from Forbes Industries and Caddie – undoubtedly the largest brands in the hospitality trade.

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

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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%



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ECG Corporate member directory

4 Corners

Nathalie Hall / Mike Walden
Marketing Manager / Commercial Director
Mobile: +97148847248, Phone: +971526475455
Email: nathalie.hall@4cornersuae.com
www.4cornersuae.com

Abu Dhabi Farmers' Services Centre

Martin Aguirre, Commercial & Operations Director
P.O. Box 62532, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Direct Line: +971 2 813 8400.
Phone: +971 2 813 8888, Fax: +971 2 813 9999
Mobile: +971 56 685 4836

Advanced Baking Concept LLC (Probake)

Syed Masood
Mobile: +971.55.220.1475
Email: masood@abcbaking.com
Anna Petrova
Mob 050-9121337, anna@abcbaking.com
Vivek Jham
Mob: 055-4498282, vivek@abcbaking.com

Agthia Consumer Business Division

Dinusha Gamage, Brand Manager - Food category
Consumer Business Division
Agthia Group PJSC, P.O. Box 37725, Abu Dhabi.
Mail: dinusha.gamage@agthia.com
www.agthia.com

Al Ghurair - Food service Division

Sameer Khan
Mob: 050 4509141, Off: 04 8852566
Email: SameerK@alghurairgroup.com

Al Islami Foods Co.

Rajesh Balan, Sales Manager - Food Service
Mob: 050 4239532, Off: 04 8853333
Email: rajesh.balan@alislamifoods.com
www.alislamifoods.com

Al Seer

Himanshu Chotalia
Tel: 04 3725425/432, Mobile: 050 3561777
Email: himanshu.chotalia@alseer.com

American Garden

Majid Ali, Regional Sales Manager - MEA
Mob: +971 56 6441578, +971 50 5042425
Email: majid@globalxport.com
web: www.americangarden.us

ANGT LLC - NONIONS / SIPPY

Ashwin V Ruchani, Global Marketing Manager
Tel +971 4 4565878, Fax - +971 4 4565879
1507/8, 15th Floor, Metropolis Tower,
Burj Khalifa Street, Business Bay,
PO Box - 42941, Dubai.

Arab Marketing and Finance, Inc. (AMFI)

Simon Bakht
Tel: +961-1-740378 / 741223 / 751262
Email: SBakht@amfi.com

Aramtec

Mr. Syed Iqbal Afaq, Email: syediqbal@aramtec.com

ASAAT (Al Sharq Al Aqsaa Trading Co)

Godly John Varghese,
Asst. Manager Business Development,
Mob: +971 56 174 7763

Atlantic Gulf Trading

Andy Fernandes, Manager Admin & Sales
P.O. Box 2274, Dubai, U.A.E. Tel: +971 4 3589250, Fax:
+971 4 325 4961, Mobile: +971 50 5096594
andyfernandes@atlanticgulftading.com
www.atlanticgulftading.com

Bakemart International

K.Narayanan, Manager - Operations
Mob : 00971 505521849,
Phone : 00971 4 2675406
Email - bakemart@eim.ae,
knarayanan@bakemart.ae

Barakat Quality Plus

Jeyaraman Subramanian
Tel: 009714 8802121, Email: jr@barakat.com
Mike Wunsch
Tel: 009714 8802121
Email: mikwuuae@emirates.net.ae

Baqer Mohebi

Radwan Mouselli
Mobile No: 050 387 2121, Office No: 04 3417171
Email: radwan.bme@mohebi.com

Black Iris Trading LLC

Yanal Sulieman - CEO, Fadi Sulieman - MD
Mobile No: 056 6935596, Office No: 04 8877940
Email: info@blackirisgroup.com

Boecker Public Health Food Safety

Antoine Masse
Office No: +97143311789, Email: uae@boecker.com

Convotherm/ Manitowoc Foodservice

Mick Jary, Projects Manager
Tel: (+971) 4 8862677, Mob: +971 (0) 561743584

Chef Middle East LLC

Frederique Simon, Marketing Manager
Tel: (+971) 4 815 98 41, Mob: +971 50 88 25 620
Email: frederique@chefmiddleeast.com
Web: www.chefmiddleeast.com

Del Monte Foods (U.A.E) FZE

Souhail Khattab
Sales Director - Local & Export Markets
Tel: (+971) 4 3333801, Mob: +971 (0) 504583512
SKhattab@FreshDelmonte.com

Diamond Meat Processing Est. (Al Masa)

Suresh K.P, Mob: +971 4 2671868, +971 50 6554768
sureshkp@etazenath.com

Dilmah Tea

Vivette
Mob +971 508181164, e-mail: viv@proactiveuae.com,
Marketing@dilmahtea.com

