

# Gulf Gourmet

OCTOBER 2012

FROM US, FOR US.

## » Chief Speak

Exclusive interview with **Russel Sharpe**, COO, Citymax Hotels

## » East Eats West

**Big Daddy** analyses Western restaurants that expect to cash in on their global fame

## » SIAL rules

Exclusive listing of all the rules, regulations and classes for **La Cuisine du SIAL** this November

# Bleeding Blu

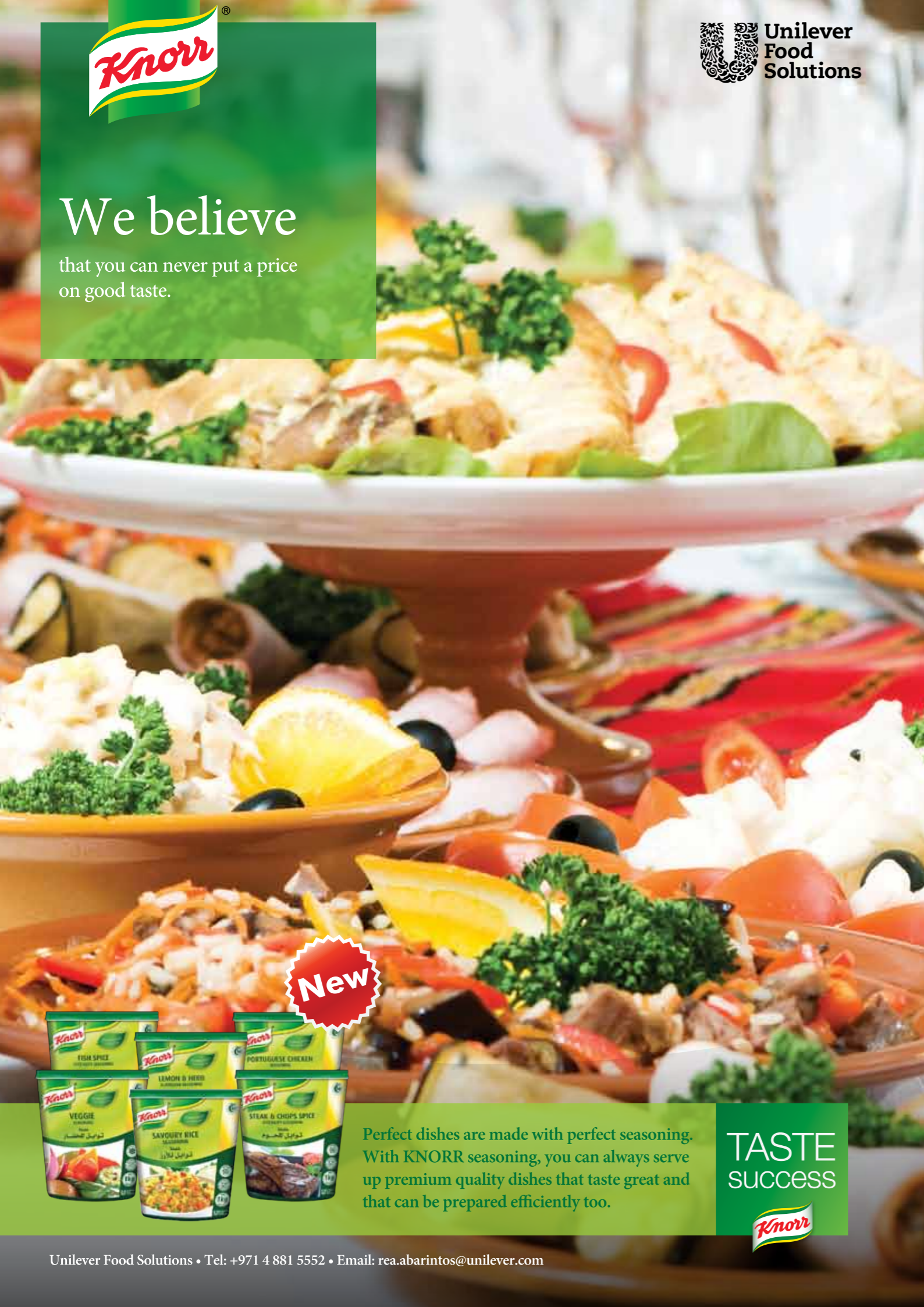
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Young Chef of the Year





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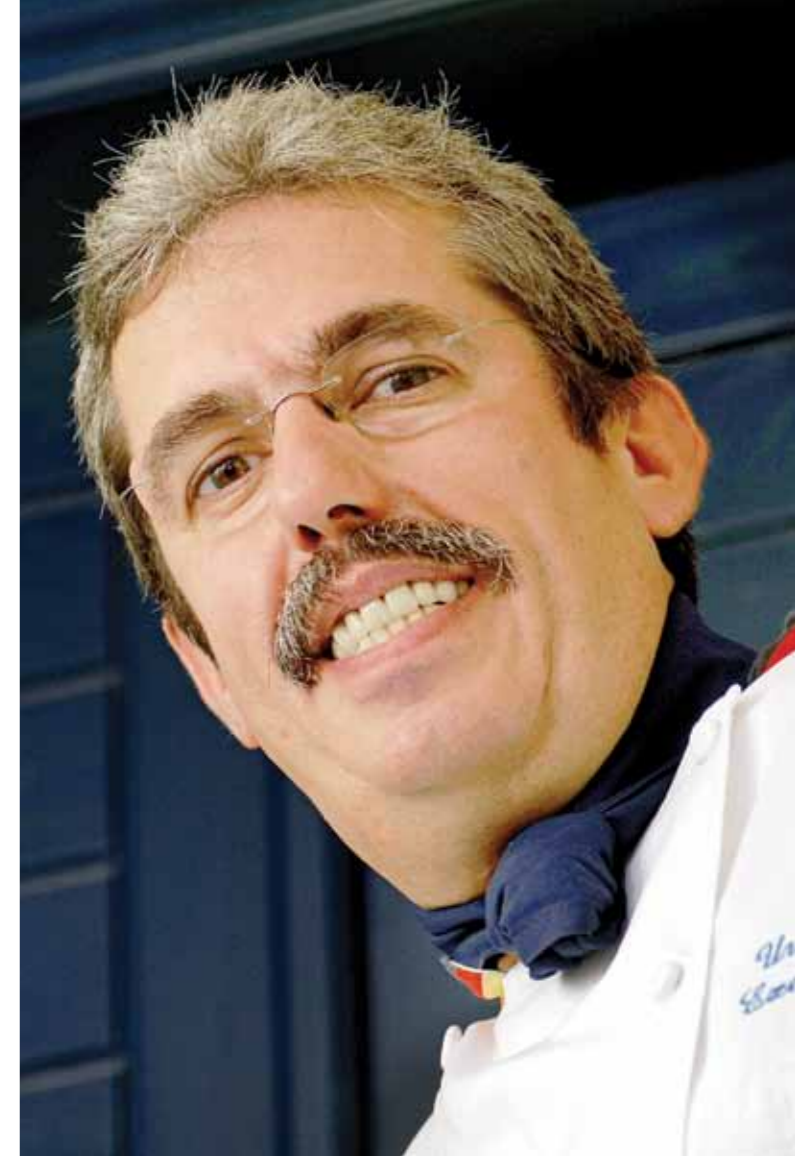


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## From the President's station



Dear Fellow Chefs, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
 Welcome to the October Issue of our Gulf Gourmet. First of all, let me thank everyone who helped to make the Burjuman Young Chef of the Year 2012 such a success. The biggest thank you goes to Mr. Eisa Adam Ibrahim and his team at Burjuman, Anil Kumar and his team, Nestle, who supported the Plated Dessert Class with Chokella, Iffco for the Al Khazna Chicken and the Omega 3 Eggs, and Citimax Hotel for playing host to our jury.

A big thank you also goes out to the competitors who invested a lot of time for the training and with their quality of work and positive energy made the event so successful. Shukran to Chef Thomas Gugler and his team of Judges, it was nice to have Chef Heinz Zucchelli and Patrick Lannes back in Dubai, we do look to your support again for our future events. Also, thank you to all the support team Marshalls, Administrators and Stewards without whom we could not have run the show.

