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THE MAGAZINE CHEFS LOVE TO READ
Volume 10, Issue 3

GRAND SLAM

St Regis at Saadiyat Island have done it again. Meet the force behind **Thamara Kumari**, the only chef in history to bag top honours at both the Emirates Salon Culinare and La Cuisine by SIAL

GOA SETTLED

Edouard Speck, the hotelier who travelled through the region before setting up his own to enjoy retirement

**YOUNG CHEFS**

Yusuf and Annette from ICCA Dubai are this month's challengers for the Golden Chefs Hat competition

**SWEET SURPRISE**

Executive Pastry Chef **Siddhesh Sukhathankar** of Amwaj Rotana shares his special recipe with us





Create your sweet signature

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Dear fellow chefs, ladies and gentlemen,

Welcome to the March issue of our Gulf Gourmet, the Salon Culinaire 2015 special. I do know a lot of you are waiting for the issue with all our Salon winners.

First of all I'd like to start with the great news. The Dubai culinary team (Chef Thushan, Chef Karan and Chef Kapila) won the Grand Prix at the Southern Europe Culinary Competition at Thessaloniki in Greece, the team won Gold as well as the main trophy in the Black Box team competition. All three also took part in Individual Live Cooking and won a Gold medal each. Pictures and more event details will be in our April issue.

Another great news is the success of Chef Rahil Rathod, our Junior Chef Winner of Salon Culinaire. Not only did he qualify for the San Pellegrino Middle East Africa final in Cape Town, he bagged second place. Event picture and details of this too will be in the April issue.

I'd like to thank the whole Emirates Culinary Guild team for the great job done during the International Salon Culinaire 2015 at Gulfood.

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

Thank you also to Gert Klotzke from the WorldChefs culinary committee for facilitating the WACS judges seminar. All the best to the new judges. As I said at the seminar, this is just a start. You now need to gain experience, try to start to judge smaller events and be a shadow/trainee judge at the bigger events.

We do have our next event coming on the March 14, which is the hands-on beef



workshop by US Beef Export Federation and March 15, the hands-on poultry workshop by US Egg Poultry Export Council. Both events are at the Radisson Blu Dubai Deira Creek and hosted by our partners from AMFI.

This will be followed by the mini plated on April 13. On the same day will be our monthly meeting and a cocktail event thereafter hosted by the US Beef Export Federation. Registration is open.

Our next big event is the East Coast Salon Culinaire 2015 in the beginning of June and will be the last event before Ramadan and our summer break. Registration will be opened end of this month. Book the June 8-9 into your diary.

SIAL 2015 in Abu Dhabi is confirmed for December 7-9 after our National Day holiday.

The next WACS Congress will now be in September 2016 in Athens, Greece. I recommend members to start saving money and to join us in Athens.

If you have missed any of our previous

Gulf Gourmet Magazines please visit gulfgourmet.net.

I urge all members to go visit the Guild website to see what is happening on the calendar at emiratesculinaryguild.net and to also visit the WACS Young Chefs Facebook page on [facebook.com/wacsyoungchefs](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 all our supporters.

A final thank you to Chef Michel and Chef Edgar and the Coral Beach Resort & Spa team for hosting our February 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*

March 2015 *Gulf Gourmet*

ggcontents

09 » Editor's Note
Our Editor's take on all things
F&B in the region

**10 » Friends of
the Guild**
Brands that support the
Emirates Culinary Guild

14 » News Bites
A quick round-up of what's
happening in the Chef
community and the food
service industry

16 » Chief Speak
Edouard Speck, the hotelier
who travelled through the
region before setting up his
own country house in Goo to
enjoy his retirement

18 » Pastry Power
(by Fonterra)
Executive Pastry Chef
Siddhesh Sukhathankar of
Amwaj Rotana shares his
special recipe with us

22 » Cover Story
St Regis at Saadiyat Island
have done it again. Meet the
force behind **Thamara Kumari**,
the only chef in history to
bag top honours at both the
Emirates Salon Culinaire and
La Cuisine by SIAL

32 » Golden Chef's Hat
(by Nestle Professional)
Yusuf and **Annette** from
ICCA Dubai are this
month's challengers for
the Golden Chef's Hat
competition

36 » Sustainability
Unilever global factory
network achieves goal of
sending zero non-hazardous
waste to landfill



40 »



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ggcontents



18 »

38 » Events

Images from around the region related to the industry. This issue includes images from Judges meeting pre-Salon Culinaire and the Emirates Culinary Guild meeting

40 » Gulf food Report

Full coverage of the recently concluded Gulf food Exhibition in Dubai, the world's largest annual food and hospitality trade show

46 » Salon Images

Full gallery of winners, competitors and more from the Salon Culinaire held during Gulf food 2015

57 » New Members

Meet the new and renewed members of the Emirates Culinary Guild

62 » Members Directory

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

66 » More than a chef

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

46 »





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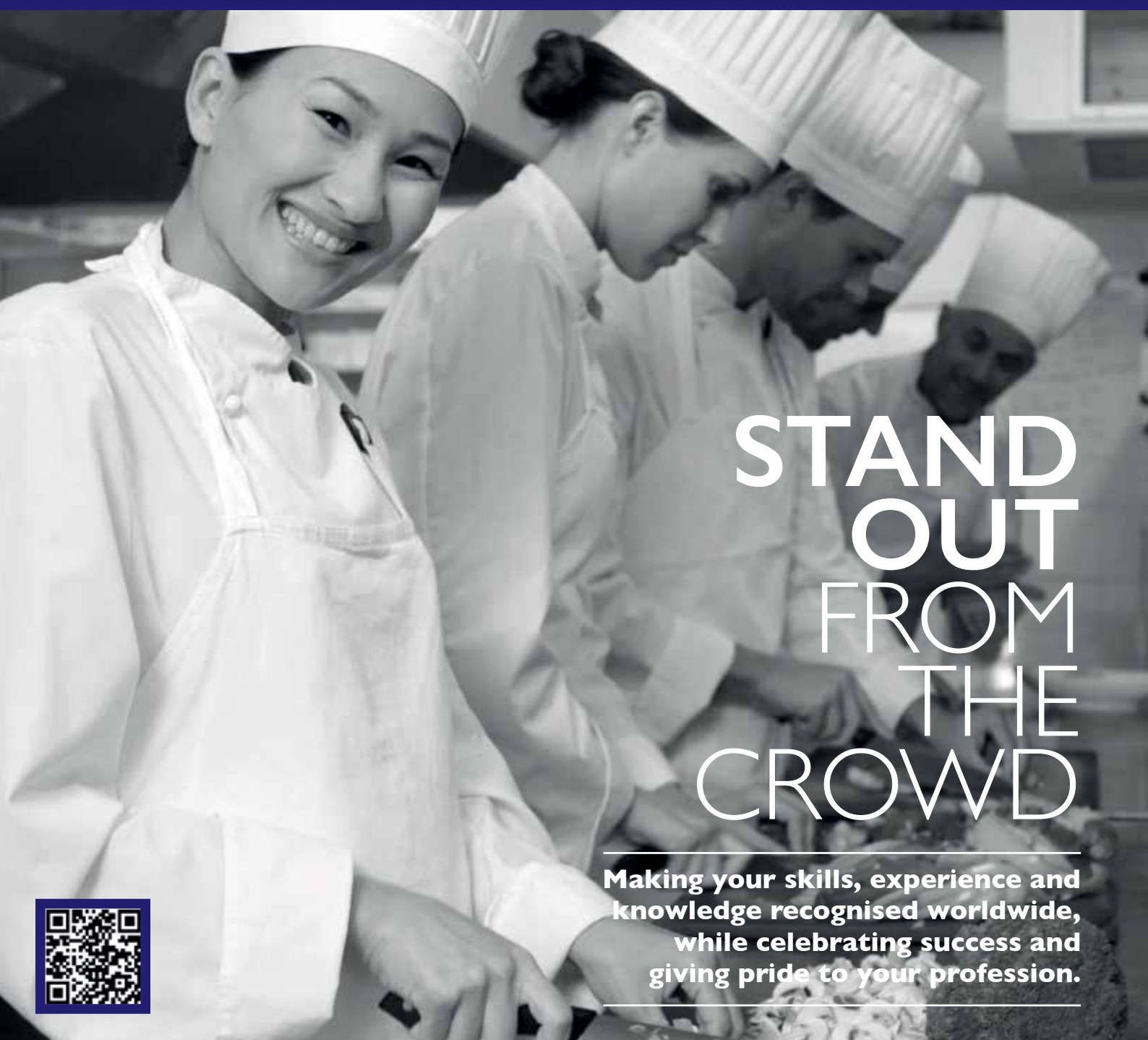
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editor'snote

email editor@gulfgourmet.net

It has been an absolute delight to edit this month's issue for one simple reason, our cover features the first grand slam winner to bag the top prize at both La Cuisine by SIAL and Salon Culinare in under six months. Needless to say, this is no mean feat. It gets better, the winner is an unassuming young lady who now has two additional records to herself – the first female to win La Cuisine by SIAL and the first female to win Salon Culinare 'Best Cuisiner'.