Diversey Gulf FZE

Samit Sanyal, Marketing Director - MENE
Tel: +971 4 8819470, Mob: +971 55 6413048,
Email: samit.sanyal@sealedair.com,
Web: www.sealedair.com

Ecolab Gulf FZE

Andrew Ashnell
Mobile: 050 5543049, Office: 04 88736 44
Email: andrew.ashnell@ecolab-gulf.ae

ELFAB CO LLC

M/s Priya Malhotra, Executive Director
P.O. Box 3352, Dubai Investments Park, Phase 2
Jebel Ali, Dubai, UAE, Tel.: 9714 8857993,
Direct: 9714 4885775, Fax.: 9714 8857993,
Email: elfab@emirates.net.ae,
web: www.elfabco.com

EMF Emirates LLC

Pierre Feghali
Mob: 050 4533868, Off: 04 2861166
Email: pierre@emf-emirates.ae

Emirates Snack Foods

Olga Noskova / Rodica Olaru, (Food service managers)
Mob: +971 55 1477455, Off: +971 4 2855645
Email: olga@esf-uae.com; rodica@esf-uae.com
Web: www.esf-uae.com

Faisal Al Nusif Trading LLC

Thomas Das
Mobile No: 050 625 3225, Office No: 04 3391149
Email: fantco@emirates.net.ae

Fanar Al Khaleej Tr

Nazarii Zubovych, Ass. Sales Manager,
Mob: +971 55 894 01 69
email: nzubovych@fanargroup.ae
Martin Wathew, Sales manager,
Mob: +971 50 263 83 15,
email: mmathew@fanargroup.ae
Braj, Food Technologist, Mob: +971 55 467 87 42,
Email: braju@fanargroup.ae, Web: www.fanargroup.ae

Farm Fresh

Feeroz Hasan, Business Development Manager
Al Quoz, P.O. Box 118351, Dubai, UAE
Office No : +971 4 3397279 Ext: 253
Fax: +971 4 3397262, Mob: +971 56 1750883

Federal Foods

Lina El Khatib, Director Food Service
Mobile: 056 6817557

Focus International

James Everall, Regional Director - Middle East
UAE Office: +971 (0) 4 5520606
UK Office: +44 (0) 1625 560778
Mob: +971 (0) 553175154
Email: james.everall@fmcl.ae
Website: www.focusinternational.uk.com
www.focusmanagementconsultants.co.uk

Fonterra

Samer Abou Daher, Food Service Manager - Gulf
Fonterra Brands (Middle East) L.L.C
Tel : +971 4 3388549 Ext. 247
Fax: +971 4 3392581, Mob: +971 55 363 0555
Email: samer.daher@fonterra.com

Food Freshly AFC GmbH

Sukhdev Singh, CEO
Tel : +49520691525, +491608024720
Email: info@food-freshly.de

FSL Food FZE (Dubai Branch)

Syed Najam Kazim, General Manager
Tel: 04-8131500, 04- 8131504,
email: najam@fslfoods.com, web: www.fslfoods.com

Golden Star International

Emie Dimmeler
Mobile: +971 50 3797164, Office: +971 04 3402492
Email: emie@goldenstarinternational.com

Greenhouse

Marc El Feghali,
Sales & Brand Manager - Chefs Equipment,
Tel: +971 6 5332218,
Website: www.greenhouseuae.com

Gulf Food Trade - UAE

Charles.S.Sidawi, Food Service Department
Tel: 04 - 3210055, Fax: 04 - 3435565
Mob: 050 - 8521470, charles.sidawi@gftuae.com

Gyma Food Industries LLC

Himanshu Kothari, Manager - Foodservice
Mobile: +971506512378
Email: himanshuk@bayara.ae, Web: www.bayara.ae

Hi Foods General Trading L.L.C

Mohamad Daher, Sales Manager,
Tel: 971529837575, Mail: m.daher@hifoods-uae.com,
Web: www.hifoods-uae.com

Horeca Trade

Wael Al Jamil, General Manager UAE and Oman
Head office: T: +971 4 338 8772 F: +971 4 338 8767
Dubai Distribution Centre:
T: +971 4 340 3330 F: +971 4 340 3222
Abu Dhabi Distribution Centre:
T: +971 2 554 4882, F: +971 2 554 4889
Email: marketing@horecatrade.ae
Website: www.horecatrade.ae

HUG AG

Riyadh Hessian, 6102 Malters / Switzerland,
food-service@hug-luzern.ch, www.hug-luzern.ch,
www.facebook.com/hugfoodservice
Distribution UAE and Oman: Aramtec, PO Box 6936,
Al Quoz Industrial Area No. 1, Near Khaleej Times
Office, Mob +971 507648434, www.aramtec.com