A big mabrook and thank you to Chef Prasad and the East Coast Team for staging a very successful, first ever, East Coast Competition. You will have a lot more info and pictures from both events in the October and November issues. I was personally very pleased with the high standards in our two new live classes Emirati cuisine and local sustainable fishes. It's important that as many Chefs as possible start to join EWS in the Choose Wisely Campaign and remove the endangered species like Hammour and King Fish from the menus. Our Team will be in Germany beginning of October

to compete for Gold at the IKA (Culinary Olympics) in Erfurt. A big thank you to all our sponsors – first of all Mr. Jayram of Barakat our Gold Sponsor. A big thank you as well to Elfab, Unilever, Meat Live Stock Australia, RAK China, Lufthansa our Official Airline, Micheel "Das Küchenstudio" our Kitchen Host and Master baker. We wish the team all the best and hope they have a very successful and safe trip.

Please do not forget to start training and to prepare for the 3rd La Cuisine Du Sial that is happening between November 26-28, 2012, in Abu Dhabi.

Also, please do look at the Friends pages to check our supporters and make sure to support them when you can. All contact details are on the back of the magazine.

Finally I would like to thank Chef Amro Al Yassin and the team from Time Grand Plaza Hotel for hosting the September meeting.

Closing my message with a very important date; we will have once again a Charity Blood Donation drive on the 14th of this month from 9am – 2pm at the Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek. Please join me and help to save lives.

*Culinary regards,  
 Uwe Micheel  
 President of Emirates Culinary Guild  
 Director of Kitchens  
 Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek*

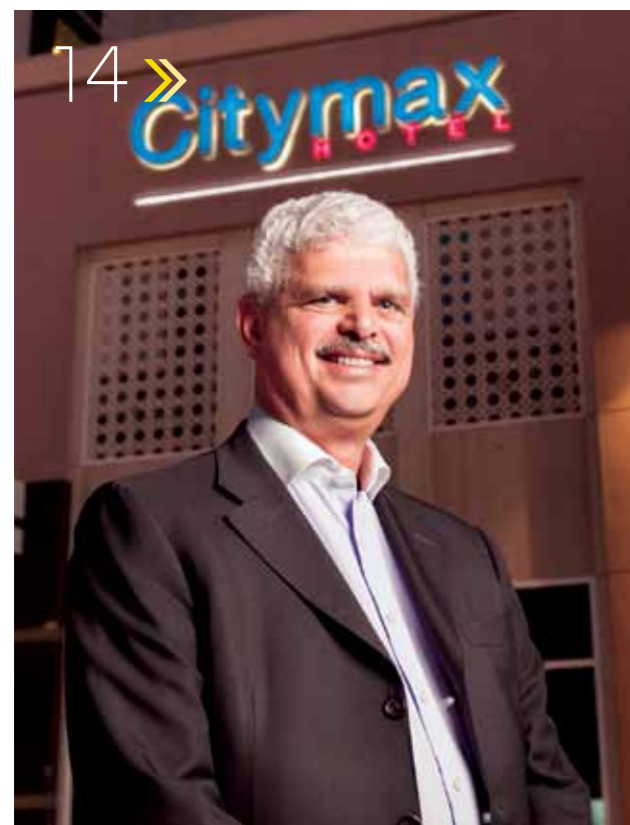


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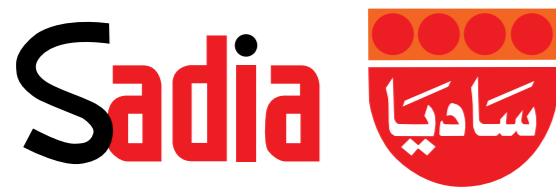




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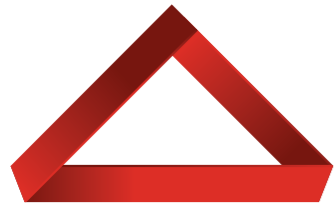


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# Pushing for innovation

Interview with **Russel Sharpe**, COO, Citymax Hotels on F&B and beyond...

**Could you tell us a bit about your career before taking over your present position?**

My 35 years of sector-specific experience involves working out of the hotel industry mainly in the Middle East and Asia. Before joining Citymax Hotels, I was associated as senior partner with the specialist hospitality industry consultants, Mezze Associates. Here I had a mandate to oversee acquisitions for multi-use projects, as well as financing, feasibility studies and asset management.

Previously, I have also served at Le Méridien Hotels and Resorts as Senior Vice-President, Sales and Marketing, Middle East and West Asia. Tasked with managing the extensive sales network for the Middle East and India, I was also fortunate enough for the opportunity to set-up Le Méridien's first Central Reservation Office.

**As the COO of your property, how involved are you with the F&B operations?**

One of the key USPs of Citymax Hotels is our F&B portfolio. And as someone who started off as a Chef, it is my constant endeavour to bring innovative F&B concepts to fruition and offer precise lifecycle analyses such as feasibility studies and revenue projections for the outlets.

**Can you tell us about the various F&B outlets in your hotel?**

Claypot, at Citymax Hotel Bur Dubai, is an authentic Indian restaurant serving cuisine that takes inspiration from the North Western region of the subcontinent. Nominated for the prestigious Ahlan Masala awards 2011, its culinary delights include elaborate vegetarian and non-vegetarian 'thalis' offering sumptuous 'chicken nawabi', 'panchvati garlic dal' and 'biryani'.

MAXX Music Bar & Grill, at Citymax Hotels Al Barsha, is a dedicated music bar, serving as a popular chill-out zone offering quintessential bar food and choice beverages. The contemporary bar theme conveys an energetic and peppy atmosphere and is designed for the young professional looking for a place to unwind.

The Huddle Sports Bar & Grill is the home of live sports, offering a fun and lively setting to enjoy the latest live sports and music. Offering an appetising menu of finger-foods & Grill items and an eclectic beverage menu, the popular bar also hosts a dedicated area with pool tables and dart boards. Sizzling Wok is a popular casual dining option, which serves Asian cuisine to Dubai's culturally diverse clientele using the freshest ingredients. The restaurant provides a vibrant atmosphere with earthy and bright décor that complements its popular food choices from Asia.

**Which among these do you like best and why?**

All the F&B concepts at Citymax Hotels are exceptional in their own right and offer variety to the Citymax Hotels patrons, at great value.

**Do you work closely with your Executive Chef in devising new concepts and promotions?**

For all new concepts and promotions, we tend work together to base decision-making on a thorough understanding of the market demand and ever-changing customers' psyche. We are constantly having food tasting sessions and looking for new dishes.

**What is your brief to your Executive Chef?**

Since I am a Cordon bleu Chef, it is easier to communicate with our signature Chef, Robin Gomes. We enjoy



All the F&B concepts at Citymax Hotels are exceptional in their own right and offer variety to the Citymax Hotels patrons, at great value





discovering new and exciting dishes together that are tailored to consumer insights.

**How important is the relationship between the COO and his/her Executive Chef?**

It is important for the head of any company to regularly engage with the Executive Chef in the operations and management of the restaurant. Such healthy working relationship will only help deliver better quality service to patrons. It is also crucial to maintain a good relationship with restaurant managers.

**Is there a conceptual difference between F&B outlets in city hotels and resorts?**

More often than not, F&B concepts in resorts tend to



Although a standalone concept, the Zuma restaurant is an innovative concept that I have been impressed by

be over-the-top in presentation, while in-city hotels are about convenience and adding value to the consumer. What sets Citymax Hotels apart from other than the functional accommodations, are its F&B offerings that are five -star in quality and provide extra value to guests.

**Have you been so impressed with a concept in another hotel or resort that you would like to introduce in your present property?**

Although a standalone concept, the Zuma restaurant is an innovative concept that I have been impressed by.

**Anything else you would like to add about Citymax Hotels?**

Citymax Hotels are set to enter the TV reality show space with 'The Foodshala' in its search for the UAE's top home chef. For all UAE-based aspiring chefs, here is a chance to feature on television and win AED50,000 worth of prizes.

The 'Foodshala' show-format will double up as the UAE's first food 'pathshala' or classroom for TV viewers seeking to hone their culinary skills. The idea is to recognise the best chef of the world, 'the housewife', by bringing her to the limelight, while also have her dish featured in our restaurant menu. Every week one contestant will get to be on the television show to showcase and share their best recipe with viewers.











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Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek sweeps top honours at the BurJuman Young Chef of the Year competition. A tête-à-tête with the top three winners

If you met 23-year-old Ishara Rangana Athapaththu in a crowd, you'd probably miss the soft spoken Sri Lankan. Ishara works as Commis II at the Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek and most of his days are spent working long hours at the all-day five-star dining restaurant called Boulevard. These days, in the midst of all the hard work, he's found reason to smile. He's just bagged the coveted Young Chef of the Year title, at the competition for young chefs held in BurJuman.