It was Deja Vu going back to meet her in such a short time span and I couldn't resist asking her if these two wins had changed her attitude or of those around her. Her simple answer was, "I now have more confidence in myself." She says this with such genuine humility, you can't help but realise she still has many milestones to achieve before she hangs up her apron for good.

Such a win would obviously not have been possible without the support of those above and below her in the organisational hierarchy of St. Regis at Saadiyat Island. Something she acknowledges whole heartedly. Which is why we bring you the stories of her mentors to understand how team work and a positive work environment can truly allow talent to shine bright.



Also in this issue is a great story from the food service industry and this time from Unilever. If their recent reports are to be believed, they've achieved a key sustainability goal of sending zero non-hazardous waste to landfill from its global factory network. Being proactively engaged in the pursuit of protecting our planet deserves kudos. Read the full story on pages 36-37.

If you or your chefs deserve recognition for the work you'll have been doing behind the four walls of your kitchens we will be only too happy to share your story with the industry using the niche unparalleled network reach we have. Just drop us an email, that's it.

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

Aquin George
Editor

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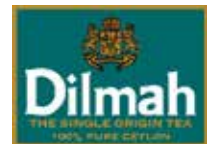
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newsbites

Andrea Magno is B&F Director at W Doha

Dubai-based retail and restaurant group Marka has announced the launch of a new restaurant in Dubai, to be operated in partnership with Michelin-starred chef Heinz Beck.

According to Gulf Business, the restaurant is among the first of five food and beverage outlets that Marka is planning to open by 2015 as part of its growth strategy. The F&B outlet, called Taste Of Italy by Heinz Beck, will be located at The Galleria on Al Wasl Road and will open by February 2015.

The restaurant will also have a fully-fledged retail store for desserts, gelato, pastry and breads, a statement said.

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Restaurant organises bloggers battle

Challenged to whip up signature dishes from Kahraman restaurant's inventive menu of contemporary Middle Eastern specialties, two teams featuring some of the UAE's top food writers and bloggers battled it out in a special al fresco kitchen set up on Balcon terrace outside the Abu Dhabi based restaurant.

Teams 'Awesome Sauce' and 'The Heroines' had 60 minutes to cook and

their dishes scrutinised by Ahmad Awad Ahmed, the restaurant's Executive Chef and Manish Law, Executive Chef at Southern Sun Abu Dhabi.

"I have no experience in cooking, and it wasn't the easiest, but really it was so much fun!" said Emirati foodie Instagrammer Abdulla Eats. "I got to experience what lengths the chefs go to behind the scenes in the kitchen."

Flavours of the French Riviera in Dubai

Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach has brought St Tropez with a twist to its Sea Fu restaurant, which normally focuses on Mediterranean-style dishes and Asian-influenced seafood delicacies in a sunset spot. The new menu offers a wide variety of specially designed dishes inspired by the taste of the French Riviera on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.



Nestle Professional launches Chef Circle event

Last month, Nestlé Professional® hosted its first Chef Circle event of the year at the Palm Grill, Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek. The purpose of this particular event was for Nestlé Professional® to extend its appreciation to the region's culinary guilds and prominent chefs for their continued support as well as to celebrate the successful completion of Gulfood.

Over 100 chefs attended exchanging their experiences over an 8-course dinner prepared by Chef Poul Gorell, Concept Developer at Oscar, who flew to Dubai specifically to present the newly launched CHEF® Liquid Stocks.

The dishes showcased numerous applications of the CHEF® Veal and Shellfish Liquid Stocks. The dessert buffet included a Mövenpick ice cream bar and an assortment of single-serve desserts prepared using Nestlé® Docello™'s Chocolate Mousse, Panna Cotta and Crème Brûlée.



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

A RELISHING SAGA IN ITS GRANDEUR!

Gulf Gourmet caught up with **Edouard Speck**, who following his travels across Europe and the Middle East decided that starting his own hotel in Goa, India and managing it, is the best way to retire

The splendor and richness of times gone by – that is what PRESA di GOA (meaning 'Captive of Goa') offers. The country house restored and furnished in Portuguese colonial style, is a stone's throw away from the endless rice paddies. Be it privacy, romance or relaxation, you can opt for the place at once. The humming of birds, occasional whistle of the toddy tapper climbing the coconut palms and the honk of the baker on his daily rounds will just punctuate the calm.

PRESA di GOA is the culmination of 25 years experience, across the globe, from one of the best in the hospitality industry. An unwavering commitment to quality, comfort and well-being is what you get there.

The location of this elegant destination is just unique. It is in the typical serene village of Nagoa Saligao, just beyond the sandy shores and noise of Goa's beach belt. But guess what, it is close enough to enjoy a day at Goa's popular beaches, Baga & Calangute, which are a mere 10 minute complimentary drive away, with access to a Private Beach in Calangute. A tempting swimming pool amidst the swaying palms to just laze around in Goa's glorious sunshine, a mouth-watering meal in the multi cuisine restaurant, barbecue and bar, set in lush green gardens – what else could you ask for when it comes to an ideal vacation? The delicious Turkish food items served at the restaurant here always gets thumbs up from the guests.



Opened in December 2003, the Country House has undergone a soft renovation in 2011, together with the acquisition of a Heritage Portuguese House of the early 20th century which has been converted to an Executive Suite and extended by 4 particularly large Executive rooms with direct view / access to the Swimming Pool and landscaped gardens.

Let us hear more about the splendid location from the man behind the idea, Edouard Speck.

How did you get into the business of

hospitality?

It was my own will. I have been passionate about it from my youth. At 16, I had tried to enter into the hotel business but my parents wanted me to complete my academic studies first. So I did my studies; learned economics. Later I worked at Caterpillar Overseas SA, Geneva, after which I entered hotel business as an internal auditor at the Inter-continental hotels. I learned a lot about the operations of hotels.

After seven years, I joined Le Meridien as finance director. I moved to operations



at the age of 43. By that time, I was at Le Meridian, Cairo. Later, I joined as the opening general manager for a Swiss hotel in Istanbul.

How was your experience in Middle East and Istanbul?

Oh, it was very pleasant. I easily adapt to all conditions around the world. Having been from Pacific to Atlantic and Atlantic to Pacific, I can adapt to anywhere in the world.

Tell us about why you chose to be an hotelier?

When I came close to retirement, I was looking for a place somewhere to set up my own hotel and enjoy the retirement fully. I came on a holiday few years ago to Goa and found conditions here all favourable. I liked the place very much and decided to build my dream here.

You are here in Goa for 11 years now. What were your challenges at the outset?

When I arrived in Goa, I was 60 years old. At that time, I knew I will have to induct some youngsters into the business. I adopted a Goan family and trained them. I would say, setting up the company and building the hotel

was the challenge. Otherwise, my experience here was pleasant.

Your food is amazing, especially the Turkish cuisine.

In fact, it was my adopted son who developed a special taste for Turkish items. He went for studies in Turkey under my supervision, where he started loving the cuisine. Later we decided that our hotel should have the first Turkish restaurant in India. The then Turkish ambassador to India inaugurated the same. In fact, the grandmother of the family has learnt the art quickly from my son and is now the main chef. She has an international experience too in London and Singapore.

Today, the hotel is a multi-cuisine one. We term the Turkish food items as eastern Mediterranean cuisine. We also serve Indian and Goan cuisines. Choosing multi cuisine rather than Turkish food alone was a marketing necessity. People do not come to Goa to have Turkish food. Once or twice it will be appreciated but not always.

Your hotel is not on the beach side unlike other ones here. Tell us about that.

It was done purposefully. At that time, I

saw the development upcoming in Goa and knew that the beach would be a bit noisy. Though I like beaches, I preferred my hotel to be somewhere there is peace and calm. So I decided to build my hotel on the countryside, at a distance of 10 mins drive from the beach. We also provide shuttle services to the beach as a complementary offer.

You live in the same place?

Yes, my adopted family and I live in the same property. They have an apartment and I have a house.

Do you have any plans of further extensions to the hotel?

I am happy where I am. And, considering my age, I do not have any further plans now. I leave it to my successors.

Do you have something to tell our youngsters who want to enter into the field?

I had a vast international experience which helped me a lot. I suggest you should gain enough experience and knowledge of the industry before venturing into a new hotel. Also, there should be a thorough study about the paper works required at the place where you are planning to start your hotel.

