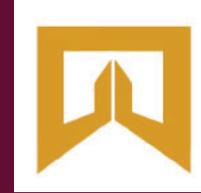




Volume 5
2015 edition



International Chefs Day 2015 Healthy kids ,Healthy future

Explore
contemporary indian
delectables at Firangi
Tadka



Culinary ventures
with Alexandre the
great



Plateful

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Editorial

2015 has been a rollercoaster ride for The department of Culinary Arts. We launched our post graduate program to help enhance skills for those who wish to get into the culinary arena and give them more exposure and experience. 2015 also saw the most revolutionary International Chefs Day focussing on the health of the future generation through the campaign Heathy kids, Healthy future with the help of Nestle. We hosted our first Dry ice competition with the assistance of Doctor Prabhakar Shashtri which brought a lot of edgy competition and also hosted an all exclusive seafood themed lunch for the faculty. The Department of Culinary Arts hosted a lot of simulations ,workshops and visits by various expertise in the culinary field like Chef Anthony Boyd and Chef Saransh Goila along with various prestigious instutions and entreprenrs .2015 was a year that involved a lot of risk and exhilaration for our college and we have been immensely successful in all we have done. The goal of this magazine is to give you insight into the events of 2015, bestow you with some culinary wisdom and to provide heaps of entertainment .So sit back ,relax and enjoy the show.

-The hungry bird team



Under the Chef's Hat

Bobby Chinn is a world-renowned Chef, television host of “World Cafe”, restaurateur and cookbook author. He started out in Wall Street when he was younger, but eventually followed his passion toward cooking and became the culinary expert that we know him to be today. We were very fortunate to get in touch with him and pick his brain!

The Hungry Bird: What is the best part about being a chef?

Bobby Chinn: To be able to work within the space silently focused on what you're doing with the option of working soundly and dreaming your life away. Though I do enjoy the creative process, I like better to work with all of my senses. It's the only profession where you use all of your senses; smell, touch, taste, hearing, and sight.

THB: How did you get inspired to cook?

BC: I used to love watching Julia Child as a child. Watching her assemble raw ingredients and then turning them into something edible was a valuable education in my early years. It was quite late that I learned how to cook professionally and that was simply because I did not know how to describe food when I was a waiter, so I volunteered all my free time and found the process very therapeutic. That was life-changing.



THB: What would you tell someone who is about to join the culinary industry?

BC: A simple principal. Simply pretend to do the job (any job) as if you will have to do it forever. If you start with that attitude, you will learn much quicker to accept the worse things that the job has to offer, but more importantly, if you are going to do something forever, then wouldn't you want to be good at it? It imparts a positive attitude which is a very most important variable that can't be quantified or measured. Your attitude will help get you jobs, keep you jobs (even when you under qualified or not the best). In all great companies there is a great working environment, there is an attitude to excel and be good. Remember, attitudes are contagious so you want to make sure you get the right one. Your attitude will be your passport for greater success. It is a principal that is often over looked, you can see it in our sports players, in our peers and hopefully you can feel it and see it in yourself.

The culinary arts is the only profession that uses all our senses. Touch, smell, tastes, visuals, and hearing. It's a profession that nurtures and feeds people, where one is connected to the seasons, the farmers and the fishermen. Our success is based on what we do but also the goodwill we that we create.

Whether you want to believe it or not, you will be the next generation of leaders and it is up to you to you to help improve our profession for the better. You must do your best no matter how hard it is to be ethical in all your business practices. You have a tremendous amount of responsibility and with it comes power, power to help those in your community, the poor and feed the more fortunate ones. We are all custodians of Mother Earth, but you can see before your very eyes the effects of climate change. Food once was our medicine, today it poisons many with the over-use of pesticides, sugars, genetically modified growth hormones, unsustainable agricultural practices, acidic oceans that are being over-fished.