While his achievement for sure has made his employer proud, the real icing on the cake came when it was announced that the first and second runner-up positions too had gone to two Commis from the same hotel! Quite a

brilliant achievement considering 400 young chefs from 40 hotels participated.

21-year-old Rahil Rathore, the first runner-up and 26-year-old Bhimsen Pakhrin, the second runner-up are both work-mates of Ishara. When I met the three at Radisson Blu, they all shared similar visions for the future. All three are passing through that stage in life where the world is their oyster, yet the curiosity about what the future holds for them is a small niggle that they comfortably live with day and night.

None of the three were confident enough to say that they aim to be an executive chef someday. Yet it's a desire they all share and are working towards, one step at a time, they say.





**Ishara Athapaththu** does not come from a family of chefs. Rather than follow in dad's footsteps and work for a government body, he decided to do a one-year diploma in Swiss Lanka hotel followed by a year-long training at the Neptune Bay.

He then spent two years working for two resorts in Lanka before joining Radisson Blu last year. "I competed in the five course dinner at the SIAL last year and won the bronze medal. It was my first competition and that gave me the confidence. In 2012 Salon Culinare, I participated in practical butchery, 5 course dinner menu and practical lamb and won 3 bronze medals. I had made up my mind to become the Young Chef of the Year. I participated in all three categories – Emirati cuisine, Practical cookery chicken and 3 course set menu."

He won gold in all three categories including a high category gold for Emirati Cuisine and saw total point tally that exceeded everyone else making him the Young Chef of the Year.

Ishara credits his win to Chef Uwe, his Exec Sous Chef Dian, and his Pastry Chef. He adds, "I was able to excel because I am not scared of asking for help from my boss." His next goal is to win the 2013 award for the Outstanding Gastronomic Chef of the Year and he's also mentoring his younger brother who has joined a Hotel School.

"I am a very determined person. I believe the 'practise makes one perfect' concept. I practise after work and I don't bother about the time. I enjoy work and love participating in competitions. It's this enjoyment that gives me the upper hand at competitions."



**Rahil Rathod**, the son of a businessman from India, confesses that the only reason he is into cooking is because he was poor in studies and he believed that the easiest way to a degree was taking up hospitality management.

After spending two years in Gujrat and a year in Scotland studying he returned to India and joined a 3-star hotel. He visited Dubai and ended up joining a Mexican restaurant following which he met Chef Uwe and joined Radisson earlier this year.

"I found out about the competition through Chef Uwe and participated. I won 2 Gold medals and 1

high-scoring Silver medal. Elmer Mancera (Chef de Cuisine), Arturo Panitino (Chef de Cuisine) and David Amirtharaj (Senior Chef de Partie) helped me with my preparation," he says.

"I had never seen a competition before. I was very scared and nervous during my first live cooking session. When I came back to the hotel I got to know from my Sous Chef that I had won the Gold. This has really motivated me for the next competition."

For the future Rahil says that he has not planned anything and just wants to learn more and more about competitions and participate in every one of them.





**Bhimsen Pakhrin**, the son of a farmer, was raised on the outskirts of Katmandu in Nepal and found his way into cooking thanks to his cousin who is an Exec Sous Chef there. He trained under him for 18 months and later came to Dubai and worked in Royal Ascot Hotel in Bur Dubai for three years.

Thirty months ago he joined Radisson Blu where

he partook in his first competition. He had won a bronze medal for practical cookery lamb and that gave him the confidence for this competition. "I trained for competition with help from Antonio De Dominicis (Chef de Cuisine), Ciro Palma (Chef de Cuisine) and Chef Uwe. Luck and hard work got me this medal. I practised after work hours and slept for only 2 hours daily," he says.



I had made up my mind to become the Young Chef of the Year. I participated in all three categories – Emirati cuisine, Practical cookery chicken and 3 course set menu

– **Ishara Attapaththu**



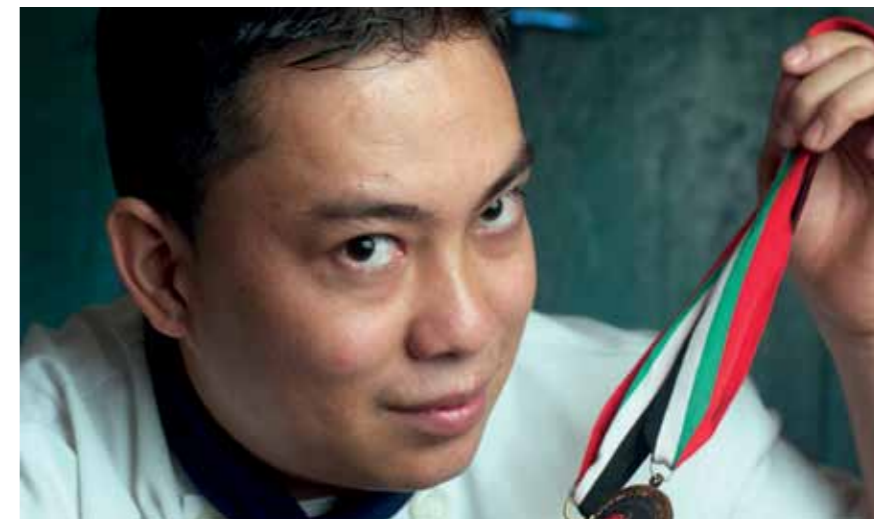
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– **Rahil Rathod**



Luck and hard work got me this medal. I practised after work hours and slept for only 2 hours daily

– **Bhimsen Pakhrin**





# East Coast Whirlwind

The first-ever East Coast Chefs competition was a whirlwind success. **Chef Prasad**, the Executive Chef from Iberotel Miramar and the driving force behind the event is a happy man, especially given the support and the outcome of the inaugural event. We speak to him about the event

**Tell us everything – from the idea behind the event, to why Iberotel Miramar decided to take on the challenge, and, of course, what motivates you to do all this?**

This project has been my dream for a long time now. When I came to Fujairah in 2007, this place did not get the attention it deserved. Very few people knew about all the great hotels that were present here.

I remember speaking with friends and they didn't realise that there were so many 5-star hotels & resorts in this region. First thing we did in 2008 was to train a culinary team from Iberotel Miramar and participate in the junior competition at Burjuman centre. This was the first time that chefs from the east coast came as a group with the aim of winning medals and showcasing their talent.

That challenge we won 4 medals (a silver and 3 bronze) along with a few merits. This was a first time for this region and a wake-up call for everyone. It's a tough task travelling almost 300+ kilometres to and fro with all your stuff over a period of four days. But we achieved what we had set out to do. From then till now we have won over 50 medals in various competitions with over 15 of these being gold. At the last junior competition we achieved 15 medals and came third in the UAE.

# 1000

We had over 1,000 visitors including municipality, tourism board, VIPs, etc. from Fujairah government who visited the event

I had promised Chef Uwe and the Executive Committee when taking over as VP for East Coast for the ECG to make this event happen. This was one of my commitments. The original plan was to do it in 2013. But my General Manager Mr. Ashraf Helmy was the one who encouraged me to make this happen faster. He advised me that the hotel would like to support the event 100% and take on all the expenses. He said he wanted to see this happen this year. We took up the challenge and made it happen. The rest is for me is a dream come true.