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INTO THE LIP-SMACKING WORLD OF **PASTRY!**

This month, we bring you Executive Pastry Chef **Siddhesh Sukhathankar** of Amwaj Rotana to help our young readers learn new techniques and learn more about the young prodigy

Precision, Patience, Practice and Passion – these are the four Ps on which the art of pastry making thrives, believes Siddhesh Kumar Sukhathankar. Chef Siddhesh, who was recently appointed Executive Pastry Chef at Amwaj Rotana, Dubai, ventured into the culinary scene as a trainee at the Oberoi, Mumbai, India and has since developed his skills with big brands and bigger chefs.

Siddhesh has had the chance to work with top names such as Marike van Beurden of Caprice, Four Seasons

Hong Kong, Chef Vikas Bagul of Oberoi and French Chef Claire Clarke. Heston Blumenthal is his inspiration, he says.

He has even earned a number of awards and accolades such as scoring a perfect 10 by all judges for his desserts at the Battle of the Kitchens in May 2012, as well as winning the award for most innovative chef. Siddhesh, promises guests that he will revisit the classics in 2015 to add a modern touch to the desserts, especially with his two favourite ingredients, Tahitian vanilla bean and passion fruit.

Here are excerpts from a conversation with him:

How did the profession find you? Was it always about cooking or just fate?

Yes, it was always about cooking. I used to love helping my mom in the kitchen. Also, I wanted to pursue something different from a typical nine to five job. I joined the IHM (Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition), Mumbai and when I entered the industry I felt assured that I am on the right track.

Many Indian parents don't see the





culinary profession positively. How did your parents react?

My dad is an engineer and mom a homemaker. They had limited knowledge of the culinary field, but nevertheless supported my choice. In fact, my dad accompanied me to various culinary institutions to collect application forms and to further explore the profession. Even my brother Saiprasad was instrumental in encouraging me to follow my passion.

So, how did you develop an interest in pastry making?

When I joined the Oberoi, it was as a demi chef de partie. For the first six months, we were made to work in different kitchens each month. My first kitchen was pastry, which I liked very much. I found the work interesting: it is very cool, calm, organised and creative as well.

Tell us about your career in India.

In less than two years since starting my career, I was selected to be a part of the Oberoi management training course. I was given the opportunity to focus heavily on the art of pastry making. This was in Delhi. I was later posted to Calcutta, where I was the in-charge of pastry making for a year and a half. I was then transferred to Mumbai, following

which I thought it was the right time to move internationally and learn new techniques and styles.

It is said that in India, executive chefs hide expensive ingredients from juniors. When you came here were you surprised to see the difference?

Yes, I would say it was a sweet shock. Unlike in India, here everyone has a free hand on every ingredient, provided they use them properly and don't waste them.

Tell us about your culinary journey in the UAE.

I came to the UAE to be a part of Beach Rotana, Abu Dhabi, in 2010. I learnt a lot there, especially banqueting. It was a different experience. Back in India, we mostly have only traditional weddings. Banquets are not arranged often. I have watched them only on television and have known that such things happen internationally. After Beach Rotana, I moved to Hotel Sofitel on the Corniche, Abu Dhabi, as a pastry chef. I was there for one and a half years. And now I am back with Rotana.

So, are you still learning new techniques?

Yes, I do learn a lot. I like to invest in books rather than gadgets. I have a

huge collection at home, which would be worth around AED 10,000-15,000. Some very good books on pastry and the art of making it is also there.

You have a bright future ahead of you. What are your long-term goals?

Nothing specific. I am enjoying the space I am in right now.

Tell us about your family. How does your wife support your profession?

Rasika and I have been married for six years. She is not from the industry and initially she knew nothing about the field. Now she understands, is supportive and is fine with my odd working hours, provided I am there with her during the weekends (laughs)!

What is your advice to young chefs working in pastry?

I'd say focus on the basics. Learn a lot, be creative, ask questions, put in a great amount of hardwork and never ever take short cuts. Do not think of financial gains initially; it will come gradually. Once you become a Pastry Chef, it is all about setting up the kitchen and being with the team. Being a chef is a great responsibility; expectations from you are high and there is a very little scope for making mistakes.

MINT AND RASPBERRY CANDY

PISTACHIO FINANCIER

Egg white	100g
Sugar	90g
Pistachio paste	20g
Anchor Butter	100g
Flour	40g
Almond powder	30g
Pistachio chopped	20g

METHOD

- ◆ Melt the butter to hazelnut stage and keep it separately. Mix it with pistachio paste.
- ◆ Sieve together flour and almond powder.
- ◆ Whisk egg white and sugar till soft peak. Gently fold in flour and almond powder.
- ◆ Temper the hazelnut butter in the mixture.
- ◆ Spread this on a baking tray and sprinkle chopped pistachio on top.
- ◆ Bake at 160C for 15 minutes.

WHITE CHOCOLATE AND MINT MOUSSELINE

White chocolate	200g
Egg yolk	2nos
Sugar	30g
Milk	200ml
Mint leaves	10g
Gelatine leaves	4nos
Anchor cream	280g

STEPS



- ◆ **1.** To make the mint and white chocolate mousseline, warm the milk till 80C and infuse fresh mint in it for 15 minutes. Strain the milk.



- ◆ **2.** Pour the mint infused warm milk, on top of melted white chocolate to form a ganache.



- ◆ **3.** Fold in semi-whipped cream into the ganache mixture.
- ◆ **4.** Temper the soaked melted gelatine to the mix.

RASPBERRY CREMEUX

Raspberry puree	220g
Sugar	40g
Corn flour	20g
Eggs	2nos
Anchor butter	90g



- ◆ **1.** For the raspberry cremeux, add the whole egg to the raspberry puree in a saucepan



- ◆ **2.** Add the sugar into the mixture



- ◆ **3.** Add the corn flour and whisk all together before putting it on the flame



- ◆ **4.** Whisk the mixture continuously to avoid lump formation and cook it till 73C and starts to thicken.



- ◆ **5.** Take mixture off the flame and add soft unsalted butter.



- ◆ 6. Whisk in the butter gently to ensure it forms a smooth emulsion.



- ◆ 7. Blend the mixture with a hand blender to form a creamy texture.



- ◆ 8. Pour the mixture on a lined tray and spread it evenly. Freeze it for 4 hours.

ASSEMBLY:

- ◆ Pour the mint mousseline in half the candy mould.
- ◆ Sandwich the raspberry cremeux in between two sheets of pistachio financier and cut them in a rectangular shape to fit inside the candy mould.
- ◆ Place the raspberry cremeux on top of the mint mousseline and cover the remaining mould with mint mousseline.
- ◆ Keep this in a freezer overnight to set.
- ◆ Demould the mint candy and glaze it with white glaze.
- ◆ Place it on a slice of pistachio financier. Garnish with the chocolate decoration, gold leaves and edible flowers.

CHOCOLATE PASSION FRUIT CANDY

FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE SPONGE

Dark chocolate	80g
Anchor butter	40g
Egg white	80g
Sugar	30g
Egg yolk	2nos

METHOD

- ◆ Whisk the egg white and sugar together.
- ◆ Whip the egg yolks separately and fold it in the egg white meringue.
- ◆ Melt together dark chocolate, butter and fold in the above mixture.
- ◆ Spread the mixture on a baking sheet and bake at 170 C for 15 minutes.

PASSION FRUIT CRÈME

Eggs	4nos
Passion fruit puree	200ml
Sugar	150g
Corn flour	15g
Anchor butter	100g

METHOD

- ◆ Mix eggs, passion fruit puree, sugar, corn flour in a sauce pan and cook them till the mixture thickens.
- ◆ Take mixture off the flame and mix in soft butter. Blend it to form a creamy texture.
- ◆ Pour this on lined tray and set in the freezer.

DARK CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

Dark chocolate	200g
Egg yolk	4nos
Sugar	25gm
Milk	100ml
Anchor Cream	180gm



- ◆ **Step1.** For the dark chocolate mousse, mix the egg yolk and sugar in a separate bowl, and cook it on a double boiler.



- ◆ 2. Add warm milk to the mixture and cook it further on a double boiler till sabayon consistency.



- ◆ 3. Pour the warm sabayon on chopped dark chocolate to form a smooth consistency.



- ◆ 4. Once the chocolate sabayon mixture cools down, gently fold in the semi whipped cream to it.

ASSEMBLY:

- ◆ Pour the chocolate mousse in half the candy mould.
- ◆ Sandwich the passion fruit creme in between two sheets of flourless chocolate sponge and cut them in a rectangular shape to fit inside the candy mould.
- ◆ Place the passion fruit creme on top of the chocolate mousse and cover the remaining mould with chocolate mousse.
- ◆ Keep this in a freezer overnight to set.
- ◆ Demould the chocolate candy and glaze it with the chocolate glaze.
- ◆ Place it on a slice of flourless chocolate sponge. Garnish with the chocolate decoration, gold leaves and edible flowers.