Our success is not measured in stars, money, style of food or any other arbitrary symbol or measurement created by man. It is pointless to have all the money in the world with no one to share it with; Or to be recognized as a great chef if you do not feel it in your soul. If you do something that you love doing, you will never have to go to work again, and funnily enough your work would be one of the most noble

Contribution by Aathira Sethumadhavan

Quotable quotes

You have no choice as a professional chef: you have to repeat, repeat, repeat, repeat until it becomes part of yourself. I certainly don't cook the same way I did 40 years ago, but the technique remains. And that's what the student needs to learn: the technique. -*Jacques Pépin*



If an architect makes a mistake, he grows ivy to cover it. If a doctor makes a mistake, he covers it with soil. If a cook makes a mistake, he covers it with some sauce and say's it is a new recipe. -*Paul Bocuse*



Cookery is not chemistry. It is an art. It requires instinct and taste rather than exact measurements.” - *Marcel Boulestin*



“Tomatoes and oregano make it Italian; Wine and tarragon make it French; Soy sauce makes it Chinese; Garlic makes it good” - *Alice May Brock*



“A man who was fond of wine was offered some grapes at dessert after dinner. “Much obliged,” said he, pushing the plate aside; “I am not accustomed to take my wine in pills.” - *Brillat Savarin*

Excavating our way to deliciousness!

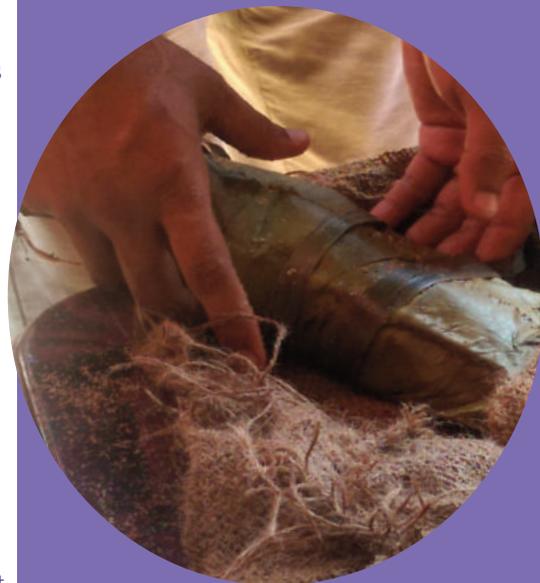
The region of Awadh splurges with not just rich ingredients, but also innovative and interesting cooking methods. They were the ones who started cooking meats through the method of Zamin soz. In this cooking method, meats are stuffed with spices, sealed in an earthen case, buried in the ground and cooked by placing cowdung cake on the fire above and is kept like that for 6-8 hours. This is a method closely associated with the royal kitchen but is commonly seen in many Muslim households even today. The earthen case would fit the meat so perfectly almost like a glove giving it all the moisture it needs.

Unlike other colleges where the stereotypical Indian food is demonstrated to students, our college goes into the deep roots of our rich food culture leaving no stone unturned. Not just in terms of the dishes cooked but the utensils used as well. Traditional utensils give the dish a different taste altogether and that is seen only in our college.

As a part of our Indian cuisine and culture subject, our professor Chef Manoj Belwal arranged for a field trip to a beach resort in Mangalore to organize a zamin doz. We took meat and vegetables and started early. When we reached and replenished ourselves we got to some major digging. We chose to cook fish and prawns as zamin doz is closely associated to fish and lamb. The fish was marinated a day before to make sure the flavours seep in entirely. We wrapped the fish and prawns in a banana leaf and started lighting the coal. We then placed the covered meat over that and kept a layer of branches and leaves to avoid direct heat. Since we had a time constraint, we cooked it for up to 4 hours. There was a certain type of anxiety and curiosity amongst everybody to see the result of the zamin doz. Once we removed the fish out of the banana leaf, there was a gripping smoky aroma that it had. Everybody was extremely excited to taste it as well. We realised why this cooking method grew so popular. The meat was soft, juicy and almost melted in our mouths. All in all, even though it was slightly strenuous, it was a great learning experience and definitely worth the effort.

-Written by Niketa Mohan

What's Cooking at BACA?



**From top to bottom
The dug up zamin doz
Marination of meats being done
The final product wrapped in a banana leaf**

What's Cooking at BACA?