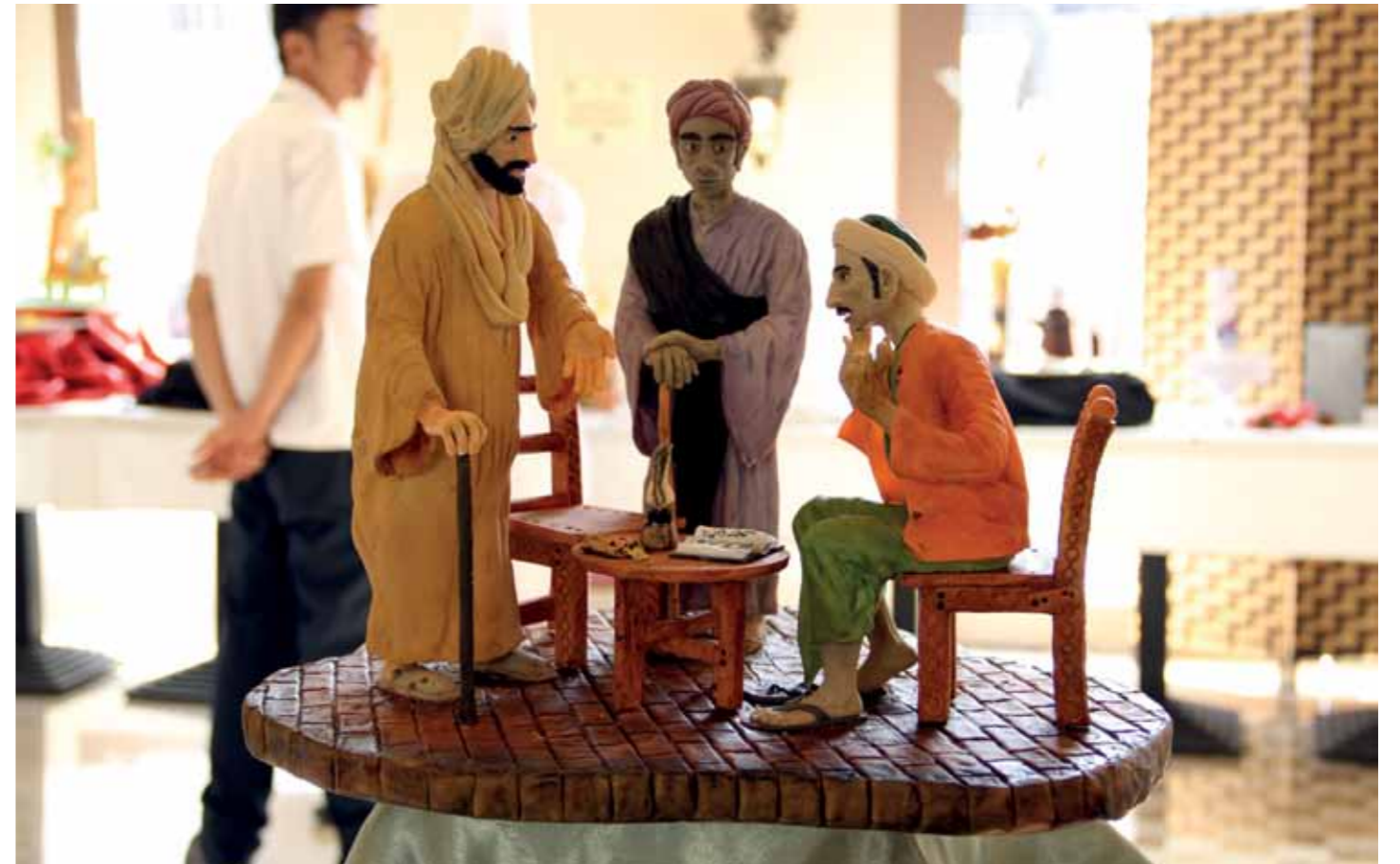
**What did you want to achieve with this competition?**

Our first and foremost aim was to show everyone around us that we have great hotels and chefs in east coast. Second, we wanted to encourage all east coast young chefs, nurture them to the next level and to hone their skills in a way that they are able to compete at higher levels of competitions in the future. The great news is that I have many chefs in our region already requesting to participate in the next La Cuisine du Sial and Salon Culinaire. This in itself is an achievement and evidence that we have succeeded in what we set out to do.

**Who all supported and sponsored the event?**

To begin with I must thank our General Manager for his great support and advice as always. My great kitchen team, our management and other colleagues in our hotel must be thanked for their support as well. Last but not the least, my fellow Executive Chefs in the region and their F&B teams supported us whole-heartedly. Our sponsors were our suppliers. MMI was the platinum sponsor for our live cocktail competition, gold sponsors for the culinary event were Barakat Vegetables, Six Brothers, Horeca, Gyma, Atoz; silver sponsors were RAK Porcelain, Johnson Diversey and Barakat Quality Plus; and bronze sponsors were MH Enterprises and Malik Al Samak.

**What challenges did you face considering this was the first event?**



Time was our biggest challenge. We had just 20 days to organize the entire event. Then finding the sponsors, plan the whole thing, all in all everything was a challenge as we were doing it in the first time. A very special mention here for the ECG senior team, Chef Uwe, Alen Thong, Andy and Josephine Cuthbert for their full-hearted assistance.

Our other big challenge was closing down our 600-capacity restaurant for breakfast and lunch to make place for the competition. We had to move all our guests to 160-capacity Italian restaurant. There were a few tough situations for our F&B staff. I would like to thank them for their patience including the hotel guests who cooperated with our requests.

**Tell us about the chefs that participated and categories for competition?**

It was categorized for the young Chefs, basically Chef de Partie and below. We had 109 participants. The categories were Individual Fish / Seafood Static, Individual Meat / Lamb Static, Individual Arabic Dish Static (Main Course), Individual Pastry Static, Individual Pastry Static (Arabic), Bread Loaves & Showpiece, Open Show Piece, Pastry Show Piece, Chocolate Carving Showpiece, Vegetable Carving Showpiece and Cocktail of the day.

**Tell us about the winners of this competition.**

Tally for medals in each participating hotel were as follows: Iberotel Miramar won 7 Gold, 14 Silver, and 14 Bronze. Le Meridien Al Aqah won 1 Gold, 2 Silver and 5 Bronze. Hilton

Fujairah won 2 Silver and 4 Bronze. Rotana Fujairah won 4 Gold, 3 Silver and 1 Bronze. Radisson Blu won 1 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze. Concorde Hotel Fujairah won 1 Silver

Special Awards given included Best Bartender for Iberotel Miramar's Ms. Kathrina Siringan, Best Kitchen Artist to Rotana's Janaka Priyanaga Shabandu, Best Arabic Chef to Iberotel Miramar's Saad Sami El Gamry, Best Gastronomy to Rotana's Karthik Sundar and Best Pastry Chef to Iberotel Miramar's Samintha Guruge. Overall Championship Trophy was awarded to Iberotel Miramar for the highest medal tally among participating hotels.

**How was the level of cooking compared to La Cuisine du Sial and Salon Culinaire?**

As per the remarks got from our fellow experienced judges and the marshals who are the same people involved in Salon and Sial, it was very high in standards. We had great appreciation from every single person at the event and the remarks after the event was overwhelming.

We had over 1,000 visitors including municipality, tourism board, VIPs, etc. from Fujairah government who visited the event. We had 5 different press and media covering the event. We catered all meals for judges, marshals & VIPs. We gave all our main suppliers the opportunity to have their stalls in the competition arena. Later we had a great cocktail party sponsored by Miramar hotel and a grand celebration for award ceremony including memorandums, trophies and plates for all the judges, marshals, suppliers, VIPs and more importantly for all competitors.



“

This event will definitely improve the standards, the culinary ambitions and the skills of the young chefs in east coast. It'll definitely motivate them and sharpen their skills.

As we proudly sponsor this event for the first time in the East Coast, it'll give huge respect and prestige for our hotel. We promise that we'll be even better and provide more excitement in the next edition of this competition with my team

– Iberotel Miramar GM



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# Feedback from the judges of the **Burjuman Young Chef of the Year** competition



## **Chef Heinz**

The main difference between Salon Culinaire and the Burjuman competition is the size. However, the standard here is very good. In my opinion, the best here are just as good as those competing at Salon Culinaire. It's a good platform for young chefs to show off their skills against other chefs their age.

We have been quite strict with the judging. That said there may have been chefs winning bronze in this competition that they would not have won in the Salon. But a gold won here is as good as a gold won at the Salon Culinaire.

My tip for young chefs is that it's important for them to participate without any expectations the first time around. A competition like this is the ideal place to learn. Don't give up!



## **Chef Patrick**

The general standard so far I've found to be good. There are standards to judging that we follow as judges. But we have to consider how young and inexperienced these chefs are. And so we have to overlook some mistakes and give them a chance.

My tip for young chefs is to always read the rules and regulations well before the competition. The chef should choose his or her classes carefully and train and train and train!

## **Chef Vivek**

I perceive this as a preparation for young chefs who will ultimately participate in bigger competitions in the future. The standards here can sometimes be very good or can also be quite the opposite. This is because most chefs here are competing for the first time.

Generally we are a bit softer on the judging criteria. It's important not to discourage them as they are young and impressionable. Even the feedback we give to them is all about encouraging and mentoring them.