March 2015 Gulf Gourmet



THE WINNING COMBINATION



A lot goes into the making of the Best Cuisiner at Salon Culinaire. Even more goes into it, if the winner is the first female chef to win it and also the first chef in history to win both La Cuisine by SIAL and Emirates Salon Culinaire back-to-back. The people who support her and the environment needed to shine bright, required a little more than persistence and hard work. We bring you the stories of **Thamara Kumari**, this year's winner; Chef **Kushan Pererea**, her mentor; and their Executive Chef **Daniel Nuss**, all from St. Regis at Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi to showcase their diverse backgrounds and how it has all come together to create a potent winning combination

March 2015 Gulf Gourmet



TURNING ON THE EAT!

Meet Chef **Daniel Nuss**, Executive Chef at St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi. He commands one of UAE's most talented army of chefs, who have been winning multiple awards at culinary contests around the country and also winning the hearts and palettes of hi-profile guests that choose St. Regis as their preferred destination when in Abu Dhabi. Here's his story...

'Gutes Essen', 'Bon Repas' and 'Good Food' are what Chef Daniel Nuss needs to hear from those savouring the food coming out of his kitchens. He definitely understands those words as it is the three languages he speaks – German, French and English. What he doesn't necessarily need to hear is his team's exceptional performance at national culinary competitions. The medals and trophies itself speaks volumes.

The cuisinier, originally from the Alsace Region in eastern France and currently the Executive Chef of St. Regis at Saadiyat Island, heads a winning pool of talented chefs; most of whom he's hand-picked during the pre-opening of the grandiose waterfront property built on a beautiful sunny island.

So how does one get from a chilly country-side to a grand 5-star resort? If you had to go by Chef Daniel's career path, you'll have to

crisscross the planet a few times. But we'll get to that later.

As a child from the countryside in Strasbourg, his first tryst with hospitality was working in a tavern. "My parents had a pub and I worked there doing anything my parents allowed me to do right from the age of 10. I would stand on the stool, serve food and cook too. All of us used to help including my brother," says the chef proud to be one to earn his bread and butter.

"Food was always the main thing to us and time we all had to be together was at the dinner table or the lunch table. When my mother used to say it's time for lunch everybody had to sit down and this was the time the family was together," he says with a hint of nostalgia.

Growing up with his grandparents in his early childhood, Daniel was always surrounded by livestock and vegetables growing in the backyard.

"My grandparents had rabbits, chickens and a big dog; and food was always a part of growing up days," he recollects.

When he was 15, his potbellied grandpa told Daniel that he wanted him to be as big as him. "I did say that 'I am gonna be as big as you grandpa' but then, I changed my mind afterwards," he says realising that eating and cooking were as different as chalk and cheese.

As a teenager when he decided he wanted to be a chef for a living, his parents warned him that he would have to work on nights and weekends. "You don't realize in the beginning years. It is not an eight hour job, it's a fulltime job and you do it only because you love it," he says, looking content with his choice of profession that lets him bring home the bacon and then some.

The 18-year-old absolutely loved cooking, even if it meant long hours and that is the one thing he does miss now as an Executive Chef, as



other important tasks need his urgent attention. "When I was 18, I started cooking in the kitchen. I miss that part a lot. It was a lot of entertainment for me, I miss making people happy that way and yes, I also miss the heat of the stove." It took Daniel four long years learning the craft academically. He was at the CAP Cuisine Traditionnelle where he completed a 3 years training and got a Diploma at Strasbourg and also got the Le Notre Pastry School certificate.

And then it was about travelling, cooking across nations and perhaps that's where Daniel learnt that food transcends borders. "I have travelled to France, Germany, Switzerland, Tahiti, Australia, Seychelles, Dubai, Indonesia, Abu Dhabi, Las Vegas and then back to Abu Dhabi," he says.

And it was during his first trip to Abu Dhabi where he met his wife. "It has been many years now; she has been travelling and moving with me across all these places too," he says.

Chef Daniel first came to Dubai in the nineties and then replanted his footprints on the sands of Abu Dhabi.



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"Unlike earlier, we now get everything here in the Emirates. In the beginning, everything was pretty hard to get and we had to be choosy. Today, it's getting the right people at the right place that takes time," he says. He hired over 120 chefs in all key positions in the kitchen department and 40 Stewards adding to that long list. "All those who were recruited for Demi Chef and above I have personally interviewed. I prefer taking my time recruiting because once you have the right people on board, the rest is easy. I watch out

for everything from skills to attitude and even their career graph and how loyal they've been to their previous employers."

With a vast experience spanning several years in many hotels like the Yas Hotel and Inter-Continental Hotel at Abu Dhabi, Forte Grand Hotel at Dubai, The M Resort, MGM Grand Hotel Casino, The Luxor, MGM Mirage at Las Vegas USA, Dusit Balikpapan at Indonesia, Grand Hotel d' Angkor, Siem Riep at Cambodia, Plantation Club Hotel & Casino at Seychelles, Hayman Island and Capital Park Royal Hotel Convention Center, Australia, and other Oceania locales like Moorea Park Royal and Tahiti Beachcomber Park Royal at French Polynesia apart from Hotel Restaurant, Switzerland, Nuss's experience have taught him to maintain his cool during pressure situations and that is something he has imparted to the rest of the staff.

Thamara Kumari, this year's Salon Culinare Best Cuisiner, has in some part have to thank Chef Daniel for putting in place a working environment that allows for talent such as hers to shine bright.

MENTORING WINNERS

Executive Sous Chef **Kushan Perera** of St. Regis Saadiyat Island comes from a milieu that got him interested in the kitchen before he turned teenager. And he has used the situation to his advantage, been on top ever since, and is helping youngsters follow in his path of success...

Chef Kushan Perera was always destined to be in the hospitality business and that too as a chef. Think of it, he was almost born in a hotel.

"You could say I grew up in a hotel background both in the literal and metaphorical sense. By the age of 5, I was already playing inside the walls of a 5-star property. My father was an engineer at a resort and during all my school holidays we used to go visit my dad who had his quarters there.

"My dad's influence in the hotel gave me the opportunity to saunter around the entire property bar one location – the kitchen. The kitchen was the only place I had no access to. I was very curious to know what happened inside there and that's the reason for me to initially find the kitchen exciting," admits Chef Kushan.

Becoming a chef was never a priority for the now 40-year-old chef, however, he says, "In the 90s there was ethnic problems in Sri Lanka and schooling was not easy because of strikes, et al. Many parents would send their children abroad and I decided hotel schooling was for me. I specialized in cooking," says Chef Kushan who landed up in the kitchen more by default than design.

Chef Kushan completed his schooling



in Colombo and followed it up with Intermediate Level Cookery, at the Ceylon Hotel School in 1998. He also pursued a Food Management

Systems: Operations Course from Cornell University School of Hotel Admonition, Train the Trainer Course, Basic Level German Course, Basic Food

Hygiene Course and Essential Food Safety Training Certificate, to name but a few.

The hunger to do better was something innate for Chef Kushan who in his initial days as chef won a bronze medal in a culinary competition in Colombo for a 5 course meal. Still a youngster in his twenties, Chef Kushan decided to move to the Middle East and has since been shuttling between Abu Dhabi and his homeland giving back his country a bit of the flavours of the Middle East while he uses his exotic Lankan culinary skills to spice up the food for guests from around the world.

Chef Kushan has been active in chef contests for a while in various capacities. "I have over nine medals and I started winning at the age of 22 in Abu Dhabi itself," he says. This includes the President's award in 2008 while at the Starwood Hotels and Resorts – Europe, Africa & Middle East division as well as multiple awards at Emirates Salon Culinaire. He even led the Le Royal Meridien Hotel culinary team at the Le Cuisine du SIAL Abu Dhabi in 2010, winning 1 Gold & 3 Silver Medals.

Having won so many awards, Chef Kushan decided to give back to the community. Taking a cue from his Executive Chef, he began involving himself heavily in re-organising the Abu Dhabi chapter of the Guild and bringing more and more young chefs to join the association that trains them for the better.

We ask why Thamara Kumari was selected and groomed for the competitions. He says, "Actually it has nothing to do with the name and position when choosing a contestant and training him or her. We identify the person's talent. What we see is, one, whether the person has a good attitude and two, the level of commitment. We then pick up people

from each restaurant and see how much time they spend on practice and how well they listen to instructions. By then we know who stands a better chance of winning and we focus heavily on those few individuals. As for the competition dish, we discuss and we argue until we come to the final plate," he explains.

However, Chef Kushan reiterates that the recent win at Salon was not that easy.

"Honestly speaking, we did not have a big team for the Salon. It's not easy to take part in Dubai. There are many logistical challenges, and remember we don't do outside catering and transporting food at the right temperature is tricky. I received exceptional support from my Executive Chef Daniel Nuss, who allowed me the liberty to stay away from the kitchen during the competition days and focus on the team. I'd say his support was 120%. We went with only two chefs to Dubai – Thamara and Dhanuska. I told them to take part in the same categories as in SIAL, and the first thing I said is we don't need to win. We just have to get medals in all categories. We were positive and as you can see, whatever Thamara touches turns to gold," he says beaming like a proud mentor.