IFFCO

Craig Finney, Head Sales UAE
Mobile: +971 555 138 698, Tel: +971 650 29436
Email: cfinney@iffco.com, Web: www.iffco.com

Johnson Diversey Gulf

Marc Robitzkat
Mobile No: 050 459 4031, Office No: 04 8819470
marc.robitzkat@johnsondiversey.com

John Holt Foods

Alen Thong, Tel: 0097150 347 20 49
Email: jathong@emirates.net.ae

Kerry

Leanne Hart, Commercial Support
Tel: +971 4 3635900
Email: leanne.hart@kerry.com, web: www.kerry.com

Lamb Weston

Sajju Balan, Mobile No: 050 4907980
Email: sajjubalan@lambweston-nl.com

Masterbaker

Sagar Surti, General Manager – Operations
Mob: 00971 50 5548389, Phone: 04 3477086
Email: sagars@uae.switzgroup.com

Meat Livestock Australia (MLA)

Jamie Ferguson, Tel: 00971 44 33 13 55
Mobile: 00971 55 1000 670
Jferguson@mla.com.au

MEIKO Middle East FZE

Tim Walsh, Managing Director
Tel: +97143415172, Mob: +971509895047
Email: wat@meiko.de, Website: www.meiko.ae

Mitras International Trading LLC

Arun Krishnan K S, Business Head
Mobile: 971-55-1089676, Office: 971-4-3623157,
Email: info@mitrasglobal.net
Web: www.magentafoods.com

MKN Maschinenfabrik Kurt Neubauer GmbH & Co

Elias Rached, Regional Director, Sales Middle East
and Africa, Tel: +971720413 36,
Mob: +97150558747
Email: rac@mkn-middle-east.com
Web: www.mkn.eu

M.R.S. Packaging

Manu Soni, Managing Director, Office G08,
Al Asmawi Building, Dubai Investment Park
P.O. Box 17074, Tel: +971 4 885 7994
Fax: +971 4884 9690

NRTC

Ali Nasser, Al Awir Central Market, Dubai, UAE, Tel:
+971-4-3208889, nrtc@emirates.net.ae

Nestlé Professional Middle East

Anuj Singh, General Operations Manager
Nestlé Professional UAE & Oman
T +97 144 088 100, Direct +97 144 088 101
Email: anuj.singh@ae.nestle.com

Oasis Foods International LLC

PO BOX 37015 Dubai UAE
Tel: +971 4 2676223 Fax: +971 4 2583655
admin@oasisfoodsintl.com

Ocean Fair International General Trading Co LLC.

Lorena Joseph
Tel: +971 4 8849555, Mobile: +971 50 4543681
Email: lorena@oceanfair.com

Pasta Regina LLC

Stefano Brocca, CEO
Tel: +971 4 3406401, Mobile: +971 55 7635513
Email: stefano.brocca@reginapasta.com
Web: www.reginapasta.com,
Al Quoz Industrial Area #4 P.O. Box 38052
Dubai (Adjacent to Emirates Glass
near ECC Plant & Equipment)

Pear Bureau Northwest

Bassam Bousaleh, (TEL) 961.1.740378, (FAX)
961.1.740393, Mobile: 050.358.9197,
AMFI, Beirut Lebanon
E-mail: BassamB@amfime.com

Promar Trading L.L.C.

Pierre Accad, Sales & Marketing Director, Tel:
97142859686. Mob: 971504824369.
Email: pierre@promartrading.com

RAK Porcelain

Raphael Saxod, Managing Director,
Tel: 97172434960, 97143285951
Email: restofair@rakporcelain.com
Web: www.rakrestofair.ae

Radikal Foods DMCC

Chakradhar, Regional Manager,
Tel: +971 4 4470449, +971 50 4742307
Email: chakradhar@radikalgroup.com
Web: www.radikalway.com

Rational International [Middle East]

Simon Parke-Davis, Chief Representative,
Mobile: +971 4 3386615
Email: info@rational-online.ae,
Web: www.rational-online.com

Renarte LLC

Sharon Black, General Manager,
Tel: +971 4 4356994, Mobile: +971 50 706 3436
Email: sharon.black@renartellc.ae,
Web: www.renartellc.com

Restofair RAK

Raphael Saxod,
Tel: +971 7 2434960, +971 97143285951,
Email: restofair@rakrestofair.ae
Web: www.restofair.aew

SADIA

Mr Patricio Email: patricio@sadia.ae
Daniele Machado
Email: Daniele.Machado@sadia.com.br

SAFCO

Ajit Sawhney, Tel: 009716 5339719
Email: ajit@sawhneyfoods.ae

Supreme Foods Group

Jiji Mathews, General Manager - Sales
Tel: 0097148868111, Mob: 00971505578118
Email: jiji.mathews@sfgarabia.com,
Web: www.sfgarabia.net