My tip to young chefs is to keep it simple and look at the latest food trends from magazines, books and the internet.



## **Chef Tarek**

In general the quality of the dishes in this competition is good. However, young chefs need guidance not only on cooking methods but also in competing.

While it's important to point out mistakes made by the chefs I have to make sure that this is done very delicately. I believe a competition like this is what leads chefs to perfection – the more you compete the better you get. It's important to give constructive criticism to aid this process.

My tip for young chefs is that it's important to practice until preparing the dish comes second nature to you. It's also important for the chef to refresh his memory with the sixteen cooking methods before the competition.





### Chef Thomas

This competition is great and well organized. The Emirates Culinary Guild has done a fantastic job.

I wouldn't say you judge any different in this competition. We follow the same criteria as the senior competition but you do give them some credit points based on their young age and inexperience. The standard in the UAE has gone up dramatically in the last few years and a gold won in this competition will win you a gold in any competition around the world.

My tip for young chefs is that it's very important to read the rules and regulations properly. A lot of mistakes are done in not reading the rules right. Also, chefs that come to the competition must train what they are going to do here at home or at work if possible and get a lot of feedback.



### Chef Nermine

The quality we have seen so far is very good overall. I've been really impressed by some dishes, carvings and bread showpieces.

The only difference is that we are a bit lenient in the type and approach to judging. But we have to be careful not to put them off and risk not have them compete in the future.

My tip for young chefs is choose to cook what you love and go to your chef and ask for advice. Practice, practice, practice!

## They came, they saw, they learnt

Thanks to the initiative by the Emirates Culinary Guild, the Young Chefs Club and of course Burjuman alongside all the sponsors and supporters, the Young Chef of the Year was a success. This was the first time for a lot of young chefs who came to compete and they understood what it feels like to compete on an international stage. Confidence was boosted with judges explaining how to do better and many won their first medal on this stage. We believe this is a great learning ground for young chefs who want to outshine their peers through competitions. Here are a few moments captured by **Amaresh Bhaskaran** at the event. For all the remaining images, watch out for the next issue















## Texas Beef Master Chef Seminars in Dubai

**O**n September 8 and 9, 2012, two Texas Beef Council (TBC) Chef Training Workshops took place at the Palm Grill Steakhouse of Radisson Blu Hotel in Dubai. The TBC and the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF), in collaboration with the Office of Agricultural Affairs - U.S. Consulate in Dubai, have concluded these workshops with a series of 2 days hands-on training and live cooking.

69 chefs from 26 hotels and restaurants joined Chef Uwe Micheel, President of the Emirates Culinary Guild and Kitchen Director of Radisson Blu Hotels.

U.S. beef suppliers' representatives as well as importers were keen on sending different staff members, who were unable to attend the first six seminars, to participate in this second phase of the TBC workshops. Nine representatives of five leading U.S. beef local importers in the UAE, namely, ARAMTEC (suppliers of AFG and Rastelli), TRANSMED (suppliers of SYSCO Int'l), Faisal Al Nusif Trading Co., Food Wise and United Source One local representative Mr. Steve Errera, were all present.

In compliance with previous seminars, USMEF Middle East representative AMFI set up and organised the semi-

nars with U.S. suppliers, their local representatives and local importers. Staff member Bassam Bousaleh initiated the seminar followed by technical segment of the chef workshops and hands-on training by Chef Uwe Micheel.

Quality and profitability attributes of underutilized U.S. beef cuts, such as Tri Tip, Top Blade, Hanging Tender, Flat Iron, Petite Tender and Shoulder Clod cuts, were thoroughly presented to participating chefs.

All chefs, local importers and distributors as well as USMEF Rep later gathered to sample the selection of creation dishes prepared and shared with the local trade their interests, preferences and profitability margin and obtained additional information such as pricing to compare as how would underutilized U.S. beef can bring profit to their operations.

All attendants received an information kit which enclosed a booklet of beef cuts for foodservice, a bilingual TBC booklet entitled "When Quality Meets Profit", fact sheets on underutilized U.S. beef cuts, a CD of Profit Planner program. Chefs were handed a "Certificate of Completion" as a token of appreciation to their participation and in recognition of their efforts.







**BRIEFS OF THE CLASSES FOR ENTRY  
LA CUISINE BY SIAL**

**No. Class Description**

1. Cake Decoration - Practical
2. Wedding Cake Three-Tier
3. Four Plates of Dessert
4. Pastry Showpiece
5. Baked Bread Showpiece
6. Friandises Petites Four Pralines Nougatines
7. Chocolate Carving Showpiece
8. Fruit & Vegetable Carving Showpiece
9. Open Showpiece
10. Australian Lamb Five-Course Gourmet Dinner Menu
11. Tapas, Finger Food and Canapés
12. New Arabian Cuisine
13. An Arabian Combination – Practical Cookery
14. Individual Ice Carving
15. Ice Carving Team Event
16. Practical Fruit & Vegetable Carving
17. Fish & Seafood - Practical Cookery
18. Australian Beef - Practical Cookery

**Class 01: Cake Decoration - Practical**

1. Decorate a pre-baked single cake base of the competitor's choice.
2. Two-and-a-half-hours duration.
3. All decorating ingredients must be edible and mixed on the spot.
4. No pre-modelled garnish permitted.
5. Chocolate and royal icing can be pre-prepared to the basic level, e.g.. tempered chocolate can be brought.
6. Competitors must provide all ingredients, cake base, utensils, and small equipment required.
7. The cake base must a minimum size of 30cm X 30cm or 30cm Diameter.
8. A standard buffet table is provided for each competitor to work upon.
9. Water, electricity and refrigeration might not be available.
10. All cakes will be displayed until the end of the Salon and will be disposed of by the organizer.
11. The cake will be tasted as part of judging.



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12. The Judges will cut the cake.

**Class 02: Three-Tier Wedding Cake**

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

**Class 03: Four Plates of Dessert**

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

**Class 04: Pastry Showpiece**

1. Freestyle display.
2. Edible media, marzipan, pastillage, sugar, pulled-sugar, croquant, etc., may be used, singly or in mixed media.
3. Written description required.
4. Maximum area w90 x d75cm.
5. Exhibit can be no more than 90cm. in height including base or socle where used.



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### Class 05: Baked Bread Showpiece

1. Freestyle display of a bread showpiece.
2. Maximum area w90 x d75cm
3. Exhibit can be no more than 90cm. in height including base or socle where used

### Class 06: Friandises Petites Four Pralines Nougatines

1. Five varieties.
2. Six pieces of each variety (30 pieces total).
3. Freestyle presentation.
4. Required one extra piece of each variety on a separate small platter for judges' tasting.
5. Written description mentioning the theme is required.
6. Typewritten recipes are required.
7. Maximum area w90 cm x d75 cm.

### Class 07: Chocolate Carving Showpiece

1. Free-style presentation.
2. No frames or supports.
3. Natural colouring is allowed.
4. Minimal glazing is allowed.
5. No moulded work.
6. Maximum area: w80 cm x d75 cm.
7. Exhibit can be no more than 75cm in height including base or socle where used.

### Class 08: Fruit & Vegetable Carving Showpiece

1. Freestyle presentation.
2. Light framing is allowed, but the construction of the piece must not depend upon it.
3. Maximum area w60 cm x d75 cm.
4. Exhibit can be no more than 55 cm in height including base or socle where used.

### Class 09: Open Showpiece

1. Freestyle presentation.



2. Only showpieces made of edible food material will be accepted for adjudication.
3. Maximum area w90 cm x d75 cm.
4. Exhibit can be no more than 75 cm. in height including base or socle where used.

### Class 10: Australian Lamb Five-Course Gourmet Dinner Menu

1. One dish must contain Australian Lamb as a main component.
2. Present a plated five-course gourmet meal for one person
3. The meal to consist of:
  - > *A cold appetiser,*
  - > *A soup,*
  - > *A hot appetiser,*
  - > *A main course with its garnish*
  - > *A dessert.*
4. Hot food presented cold on appropriate plates.
5. Food coated with aspic or clear gelatin for preservation.
6. Total food weight of the 5 plates should be 600/700 gms.

7. Typewritten description and typed recipes required
8. Maximum area w90 cm x d75 cm.

### Class 11: Presentation of Tapas, Finger Food and Canapés

1. Produce eight varieties.
2. Six pieces of each variety (total 48 pieces)
3. Four hot varieties
4. Four 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. Eight pieces should correspond to one portion.
9. Name and ingredient list (typed) of each variety required.
10. Maximum area 60cm x 80 cm.