So what plans for contests ahead? "Actually I am happy to see that we have made it till here in Abu Dhabi and to see the support from our company to take part. Honestly speaking I would like to mentor new people as well. We have some highly skilled people in our staff who can easily win gold," he adds.

And that is not the only thing that keeps him hungry. "As Executive Sous Chef I enjoy a challenge and appreciate a property which has an active culinary schedule. I enjoy supervising a large operation and would like to move into a wider role if this was open to me," he says.





March 2015 Gulf Gourmet

CEYLON CULINAIRE

Lankan Chef **Thamara Kumari** has reclaimed the kitchen from the men with her multiple wins in chef contests of late, but in an act of 'thamara'derie, she credits her mentor for the same

She was the first woman chef from the Emirates to win a national level chef competition. Last month she again won UAE's biggest chef competition Salon Culinaire at Gulfood, Dubai. She is the only chef ever in history to win top prizes at both 'La Cuisine by SIAL' competition in Abu Dhabi and 'Salon Culinaire'. Even a male chef has never managed this achievement. And these are enough reasons why a woman in the kitchen can show the men how delicate hands can handle the delicatessen.

Reintroducing Thamara Kumari – this time as 'Best Cuisiner' Salon Culinaire 2015. Hard to picture this, but as a little girl growing up in Wennappuwa, Sri Lanka, she was actually reluctant to enter the kitchen. Serendipity in Serendib is the best way to explain her journey here.

She won accolades for everything she created at Salon Culinaire exactly like it happened at La Cuisine by SIAL last November in Abu Dhabi. This time she won golds in 'lamb five-course gourmet dinner' and in the 'beef practical cookery' segment and a bronze for 'live fish and seafood' category becoming the 'best cuisiner' enroute.

Chef Thamara says, "I didn't have any plans to go to Dubai and this was my first time at Salon. The journey to Salon only began last December when we had a party here in Abu Dhabi to celebrate our hotel's impact at SIAL. Towards the





end of the party our GM said why not Dubai? He had more confidence in us than we did ourselves.

"The Dubai event is obviously quite huge and the event is known to be of a high standard. But we said we would try and give it our best and from that moment I gave it my all during practice every day. So for me it's a great achievement."

She may have cooked up a storm but she had butterflies in her stomach when the competition began. "Dubai is huge, I was really shaking and when I saw the chefs around, they were all leading chefs and I was thinking, 'Oh my goodness! This is a really big event'. The second day was my cooking and when the plating was done, I saw the judges looking approvingly at my dish. Then finally when they said that mine was the best dish I was extremely happy," she says with all humility.

Thamara has been groomed by Executive Sous Chef Kushan Perera who taught her the secret recipes of winning. "If you have good teachers like Chef Kushan and Chef Daniel you can be a good student always," she says acknowledging the presence of her seniors who helped her cut the mustard. She shares a secret



If you have good teachers like Chef Kushan and Chef Daniel you can be a good student always

recipe to her success which has been helping her win medals and judges' hearts. "We try to do something new but there are times when judges are not expecting it and don't want it, also they don't want any wastages," she says.

For those who missed Thamara's cover story issue in Gulf Gourmet, here's a bit about her life. It was the need to wear the apron and the chef's jacket that had gotten her into the trade. What started as a six month course in hospitality got her a job at the Arabic Kitchen Catering Service, Kuwait, a banquet kitchen company as a serving crew. But the lure of the kitchen made her enter it once her serving time was done and dusted with.

She only knew English and the milieu in the

kitchen was Arabic. But those around her came to her rescue and suggested that she join the kitchen and voila, there she was. She even learned to speak in Arabic within a few months of landing in the region.

Her career graph is something she has worked hard for and it wasn't handed to her on a silver platter. A family crisis pulled her back to her island nation, but she came back with a vengeance and worked for 5 years in Kuwait. "I then joined the Cafe Moka restaurant at the Dubai Ladies Club and then at the Abu Dhabi Mall. Then it was a move to the Qasar Al Sarab Desert Resort working at the Al Waha restaurant and the Sohail Grill and Bar," she says.

2011 saw her land at the St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort and now she is the senior chef de partie, in charge of all-day dining. And she now tries to impart what her mentors have taught her – training younger chefs and supervises the daily operations of the kitchen.

Her belief in herself has helped her perhaps impart a lot of knowledge to the ones who want to learn from her. "You have to believe that you can do it," says the chef extraordinaire.

March 2015 Gulf Gourmet

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NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

Giving an incredibly tough competition to our regular seasoned young competitors are two aspiring chefs who are currently being groomed at ICCA. Read on to find out, how they've fared

Youngsters from the International Centre for Culinary Arts (ICCA), the Dubai-based culinary training centre accredited by the internationally recognised City & Guilds, London, are this month's challengers for the Nestle Professional Golden Chefs Hat Competition.

Yunus Topuz

As a young guy, Yunus was bitten by the

fashion bug and took it upon himself to work in the fashion industry as a teenager. However, with maturity and some time (a decade in this instance) Yunus realised that his real passion and love was for the culinary arts. "I joined ICCA Dubai once I was convinced that I needed to develop my passion for cooking and baking."

Having been a brand developer and merchandise expert with a variety of

companies, real comfort was something he only found in the kitchen. "My love for food has highlighted my strengths and weaknesses as a person allowing me to grow and learn a lot about myself," he says.

Yunus says that he loves the hard work in the kitchen and is constantly striving towards being the best he can be. This line of work has also taught him that being quick on his feet and adapting to



Yunus Topuz

his surroundings, and following orders, are part and parcel of this career.

"ICCA Dubai opened my eyes towards food in a different light. I learned that a recipe is just a recipe unless you put your heart into it. With that in mind my goal is to work towards becoming an Executive Chef, who brings a creative outlook towards food."

Annette Harding

Baking has always been Annette's calling since childhood. Her passion for baking was limited to being a hobby until she came across ICCA Dubai.

"It's now become my career," she says, adding, "Last year, I completed the Professional Diploma in Pâtisserie and



Annette Harding

graduated as a professional Chef. I learned more than I could ever imagine not to mention made some amazing friends." During her study at ICCA, Annette was drawn towards the "lovely sugar flowers in the window display" and so, within a few weeks of joining ICCA, she signed up for their masters in sugar craft class. "I have always loved baking but was never quite confident of making it a profession."

In the beginning of this year, Annette's exceptional sugar work pushed ICCA to offer the young lady the role of an assistant in the sugar craft department. "One day, I will hope to qualify as a PME sugar craft instructor, which will enable me to keep doing this thing I love every day."

DUO OF BEEF WITH SPRING VEGETABLES

Beef medallion paired with slow cooked compressed beef rib, accompanied by spring vegetables, Williams potatoes and herbed beef jus

Yield: 10 portions

FOR BEEF RIBS

Beef ribs	2 kg
Onions, diced	200gm
Carrots, diced	100gm
Celery, diced	100gm
Tomato couli (Nestle)	100ml
Red	100ml
Chef veal stock	1lt
Oil	50ml
Seasoning	as required
Bay leaves	4 pieces
Chef Demi glace	200ml

FOR BEEF FILLET

Beef medallion 10 x 80 gr	800gm
Seasoning	as required
Oil	50ml

FOR BEEF JUS

Chef veal stock	1.5 lt
Onions, chopped	200gm
Bay leaves	2 pieces
Herbs, chopped	1 tbsp
Red	150ml
Seasoning	as required

FOR WILLIAMS POTATOES

Maggie mash potato mix	250gm
Milk	1 lt
Egg yolk	3 each
Butter	50gm
Seasoning	as required
Clove	30 pieces
Flour	100gm
Egg	3 each
Bread crumbs	200gm
Gelatin	15gm

FOR SPINACH

Spinach, blanched	300gm
Butter	30gm
Seasoning	as required

FOR SPRING VEGETABLES

Baby carrots	30 each
Asparagus spears	30 each

Yellow Zucchini ball	30 each
Beetroot	500gm

FOR HERB OIL

Olive oil	100ml
Parsley, chopped	1 tsp
Thyme, chopped	1 tsp
Basil, chopped	1 tsp
Seasoning	

METHOD FOR BEEF RIBS

- ◆ Season the ribs and sear off in a hot pan and place in an oven dish.
- ◆ In the same pan sauté of your vegetable mirepoix, add tomato paste then deglaze with red.
- ◆ Add the beef stock, demi glaze & bay leaves, seasoning and bring to the boil then pour over the ribs and cover.
- ◆ Place the dish in a 140C hot oven and braise for 90 min or until tender and the meat is falling of the bones.
- ◆ Strain the sauce and reduce to the right consistency and keep a side.
- ◆ Take of all the meat from the bones and shred it, keep one bone per person, clean and set aside.
- ◆ Add some sauce to the meat to bind the meat and place into a mold, cover with aluminum foil
- ◆ and place some weight on top of it to press it down. (Best overnight in the fridge)

METHOD FOR BEEF FILLETS

- ◆ Season the portioned beef medallions then grill.
- ◆ When done keep aside for plating

METHOD FOR BEEF JUS

- ◆ Make a reduction with the onions, herbs, bay leaves, seasoning and Red.
- ◆ Add the beef stock and the left over sauce from the ribs and reduce to
- ◆ the correct consistency and season.