Sopexa Middle East

Edwina Salvatori, Senior Account Manager
Tel: 04 439 17 22, Email: edwina.salvatori@sopexa.com
Web: www.sopexa-me.com/en7/agency_word

Technolux

Zer Boy A. Rito, Sales Manager
P.O. Box 52530, Al Bada, Dubai UAE
Tel. No.: (04) 3448452, Fax No.: (04) 3448453
Mobile No.: 0555237218

Tramontina Dubai UAE LLC

Elias Eid, Operations and Marketing Manager
Tameem House, 5th Floor - Off. 501/502, Tecom C
P.O.Box: 28924, Tel: +971 4 4504301, +971 50
4570466, Email: elias@tramontina.ae,
Web: www.tramontina.ae

Transmed Overseas

Hani Kiwan
Office No: 04 334 9993 Ext 386
Email: hani.kiwan@transmed.com

Truebell Marketing & Trading

Bhushant J. Ghandi
Mobile: +971 50 6460532, Email: fsd@truebell.org

Unilever Food Solutions

Marc Hayes, Executive Chef Arabian Gulf
Mob: +971 56 2266181, Marc.Hayes@unilever.com
Ahmed Saraya, Customer Development Consultant
- UAE, Mob: +971 56 6869243,
Ahmed.Saraya@unilever.com

US Dairy

Nina Bakht El Halal, Mobile: 050.358.9197,
Beirut: 961-740378, email: halal@cyberia.net.lb

US Meat Export Federation

Bassam Bousaleh, Tel: +961-1-74038 / 741223
Fax: +961-1-740393, Mobile: 050.358.9197
AMFI, Beirut Lebanon, Email: BassamB@amfime.com

US Poultry

Berta Bedrossian
(TEL) 961.1.740378
(FAX) 961.1.740393
Mobile: 050.358.9197
email: BettyB@amfime.com

Vito Kitchen and Restaurant Equipment Trading U.A.E.

Sascha Geib
Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Street
P.O.Box 2257 Ajman
M:+971509664620
Mail: uae@systemfiltration.com

Winterhalter ME

Saju Abraham, Sales Manager
Mobile: +971 505215702
Email: sabraham@winterhalter.ae



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Application Membership

Date of Application:

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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:.....

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Remarks:

Payment received?

Certificate Given.

Pin Given.

Medal & Collar Given

Approved

Approved

President.....

Chairman.....

Fees:

Young Member: Junior members will receive a certificate.

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

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

150/=per year thereafter.

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

Corporate Member Dhs. 20,000 per year

YOU + FROG = HAPPINESS AND PRODUCTIVITY



In the hospitality industry, time is of the essence. Needless to say, your role – regardless of your level in the corporate hierarchy – is extremely demanding. Time management is therefore critical to delivering what is expected of you.

However, if your time management efforts are not working, it's probably because you haven't included yourself and prioritised what's important to you as an individual. When one is unable to manage his or her own needs based on priority, it is bound to manifest itself into frustration at the work place. This in turn will affect your inner peace and you end up stuck in a negative cycle.

So how does one get out of this cycle? The first obvious answer is to allocate space for yourself in your time management efforts. You'll be surprised to see how much more productive you get when that happens.

The second involves eating a frog. Well, metaphorically speaking.

In his book 'Eat That Frog', Brian Tracy quotes Mark Twain as saying, "If you eat a frog first thing in the morning, the rest of your day will be wonderful" and

"If you have to eat a frog, don't look at it for too long."

What it means is simple. Make sure your time management plan lists the "not-so-happy-tasks" to be completed first thing in the morning and don't leave it for later. This is for two reasons.

One, the human mind is capable of finishing arduous tasks faster when it's not tired. And two, the rest of the day is easy to manage as you are no longer worried.

To eat that frog one needs to be focused and aware. Creating a personal vision statement also helps in making it easy to do the hard work.

If you are still confused, try the following. The idea is to establish short and long-term goals so that on a subconscious level you start impacting and influencing your daily plan.

- ♦ Have a vision that motivates you. Something that gets your excited. Such as to own your own restaurant someday or to become Executive Chef or GM some day.
- ♦ Slowly begin doing things outside your comfort zone. Such as talking

in a language you are weak in or doing a job which is not part of your job profile. You'll be surprised how soon these uncomfortable tasks will become a part of your comfort zone.

- ♦ Set challenging goals for yourself. This is because easy goals are not motivating enough. Goals such as 'I will create a new dish from scratch' or 'rework a recipe I think I can make better'.
- ♦ Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway®. Be willing to take some risks and go after what you want

It was Carl Sandburg who said, "Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you."

You have 24 hours each day just like everyone else. So get yourself motivated by following the above four steps. And don't forget to eat the frog first thing every day. Success will reach you faster than you believe.

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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