### Class 12: New Arabian Cuisine

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



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

### Class 13. An Arabian Combination.

1. Two-person team.
2. One team member must be at or below the rank of Chef de Partie.
3. Prepare two servings of each of the following:
  4. Four types of cold mezzeh.
  5. Three types of hot mezzeh.
  6. One main course.
  7. One Dessert
8. Time allowed 90 minutes, i.e. the final course must be served to the judges within ninety minutes of the start of the competition.
9. Cold items can be brought ready, but must be dished and decorated in real time at the competition.
10. Preparation and cooking of the hot mezzeh and the main course must be done in real time at the competition.
11. Ingredients used must be those easy available in an Arabic kitchen, e.g. no mussels, salmon, scallops, etc.



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12. Taste, innovation and nouvelle presentation and the inclusion of Emirate dishes with in the food are the keynotes to this class.
13. The food to be served by the competitors to the judges in the sequence the competitors wish.

### Class 14: Individual Ice Carving

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

### Class 15: Ice Carving Team Event

1. Freestyle.

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

### Class 16: Practical Fruit & Vegetable Carving

1. Freestyle.
2. 120 minutes duration.
3. Hand carved work from competitor's own fruit\vegetables.
4. Competitors to use own hand-tools and equipment.
5. No power tools permitted.



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6. Pre-cleaned, peeled material is allowed, but pre-sliced/carved will result in disqualification.
7. Each competitor will be supplied with a standard buffet table on which to work.

### Class 17: Fish & Seafood - Practical Cookery

1. Time allowed 60 minutes
2. Prepare and present four identical main courses using fish/shellfish as the main protein item.
3. Present the main courses on individual plates with appropriate garnish and accoutrements.
4. Typewritten recipes are required.

### Class 18: Australian Beef - Practical Cookery

1. Time allowed 60 minutes
2. Prepare and present four identical main courses using Australian beef as the main protein item.
3. Present the main courses on individual plates with appropriate garnish and accoutrements.

4. Typewritten recipes are required.

### Notes on the Practical Cookery Classes

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 only one hour is given to 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.wacs2000.org](http://www.wacs2000.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.**
  - > **Potatoes washed and peeled – but not cut up or shaped.**

- > **Onions peeled but not cut up**
  - > **Basic dough can be pre-prepared.**
  - > **Basic stocks can be pre-prepared.**
  - > **Basic ingredients may be pre-weighed or measured out ready for use.**
  - > **Fish may be scaled, gutted de-finned and de-gilled, but must otherwise be brought to the competition whole.**
  - > **Meat may be de-boned and portioned and the bones cut up.**
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. No help is allowed to be given to the competitor once the competition starts; the coaching of a competitor from the sidelines will result in the competitor being disqualified.



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16. 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.
17. Two copies of the recipes typewritten are always required.
18. Submit one copy of the recipe/s to the clerk when registering.
19. Submit one copy of the recipe to the duty marshal at the cooking station.

## RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR CULINARY COMPETITIONS ORGANISED BY THE 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 disqualifications.
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.
5. Unless the organisers specifically mention a class as being a team event, 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 a trophy must participate fully in every class entered in order to qualify.



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9. Competitors must attend and participate on the date and at the time allotted to them.
17. No entry is accepted until the appropriate fee has been received.
18. Entry Fees are non-refundable.

### COMPETITION ENTRY

10. Please note that there are different forms for different types of entry; ensure that the correct form is being used.
11. Complete the entry-form according to the instructions on the form.
12. Completed photocopies of the entry-form are acceptable.
13. Submit the completed form to the organisers along with the requisite fee.
14. Fees must be submitted along with completed entry forms.
15. Fees are payable to:
  - > **Account Name: Culinary Alliance**
  - > **Bank: Standard Chartered Bank Bur Dubai**
  - > **Account No. 01-2078703-01**
  - > **IBAN: AE400440000001207870301**
16. Entries are accepted strictly on a first-paid, first-accepted basis

### CERTIFICATES AND LETTERS OF PARTICIPATION

19. 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.
20. Any applications for amendments to letters or certificates will necessitate:
  - a) Return of the original certificate
  - b) A written confirmation from the executive chef
  - c) A pre-paid fee of Dhs: 100/- (AED: One-hundred) per certificate.

### HYGIENE

21. Bad hygiene practice will result in disqualification.
22. A professional food-safety company has been engaged to oversee all aspects of hygiene practice at the competition.
23. It is quite possible that the Municipality Food Control Section will conduct its own hygiene inspections as and when it sees fit.



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24. The organisers have no control over these two entities. Should either raise an objection to the standard of hygiene of any particular person or team, that person or team will not be allowed to compete

### THE SECRETARIAT

25. The Emirates Culinary Guild (ECG) is the body responsible for the creation, organisation and administration of the competition.
26. The competition is governed by and construed according to the rules of the organisers.
27. The organisers have sole authority to adjudicate on any matters pertaining to the competition.
28. Entrants' acceptances of participation in the competition are construed as confirmation of their undertaking to submit unconditionally to the jurisdiction of the organisers in regard to all aspects of La Cuisine Du SIAL.
29. The address of the ECG for all correspondence and inquiries referencing culinary competitions is:  
**The Emirates Culinary Guild, PO Box**

**71963 Dubai, United Arab Emirates.  
Tel: + (9714) 3403128. Fax :+(9714) 3473742. Email: theguild@eim.ae**

### COMPETITORS AND HELPERS

30. Each competitor is allowed one helper to assist with carrying equipment. No other help is allowed to a competitor within the preparation area.
31. A competitor must wear full; freshly laundered chefs uniform with appropriate headgear and footwear when attending at the exhibition.
32. A competitor's helper must wear full; freshly laundered chefs uniform with appropriate headgear and footwear when attending at the exhibition.
33. Competitors that are incorrectly dressed at a competition will not have their exhibits judged.
34. Helpers that are incorrectly dressed will not be admitted to the exhibition.
35. Logos, marks and identifying colours provided by the organisers must be worn by competitors throughout the competition in the position indicated to them by the organisers at the time of registration.



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36. A competitor entered in a practical competition must register at least thirty minutes before the commencement of the competition otherwise the competition slot will be given to a waitlisted competitor.
37. Any competitor not in place and ready to start at least five minutes before the time a competition commences, will be disqualified.
38. Competitors and helpers are forbidden from approaching or speaking with or at a judge without the express permission of the organisers.

### EXHIBITS

39. Each exhibit must be the bona fide work of the entering competitor. It must be solely the work of the competitor and must be certified as such by his Head of Department or General Manager.
40. Each exhibit must be a completely original work, it must not have been displayed previously (in whole or in part) in any competition or exhibition whether private or public.

41. All exhibits must be of edible substance except for framing, socles and stands where they are allowed.
42. It is forbidden to use any living entity whatsoever as part of an exhibit (e.g. tropical fish).
43. It is forbidden to depict religious, nude, semi-nude or political themes in an exhibit.
44. All exhibits must be suitable for presentation as a decorative item in a restaurant or banqueting setting.
45. An exhibit must not carry any logo, label or mark of identification; however, competitors must be able to identify their exhibit if required.
46. 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.
47. No preparation or finishing of exhibits is allowed in any area except the designated preparation area at the rear of the competition area.
48. Finished exhibits must be placed in the position indicated by the organisers.



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- 49. No interference with an exhibit is allowed once the organisers have deemed it as submitted for judging.
- 50. Competitors must leave the judging area as soon as their exhibits are in place or when instructed to leave by the marshals, whichever is the sooner.
- 51. Exhibits may, at the discretion of the organisers, be moved to a separate enclosure, there to remain for part or for the duration of the exhibition.
- 52. Failure by a competitor to register or exhibit at the specified time could result in disqualification.
- 53. Exhibits which are removed by competitors without permission of the organisers will not qualify for any kind of award.

### COMPETITION MARSHALS

- 54. A Marshal-at-arms will be recognisable by a badge displaying the logo of the Emirates Culinary Guild and the legend 'Marshal'.
- 55. Marshals are charged with ensuring that the rules and regulations of the competition are observed by all concerned.

- 56. Competitors, helpers and visitors are all obliged to cooperate with the marshals - without question, at all times.