METHOD FOR WILLIAMS POTATO

- ◆ Heat the milk and stir in the Maggie mash potatoes and mix well to get a nice mash potato consistency.
- ◆ Add butter and season to taste, let it cool a bit then add the egg yolk and mix well.
- ◆ Form little pears from the mash and refrigerate them, best over night.
- ◆ When nice and firm crumb the Williams



potato in bread crumbs and fry until golden brown,

- ◆ then decorate them with the glove and mirco leaves.
- ◆ Roast the beetroot in the oven, then peel and cut nice cubes, 3 per person.
- ◆ The leftover of the beetroot we chop, season add some gelatin then blitz it to make a pink foam.
- ◆ Blanche the other vegetable then sauté in butter and season.
- ◆ Sauté off the spinach in butter and season, then press in rings same size like the medallion.
- ◆ For the herb oil add all herbs into the oil and blend and let it set to give the oil a nice green colour, then strain and season

PLATING PRESENTATION

- ◆ On the plate brush one line of the beef jus, rest serve in a sauce boat.
- ◆ Place a dilled of mash potato on one side of the plate then place the bone on it so it will not slide.
- ◆ Place the compressed beef meat cubes on top of the bone.
- ◆ On the other side place the spinach discs, then top with the medallions.
- ◆ After arrange the Williams's potatoes and vegetable on the plate.
- ◆ Garnish with the micro herbs, beetroot foam and herb oil drizzle.

CREAMY INDULGENT SELECTION

A platter with a selection of the classical favorites with a little twist. Tropical Pannacota, Raspberry Chocmousse and Cardamom Coffee Cream Brulee.

Portions: 10**COMPONENT 1: TROPICAL PANNACOTA FOR COCONUT CRISP**

Desiccated coconut	20gm
Flaked almond	30gm
White chocolate	100gm

FOR PASSION FRUIT PANNACOTA

Milk	500gml
Whipping cream (Anchor)	500ml
Docello pannacota dessert powder	150gm
Fresh passion fruits	2 pieces

FOR PASSION FRUIT JELLY

Passion fruit puree	100ml
Sugar	10gm
Gelatin leaves	1 piece
Fresh passion fruit	2 piece

TO FINISH

Red currants	Few pieces
Fresh mint leaf	Few pieces
Pineapple chips	Few pieces
(Or fresh pineapple few thin slices)	

METHOD FOR COCONUT CRISP

- ◆ Roast the desiccated coconut and the flaked almond on a baking tray lined with baking paper at 120 C for 10-15 minutes.
- ◆ Chop the almonds to make them course and mix together with the coconut.
- ◆ Melt the white chocolate and add the almond and coconut mixture in.
- ◆ Boil the cream and milk together with the passion fruit seeds and pour it over the dessert powder. Mix it with a hand whisk and boil again.
- ◆ Allow the mix to cool down to a lukewarm temperature and pour it over the crisp. Set

in the fridge for at least 2-3 hours.

PASSION FRUIT JELLY

- ◆ Soak the gelatin leaf in ice cold water and let it bloom for 5-10 minutes.
- ◆ Boil the passion fruit puree with the sugar and the fresh passion fruit seeds. Take off the fire and add the drained gelatin, which should have softened by now.
- ◆ Mix it until it dissolves and let it cool down to room temperature.
- ◆ Pour the jelly onto the top of the pannacota with a spoon and let it set in the fridge for an hour.

TO FINISH

- ◆ Take out the pannacota from the tray and place it on a chopping board with the baking paper.
- ◆ Cut into 40x40 mm squares with a sharp big knife and hot water.
- ◆ Place them onto a serving tray and decorate the top with redcurrants, fresh mint leaves and pineapple chips (just before serving).
- ◆ NOTE: If using fresh pineapple, prepare the pineapple chips 1-2 days before. Cut the peeled pineapple into thin slices and put them onto baking trays with a baking paper.
- ◆ Put them in the oven set at 100 c degrees for about 1-2 hours or until it is crisp. Keep it on a dry and cool place until serve. Do not put in the fridge.
- ◆ Keep it in the fridge until the time of service

Portions: 10

COMPONENT 2: RASPBERRY CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

FOR KIT-KAT CRISP

Kit Kat chunky	100gm
Milk chocolate	100gm
Butter	50gm

INGREDIENTS FOR CHOCOLATE MOUSSE:

Docello chocolate mousse powder	250gm
Milk	500ml

INGREDIENTS FOR RASPBERRY JELLY

Fresh or frozen raspberries	100gm
Or raspberries puree	
Sugar	10gm
Gelatin leaf	1 piece

INGREDIENTS TO DECORATE:

Fresh raspberries	10-12 pieces
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METHOD FOR KIT-KAT CRISP

- ◆ Melt the milk chocolate and butter together and mix in the Kit Kat chunky pieces.
- ◆ Roll it between two baking papers to the size of a high frame baking tray (200x200 mm). Put inside of the tray with the baking paper on the bottom and let it set in the fridge.

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

- ◆ Mix the Docello chocolate mousse powder with the cold milk with a hand whisk and pour into a bowl of a mixer.
- ◆ Whisk it with the whisk attachment on an electric mixer for a few minutes, until firm and spread it on the top of the Kit-Kat crisp. Allow to set it in the fridge (at least an hour or overnight).

RASPBERRY JELLY

- ◆ Soak the gelatin into ice cold water and let it bloom (5-10 minutes).
- ◆ Boil the raspberry puree. If you use fresh raspberries, add 3-4 tablespoon of water and cook it until smooth.
- ◆ Take off the fire and add the drained gelatin. Mix it until dissolved and allow it to cool down.
- ◆ Put the jelly onto the top of the mousse with a table spoon and let it set in the fridge (1-2 hours)

TO FINISH

- ◆ Take out the mousse from the tray and place it on a chopping board with the baking paper.

- ◆ Cut them into long pieces and place them onto serving trays.
- ◆ Put some fresh raspberries (halved or quartered) on the top and keep it in the fridge until serving time.

Portions: 10

COMPONENT 3: CARDAMOM COFFEE CREAM BRULEE

FOR CARDAMOM CREAM BRULEE

Docello cream brulee dessert powder	100gm
Milk	400ml
Whipping cream	200ml
Espresso coffee	2shots
Or Nescafe	1tblsp
Cardamom powder	by taste

TO FINISH

Caster or demarara sugar	as required
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METHOD:

- ◆ Prepare 10-15 pieces of small ceramic or heat proof dishes.
- ◆ Boil cream and milk together with the espresso. If you use Nescafe, mix the powder with one teaspoon of boiling hot water.
- ◆ Mix the liquid with the dessert powder and pour it into the dishes.
- ◆ Allow them to set in the fridge for at least 2 hours or overnight.
- ◆ Before serving put a thick layer of demarara or caster sugar on the top and burn it with a blow torch. If you don't have blow torch, melt some sugar.
- ◆ When the color is golden brown and it is runny, put the caramel onto the top of the cream Brulee with a table spoon.
- ◆ Serve it immediately.





ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL ACHIEVED ACROSS FACTORY NETWORK

Key sustainability goal reached well ahead of target for Unilever

On 28 January 2015, Unilever announced that it has achieved a key sustainability goal of sending zero non-hazardous waste to landfill from its global factory network.

Believed to be a global first for delivering zero waste on this scale, more than 240 factories in 67 countries have now eliminated landfill waste.

Unilever is the Food Products Industry Leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index and last week was awarded a Gold Class distinction for its excellent sustainability performance by RobecoSAM in their Sustainability Yearbook 2015.

The zero waste to landfill target forms a key element of Unilever's sustainable growth ambitions.

Eliminating waste has avoided more than €200 million of cost and created hundreds of jobs. Egypt, for example, has launched a programme that gives disabled employees the opportunity to earn extra income by recycling waste material from production lines.

To achieve zero waste to landfill, Unilever has adopted the 'Four R' approach – reducing waste at source,

Global Practice, Local Impact

> **Egypt:** Disabled employees have the opportunity to earn extra income by recycling waste material from production lines.

> **Côte d'Ivoire:** Waste has been turned into low-cost building materials

> **India:** Organic waste is being composted and shared with the local community to grow vegetables.

then reusing, recovering or recycling any non-hazardous waste that remains. This has meant reconsidering every aspect of the factory operation, from the packing materials that come with deliveries to food waste from staff cafeterias.

Reducing waste at source remains the number one priority alongside finding innovative solutions for reuse. For example, in Côte d'Ivoire, waste has been turned into low-cost building materials and in India, organic waste is being composted and shared with the local community to grow vegetables.



Believed to be a global first for delivering zero waste on this scale, more than 240 factories in 67 countries have now eliminated landfill waste

Pier Luigi Sigismondi, Chief Supply Chain Officer, said: "Reaching this landmark is the result of a huge mindset shift throughout our organisation and a great example of Unilever driving sustainable business growth. Thousands of employees from across the business have developed some really innovative solutions to eliminating waste.

"However we cannot stop here. Our focus now is on becoming a zero waste company and working towards a zero waste value chain by encouraging our suppliers and customers to join us on this mission. We are also committed to developing an open source approach and sharing our framework and experience with other organisations to drive global change".

March 2015 Gulf Gourmet



JUDGES UNITE

WACS approved judges from around the globe converged in Dubai a day prior to the opening of Salon Culinaire 2015. The team of judges headed by Otto Weibel discussed the rules and regulations and the ways of enhancing feedback to competitors in what is clearly one of the biggest Salons in the world. Here are images from the meet.





GULFOOD

20 YEARS OF UNPARALLELED GROWTH

Ruqya Khan spent time walking around the Gulfood 2015 exhibition to find out how things have further improved and to report on what you may have missed



As the 20th edition of Gulfood came to a close it reaffirmed its mark as the world's largest annual food and hospitality show. Hosted at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) across more than 127,000 square metres of exhibition space, the trade-only show saw over 4,800 international food companies and more than 80,000 visitors over the five-day event from February 8-12.

The main highlight this year was the specialist Halal World Food component. It attracted more than 1,000 international food products to establish a position as the world's leading Halal food sourcing event. Gulfood 2015 provided visitors with unrivalled opportunities to source and select from an incredible showcase of global products, while thousands of industry professionals took time to review the latest trends and innovations in food and drink, foodservice and hospitality equipment, as well as the restaurant and cafe industry. More than 1,000 industry professionals also attended three days of Gulfood Leaders Events, which hosted the World Food Security Summit, the Halal Investment Conference and the Food Franchising Forum.

Among the regulars were Barista



Prakash Menon and team

Bonanza and The Emirates Culinary Guild's International Salon Culinare – both unique in their presentation and expertise. While one gave visitors an opportunity to enjoy a variety of brewing techniques performed by top baristas; the other set the stage for more than 1,300 professional chefs to showcase their culinary talent. The work at Salon Culinare was evaluated by a panel of 25 international culinary judges, certified by the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS).

Thousands of food and beverage products and services are introduced every year at Gulfood. Ouafae Fahim, Export Manager at National Food Products Company, a participant at the event, said, "We have been at Gulfood year after year. It's a great opportunity to meet international customers and grow the business. The exposure is just fantastic which is why we have used the platform this year to introduce a new brand. The feedback has been good and we are hopeful for a nice foothold in the market too."

Gulfood means different things to different brands and participants.





Stasha Zdravkovic, Key Account Manager for Enhance UAE, said, "We have been exhibiting at Gulfood for over eight years. We started out as a supplier to just a handful of hotels in the food service industry but now cover 90% of the hotels in UAE. Such a growth in market presence reflects not just on the consistency of the brand and the trust that we have built but also the significant role that such large scale events play for us. We also use these opportunities to introduce new product lines and always receive great response."

Juan Jose Lopez, Business Head – Food Service at Farm Fresh was in agreement with the thought, he said, "Gulfood is a great platform to expand the business and get feedback from the customers, suppliers and clients. Brand presence is refreshed. Our strengths and products are brought forward and on its shoulders we make our mark too. We are bringing in new brands and also growing the existent portfolio. We want to increase awareness among the people about us."

Old timers, new comers all have a positive view of the event which is why the biggest challenge for the organisers was to accommodate the demand for space, especially as the waiting list from exhibitors wishing to participate continued to grow. This year, in order to cater to increasing demand, an additional 23,000m², purpose-built temporary structure, the largest-of-

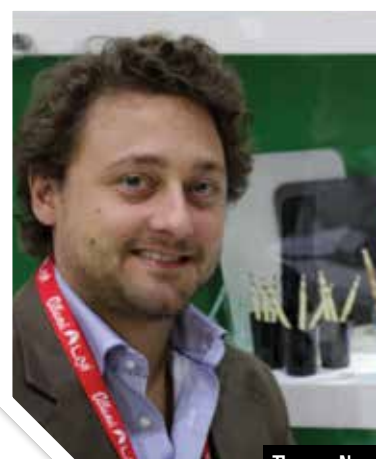


Stasha Zdravkovic

its-type regionally, was built as part of the 127,000m² exhibition space. Furthermore, the food and beverage processing industry solutions was branched off into a separate show, Gulfood Manufacturing and this helped increase participation from 4,500 of last year to 4,800 exhibitors.

Some of the largest pavilions at Gulfood 2015 included Germany, France, India, Italy, Spain and the USA. The 20th anniversary show also featured the largest-ever South American participation with representation from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay.

Prakash Menon, Managing Director of Blue Ribbon LLC has been a participant at the event for 16 years. He says,



Thomas Neven

"Gulfood is more organised now with products being grouped systematically – not everything and anything is put together. As a visitor, now all a person needs to know is, what is where, allowing them to best utilise their time and energy. Having enough room for the guests to walk around and a proper formatted layout reduces the chaos and makes participation worthy for both exhibitors as well as visitors."

Indeed there are huge operational and logistical challenges involved with servicing so many companies and their products – many of which are perishable – at the show. The co-operation and support received from Dubai Customs in this area is immeasurable. There is a continuous effort to improve both the exhibitors' and the visitors' experience,

and work on solutions to address these challenges. Given the popularity of the show, Gulfood has more exhibitors than square metres available!

"I had heard a lot about the success of Gulfood but was unable to acquire a stand last year so I just visited the event and was stunned by the energy and influence. This time even though I registered much in advance I still could not have an individual space. Luckily I was allotted this opportunity to share the booth. So far I have had good enquires and some bookings too from hotels. Here in the GCC we need to be careful about the content of the chocolates, the preference of the market here is for sweeter products. Storage and transport is also important. We are hopeful to expand ourselves successfully," said Thomas Neven, Export Manager at a Belgian based chocolate company.

Innovative products, interesting ideas and compelling strategies and big ticket purchases ruled the roost at Gulfood. Visitors enjoyed sampling new tastes and techniques. Sharad Nair had one stall that demonstrated different kinds of equipment to make any ordinary drink come alive. He said, "We identify unique products from US, France, Poland and then distribute them here. There's a machine that we use to instantly freeze the serving glasses plus we have the dry ice machine that condenses carbon-dioxide and is used as ice cubes. So when you pour your drinks on to these glasses it's a completely enticing experience and the club culture here is quite pleased to take this equipment to their base!"

Gulfood 2015 ended on a satisfying note and once again they set the bar a notch higher for themselves and participants next time. The event showcased a multitude of products, people and strategies but what really stood out was the combined energy to do better and be better together. There was a sense of growth and the need to stand and step forward as one un



The Peru stand



Sharad Nair with an instantly frozen glass

March 2015 Gulf Gourmet



THE GUILD MEET

The February edition of the Emirates Culinary Guild meeting was hosted by Chef Michel and Chef Edgar and the Coral Beach Resort & Spa team. The event saw a large turnout of decision making chefs, young chefs and corporate partners of the Guild. Here are images from the meeting.



DID YOU KNOW?

Pistachios Facts



- February 26th is World Pistachio Day
- The Sweet Sound of Success: In Russia, legend says that anyone who hears the crackle of an opening pistachio nut will soon find success.
- A Dentist's Best Friend :In the Ukraine, wild pistachio trees were called "pitch tree" in the early 17th century. People believed that regular chewing of pistachio tree pitch could freshen breath.
- Russia legend says that if you wrap up two pistachio nuts in silk red cloth and hide it in secure place, it will bring harmony and love to your family
- Pistachios grow on trees and Its a long wait to get the first nut. A pistachio tree takes 7-10 years to mature.
- The older the tree, the richer the soil and better the taste!
- Pistachios are harvested in September

Brought to you by



March 2015 Gulf Gourmet



SALON MOMENTS

Our lensmen and Amro Fahed Al Yassin went around Salon Culinaire to capture the mood at the high adrenalin culinary contest as well as to bring you images of the winners and medal winners for the year. Enjoy the collage...