### AWARDS

- 57. Gold, silver and bronze medals and certificates and certificates of merit are awarded solely at the discretion of the judges.
- 58. The decision of the judges is final and each competitor is required to abide by it without comment.
- 59. Medals will normally be presented at 18:00 each day. This may change according to circumstance.
- 60. Any medal or certificate that is not accepted by the competitor or his/her helper at the presentation ceremony for that day will be forfeit, unless prior arrangements are made with the organisers.
- 61. A competitor or his/her helper must be correctly dressed as stipulated in the rules when collecting medals or certificates.



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- 62. Incorrectly dressed competitors/ helpers will not be allowed access to the awards area.

### COPYRIGHT

- 63. All exhibitors and competitors assign all rights concerning videos, photographs, menus, recipes, exhibits, sound recordings etc. to the Emirates Culinary Guild.

### DISCLAIMER

- 64. The organisers are entitled to cancel or postpone the Salon, or to alter the duration, timing or schedule of any event.
- 65. The organisers reserve the right to cancel any classes or limit the number of entries or extend, modify or revoke any of the rules and conditions without being held liable for any claims for compensation whatsoever.
- 66. The organisers will not under any circumstances be held liable or responsible for the loss or damage of any exhibit, equipment, goods or personal effects.

### QUERIES

- 67. All queries must be submitted by email to: [theguild@eim.ae](mailto:theguild@eim.ae). The question and answer to each query will be broadcast to all entrants.



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# THANK YOU

From the organisers of the East Coast Chefs Competition

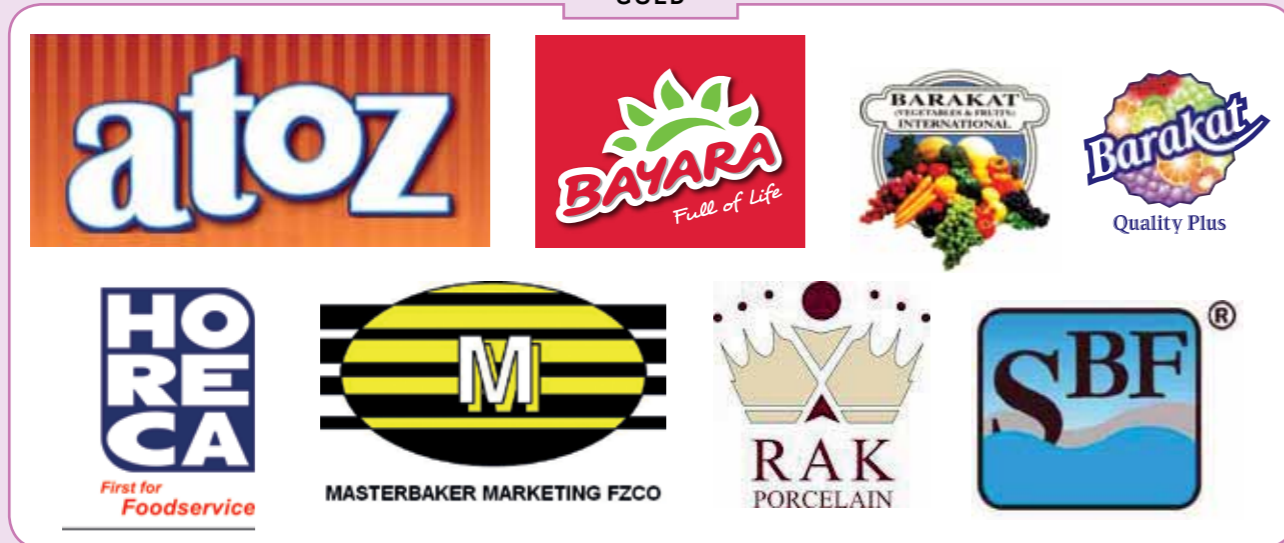
## HOST



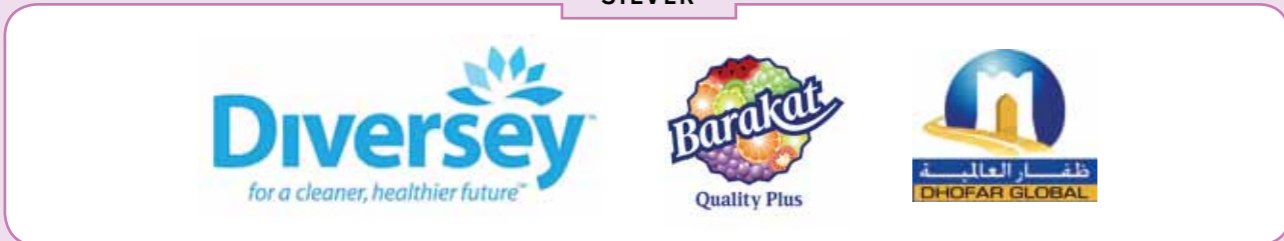
## PLATINUM



## GOLD



## SILVER



Suresh K.P., Sr. Manager – Business Development and Johannes – Product Development Consultant receiving the certificate from Chef Uwe Mischeel, President, Emirates Culinary Guild.



Diamond Meat Processing LLC  
(An ISO 9001 & HACCP Certified)

**DIAMOND MEAT PROCESSING** Establishment is an ISO 9001; 2008 and HACCP certified Dubai-based manufacturer and exporter of a wide range of processed meat products. Our extensive product range under the flagship brand of Almasa is unique in terms of taste and quality in MENA region. Over the years, the brand has become synonymous with excellent quality and customer friendly service. Diamond Meat product range consists of Breakfast

strips, Breakfast sausages, Basturma, Burgers, Mortadella, Salami, Pepperoni and assorted cold cuts from Beef, Chicken, Turkey and Lamb.

With a state-of-the-art facility, active product development center, extensive logistics and distribution network, Almasa brand has attained a market leadership position in its product category. With a portfolio of more than 250 SKUs, the product is available at all major retail chains and Horeca segments across the region.

Diamond Meat Processing Establishment is a member of the Dubai headquartered USD 5 billion highly diversified ETA Ascon Star Group. Since its inception in 1973, the group has completed projects in excess of USD 140 Billion and numerous landmarks in the Emirates stand testimony to the firm's engineering capabilities. The company is a part of Al Ghurair Group of companies, who are one of the most revered and leading business houses in the United Arab Emirates.





In 1973, **NASSAR AL REFAEE** set up a small fruit and vegetable trading shop in one of Dubai's markets. Originally from Syria, he began his trade by introducing fresh fruits and vegetables from his country into the Dubai market.

With more than 35 years of experience, the shop set up by Nassar Al Refaee has grown into a large-scale operation based in Dubai that is run by him and his sons. It is a family business comprising several departments and a staff of more than 500 workers, in addition to 11 locations within Dubai central market.

Nassar Al Refaee Trading Company (NRTC) imports more than 300 tonnes of fruits and vegetables from the Middle East daily, in addition to sourcing fresh products from Africa, Australia, Europe, North America and South Asia.

NRTC is one of the leading importers and exporters of fresh fruits and vegetables in the region and has branches in Syria, Lebanon, Abu Dhabi; a repackaging factory in Lebanon; a fleet of more than 85 trucks that are approved by Dubai Municipality and calibrated to HACCP requirements. It also has many modern cold storages equipped with the latest cooling devices to keep the fruits and vegetables fresh under the best hygienic conditions for a longer period. The storage capacity is 7,000 tonnes, which confirms the company's support to food security in the UAE.

The company works with 55 exclusive trading partners around the world and our Export Department supplies the growing markets of Oman, Sudan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

Their vision is Fruits and vegetables mean responsibility, so invest in the best practices to keep them at their best while their mission is to keep the fruits and vegetables safe and make them available to everyone.



Ali Nasser receiving the certificate from Chef Uwe Micheel, President, Emirates Culinary Guild.



Stephen Jones, Managing Director and James Overall, Regional Director receiving the certificate from Chef Uwe Micheel, President, Emirates Culinary Guild.



**Focus International**  
We're looking for you

**FOCUS INTERNATIONAL**, a division of Focus Management Consultants, the UK's leading food and beverage recruitment specialists, is opening an office in Dubai next month. Its clients include some of the largest food/drink manufacturers, retailers and foodservice organisations in the world as well as many of the more specialist, niche players.

In the last decade, Focus International has been very successful in the Middle East, actively working with a number of businesses seeking to appoint the highest calibre candidates from around the world. It has identified and attracted talent to take up many junior, middle and senior management positions across a number of functions.