March 2015 Gulf Gourmet









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WINNERS

Sr No	Description	Hotel Name	Name	Prize
	Hygiene Best Award	Anantara The Palm Dubai	Orland Lagrada	Trophy
	Hygiene Best Award	Emirates Palace AD	Chidambaravinayagam Gopal	Trophy
1	Winner - Best Effort by an Individual Establishment Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	Atlantis the Palm		
2	Winner - Best Effort by a Corporation Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	Jumeirah Group		
3	Winner - Best Arabian Cuisinier Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	Southern Sun AD	Ahmad Al Fakier	Trophy
4	Winner - Best Pastry Chef Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	Rosewood Abu Dhabi	Chamara Prasad	Trophy
5	Winner - Best Kitchen Artist Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	Burj Al Arab	Rohita Kumara Leeleewansa Kasthuriarachchani	Trophy
6	Winner - Best Cuisinier Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort AD	Thamara Kumari	Trophy
7	1st Runner - up - Best Cuisinier Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	Ritz Carlton DIFC	Elgin Alonso	Trophy
8	2nd Runner - up - Best Cuisinier Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	The Address Downtown Hotel	Shelton Mahesh Aruna Peters	Trophy
9	Winner - The Middle East Young Chef of the Year Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	Radisson Blu Deira Creek	Rahil Azizbhai Rathod	
10	1st Runner - up - Young Chef of the Year Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	The Address Downtown Hotel	Maduranga Dulshan	
11	2nd Runner - up - Young Chef of the Year Emirates Salon Culinaire Dubai 2015	Hilton Dubai Jumeirah	Chloe St-Cyr	
12	Golden Pot challenge	Syria		Silver
13	Golden Pot challenge	Egypt		Bronze





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newmembers



Majid Ali, Regional Sales Manager, MEA receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Mischeel.

American Garden started over two decades ago with just one product. Today we have over 250 products and can be found in supermarkets, kitchen cabinets and picnic baskets in over 50 countries across the Middle East, Africa, Far East, Asia and Europe.

We believe that food has the power to bring people together and create some of life's most cherished moments. Whether it's a birthday, a wedding, or a simple family lunch where three generations squabble over the last piece of dessert, sharing good food with family and friends is a treasured part of life.

That's why we put our energy into sourcing the best ingredients, finding the most authentic recipes and



creating products that can enrich every moment to make it even better-like the icing on a cake!

The world is too exciting to ignore and we're here to share its many flavors with you! Today we may be over 25 years old, but inside we've never felt younger, bolder, and more adventurous. We have an appetite for life that helps us look to the future, be more innovative and evolve to meet the needs of people like you. With an attitude that encourages you to eat well, live well and try everything.

American Garden Professional Host

American Garden understands that there are many ingredients that go into running a successful business, especially in the hospitality industry. We know it's tough to balance budgets with tight timelines and still deliver an exceptionally high standard of food. That's why we've developed a range of products specifically for catering specialists. Professional Host is a cost-effective solution made with authentic recipes and the best ingredients to the highest US standards. To ensure that you are the perfect host and that every one of your culinary creations is a true reflection of you, use Professional Host range from American Garden in your professional kitchen.



Sukhdev Singh (Managing Director and Patentee) and Muhammad Asghar (Sales Executive) receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.



FOOD Freshly® is a company since 1994 involved in research, development and production of an ingenious formulation of mineral nutrients freshness retainer (edible coating) for fresh food processing industry in the international market.

Our specialty is the extended shelf-life of peeled fruit, vegetables,

lettuce and potatoes. After years of research and development, we have succeeded in producing unique Freshness Retainers (edible coating) that presents the processing industry with various new opportunities. The Freshness Retainer and application are patented and can extend shelf-life of cut products up to 21 days.



Mr. Siddharth Chaudhary (MD) & Mr. Chakradhar (Regional Mgr) receiving Emirates Culinary Guild Membership certificate from ECG President Chef Uwe Micheel.

Radikal Foods is a leading manufacturer and supplier of premium basmati rice, offering radically pure and radically fit grains for people of all ages and tastes across the world.

At Radikal Foods, we believe that basmati rice is the most nutritive food in the world. It's an ingredient that enhances lives. And this belief is the reason that inspired us to start our glorious journey.

With the widest range of premium basmati rice, today, Radikal is found in almost every kitchen, from top-notch restaurants to homes. We are known for uncompromised quality; And our finest grains for their goodness and nutritive value.

Sourced from the foothills of the Himalayas and other rice growing states of India, each grain of Radikal rice is handpicked, tested for quality and carefully processed to serve our

customers with unmatched taste and to ensure a healthy and happy life.

According to us, productivity is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort. At Radikal, we continuously strive to enhance our performance and go beyond the defined parameters.

To continue our tradition of delivering unmatched productivity, we have established a state-of-the-art rice milling plant in Garh Mukhteshwar, UP, India with an annual production capacity of 4,80,000 metric tons.

The plant is fully automated and is built up of stainless steel which

promotes a rust-free and healthy environment and also offers purity. Equipped with the best in class-imported machineries from SATAKE Japan, here, every process follows international standards and stringent guidelines to guarantee uniformity of grains without destroying its fragrance and quality of grain. And the result is the world's finest grains!

Radikal Foods is an ISO 22000:2005, HACCP & BRC certified company. For us quality is everything. It's our strength, our passion and it enables us to delight our customers with the best of products.

From procurement to storage, machinery to equipment, milling to final packaging; we make sure that every action of ours conveys nothing but excellence. We employ the world's best ERP application S.A.P. to offer a 100% hands-free processing system and to create flawless processes.

radikal

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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THE EMIRATES CULINARY GUILD



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Date of Application:

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

First Name/s:

Nationality:

Civil Status:

Date of Birth: dd/mm/yy

Name of Employer:

Address in Home Country:

Work Address:

Tel:

Web Address:

Email:

Telephone Office:

Professional Title:

Fax Office:

Type of Membership Required: (Please tick one)

Tel. Home:

Corporate ☐ Senior Renewal ☐

Fax Home:

Senior ☐ Young Chef ☐
(under 25 yrs below)

Email:

Declaration to be Signed by all Applicants

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

Signed:.....

Proposed By:

Sig:.....

Seconded By:

Sig:.....

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Remarks:

Payment received?

Certificate Given.

Pin Given.

Medal & Collar Given

Approved

Approved

President.....

Chairman.....

Fees:

Young Member: Junior members will receive a certificate.

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

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

150/=per year thereafter.

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

Corporate Member Dhs. 20,000 per year

WORDS CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE

"Whatever words we utter should be chosen with care for people will hear them and be influenced by them for good or ill."

— **Buddha**

MORE THAN A CHEF

**ROHIT
BASSI**



There is an old saying, "sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me". For those who are unaware it means you may get hurt by physical force but not by insults. This is completely untrue as words do hurt an individual and can damage self-esteem and self-confidence with great ease.

In the book, *Words Can Change Your Brain*, written by Andrew Newberg, M.D. and Mark Robert Waldman state, "a single word has the power to influence the expression of genes that regulate physical and emotional stress."

In layman's term it means words can actually change your brain. Words are extremely powerful leading to impact your behaviour in such a dramatic manner that they can transform your map of the world.

Newberg and Waldman go on to write that "angry words send alarm messages through the brain, and they partially shut down the logic-and-reasoning centres located in the frontal lobes." This means that a single negative word has the ability to release dozens of stress-

producing hormones and that certainly is a bad place to be in.

In a blog article written by me and during trainings I talk about how words can damage others and us. I thank NLP for giving me this crucial insight. In the my blog article "Powerful Words: Use with Caution" I talk about common words we use day to day without realising they cause more damage than helping us and others.

These words being:

- ♦ But – "You look beautiful but....". Notice how the "but" immediately deletes what was said before it. "But" is the sledgehammer to anything you say. It has the ability to diminish or negate the phrase that precedes it. Note "however" is soft way to say but, so should be avoided as well. Instead replace the "but" with an "and".
- ♦ Should – "You should have....". Amazing how "should" arouses a sense of feeling guilty. It's one of the worst words to use in scenarios where the solution applied has not worked. Then someone says "we should" or even worse "you should".
- ♦ Don't – "Don't think of a pink elephant". I am sure you thought of

an elephant or pink colour or thought how will a pink elephant look like.

The brain finds it difficult to process something said in the negative. It has to do that act to comprehend what "don't" meant. So, if you end your email saying "do not hesitate to contact me" then you are really telling the person not to contact them. Maybe you could replace this with "feel free to contact me"

- ♦ Try – is considered a disguised word for failing. "Try" is seeking or giving the permission to fail. Remember Nike slogan "just do it". You replace the "try" with "do your best" or "I will do my best".
- ♦ Why – this word easily makes a person feel defensive and find justifications for his/her actions. Instead use the word "how" or "and".

Words can make you move backwards or forwards. Be selective and compassionate in the words you use with others and especially the words you use with yourself.

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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