With the increase in demand for its services from food re-

lated companies across the Gulf, Focus International made the decision to commit fully to the region with an office in Dubai to directly service the growing client portfolio in the region. Co-owner Stephen Jones explains, "There appears to be a strong demand for our recruitment knowledge of the global food and drink industry and our market leading candidate network. By having an office here, and a regional director, James Overall, for the Middle East, we can be a major support to this expanding food and beverage sector. Since we announced our plans, we have been delighted by the response from progressive businesses in the region."

With over 22 years' experience in food recruitment, and seven food specialist divisions, the Focus 'group' has resourced a number of management teams for large PLC Groups, SME businesses, and Private Equity/VC backed organisations around the world, resulting in those companies benefiting from a return on investment above market performance.

With its Dubai office, Focus International is well placed to provide cost efficient recruitment solutions for ambitious food and beverage related businesses in the Middle East seeking exceptional talent.



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# Big Daddy's East eats West



**big  
daddy's**  
kitchen



From sandwiches to coq au vin, **Big Daddy** reminisces about a Return to the basics of food that is simple, accessible and appeals to the senses.

**R**estaurants from the West can expect to cash in on their global fame when opening in the Gulf, as has been the case for a few average restaurants from the US that have somehow become the place to eat, coming to a shopping mall near you! But will it be enough to ride on the big names or will they have to pick up their game to survive the hospitality jungle that Dubai has become?

In the past twelve months, Dubai's foodscape has looked more like the West's than ever before. From all-day breakfast joints and cafes with their own brand of coffee mixology to confectionary labels that flash freeze and ship their products straight to our shores, Western F&Bs have all come a-knockin' on Dubai's doors. It was all a matter of time, I suppose. Economies in North America and Europe are about as exciting as boiled tofu and the GCC is the perfect place to stir life back into their businesses.

For sure, these restaurants not only benefit from using the Emirate as a testing ground for further expansion across the Middle East, the city is also teeming with expatriates who grew up eating at these restaurants and will surely pay regular visits to this regional branch, if only to reminisce about being back home. Add to that, the rest of Dubai's upwardly mobile population who are also eager to sample the local versions of brands they've come to trust and enjoy whenever they travel abroad.

I just hope the restaurant owners and franchise holders don't write off their Arabian adventure as a success so early in the game. After all, the familiarity they enjoy among their customers here can easily backfire and become a disadvantage, especially if they start lagging and stop meeting the high standards and expectations set forth by the mother company back home!

Asking customers, for example, to wait for three hours to be seated shouldn't become a norm--as one 'factory' manager asked me matter-of-factly, when I attempted to eat at their restaurant a week after they opened. No, thanks. I'd just as soon spend my money elsewhere, at least a place where they ask me to come inside rather than "why don't you just wait your turn"...No Sir, you lost my business.

Another newly opened breakfast place that I HOPED would be as good as the ones back home failed me...I waited 55 minutes for my omelette only to be presented with a cold plate of yellow rubber. I have worked long enough in the restaurant business to figure out that the kitchen had messed up big time and the front of the house was trying to make up for it by keeping the coffee flowing. Nevertheless, dialogue with the manager was necessary! To my surprise he did not offer to discount anything or offer free stuff. I was pleased that he simply said, "I cannot ask you to pay for cold food, so I will make you have a new one", and so they did. I liked that since I did not intend to have free bad food, I would pay... no problem, so long as it's good. Needless to say I know now to avoid that restaurant during rush hour.

Ladies and gentlemen, a brand's reputation can only go so far. If a restaurant doesn't serve up the same standards as its predecessor then it might as well pack up its flash frozen leftovers and head home. Once word spreads of these inconsistencies, chances of recovering footfall are bleak. Even in a relatively small city like Dubai, the consumer's attention-span is short, the competition is dense, varied and exponentially growing. More than likely that same crowd they were serving during their opening month is now hungry for something new to sample and blog about. Others could have just as well gone back to their original hangouts, where they get the service and food they can count on.

Rolling out branches simultaneously could be one way to cash in on the momentum gained from the first branch opening. However, the real litmus test for surviving this region's fondness for trying new things comes long after the waiting list is gone and the buzz from food bloggers has died down. That's why there's just no alternative to consistent quality and service. Revamped menus, redecorated interior, special promotions from some online gimmick don't work here. The emirates offers a wide, I mean really wide range of food outlets. At the end of the day, you gotta offer good food at a reasonable price, with a maintained standard; the brand name can only take you so far.

Anyways, I will leave it there and leave the rest for next time.

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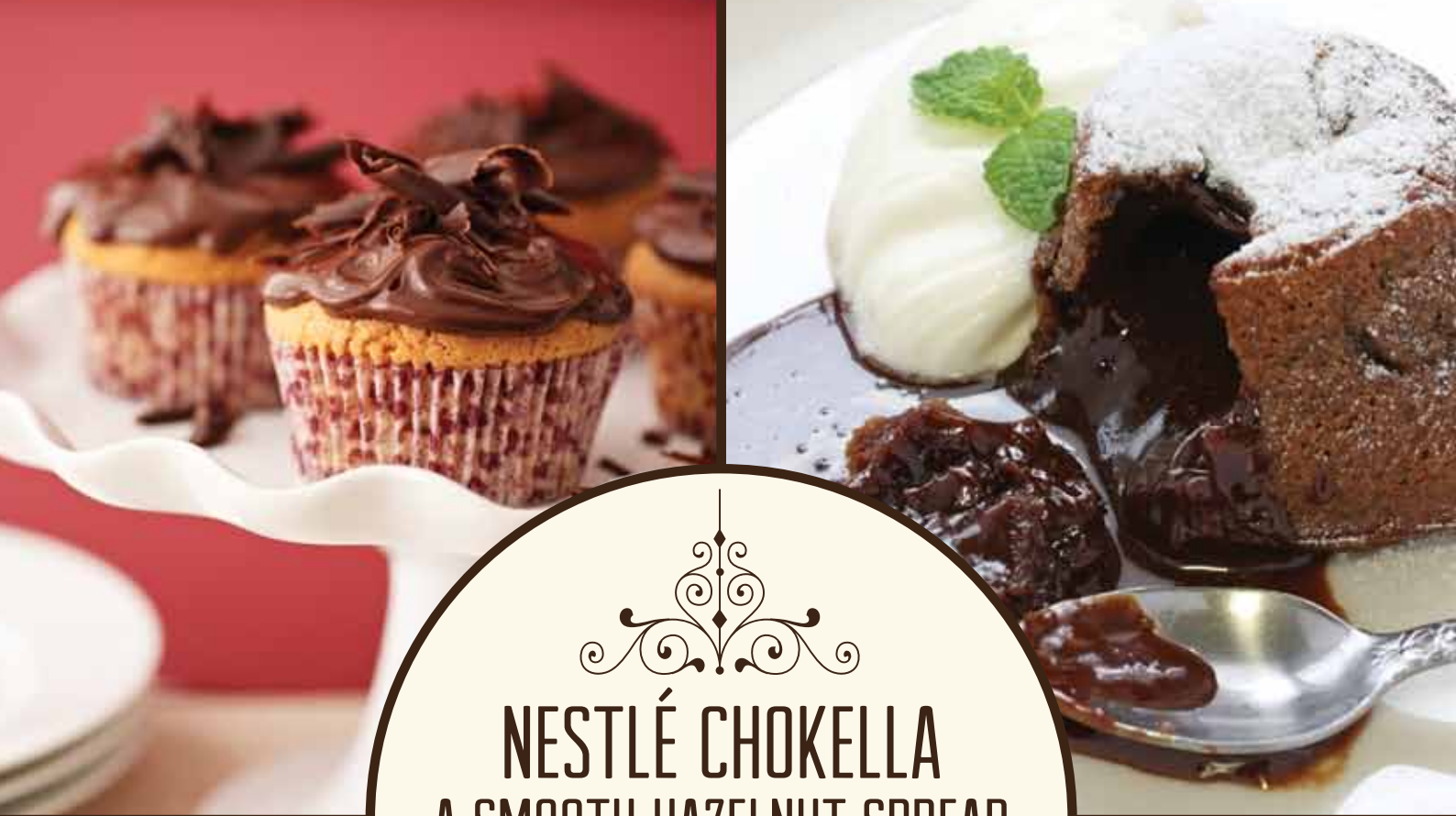
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