The Young Chefs of India-A Madhava Kripa initiative

India as a country has always been quite rigid in their lifestyle, attitude and also occupation. Professions like doctor or an engineer were always given far more upliftment over professions like becoming a chef seem quite outside the box. But over the past couple of years, our country has become quite even handed on pursuing a career of your own creativity. The world on the whole has become a lot more food oriented and the culinary world has received a great amount of exposure through various tv shows that invigorate those who hold skills but have not been given enough opportunities. A revolution was brought into the Indian kitchen by Sanjeev Kapoor involving art of food presentation, recipes being documented and men being able to passionately do a creative job. We also experienced the reign of the 'Masterchef Series' which has introduced Indians to the art of food plating which seemed most unheard of.

'All around the world people have become a lot more conscious about the food they eat because of constant awareness by different spheres of media. This was seen through the effort made by a local school in Manipal called Madhava Kripa who organized a Healthy cooking Competition' for students of all age groups and invited us to judge them. The real challenge of this competition was that it was a 'Non fire contest. The time allotted was one hour. All the students came well equipped with various fruits and vegetables to demonstrate their abilities. Dishes such as layered fruit puddings ,ferrero rocher trifle, puffed rice canapés, a variety of sandwiches, chocolate mousse etc were made .One student also made a local version of a bruschetta by using whole wheat rusk topped with mayonnaise, basil and oregano. She was most unaware that she recreated an Italian specialty which was quite commendable.

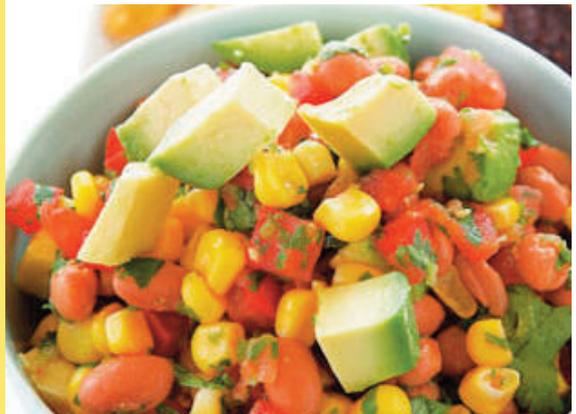
When we went around and spoke to a couple of students, they told us about how they looked up various recipes and plating techniques for the competition. Another aspect we noticed was how much they appreciate their local cuisine and came across several students who made an Indian salad called Kosambari which is the specialty of this part of India. It is basically made up of grated carrots, coconut, lentils, lemon and chilies.

All the students did a phenomenal job. More schools in the country should encourage these activities as it motivates children to become responsible healthy citizens of the future and also breaks the monotony of their regular schedule with a splash of fun and entertainment.

-Written by Drishya Prasad & Sania Naqvi



Atrifle layered with chocolate,sponge and strawberries



A tangy raw mango and corn salad with bellpeppers and tomatoes



Monaco biscuits piped with strawberry frosting

What's Cooking at BACA?



Chef Saransh conducting a cooking demo at the department of culinary arts



3rd course students on their field trip

What's Cooking at BACA?

Fun in the sun with Chef-
Saransh Goila

It is not every day that one comes across a personality so versatile, yet humble and motivating. Chef Saransh Goila, at such a young age has already published his first culinary book "India on my platter". He hosts two TV Food shows "Roti rasta aur India" and "Healthy Fridge" on Food Food channel. We were in class and were informed by our secretary that the following day Chef Saransh Goila would be visiting us for a live interaction and a cooking demonstration. Being an avid follower of the chef's work, it was an exciting opportunity for me, to interact with him and further enhance my interest in Indian Contemporary Cuisine.

The following day Chef Saransh arrived at 10:00 am and addressed us all in Chaitya. He introduced himself and proceeded to launch of his book- "India on my Platter", which talks about his culinary journey through India, presenting the first copies of the book to our Principal, Prof. P.Gopalakrishnan and Chef K.Thiru. He then showed us snippets of his TV Show "Roti Rasta aur India" simultaneously enriching us with the lessons and tips he'd learnt, pieces of advice for us like "go to the library more often and keep reading!!", his own hardships and trials and how he finally culminated years of hard work into the book he had launched earlier that day. In his own words, he has the "Gift of the Gab" which distinguishes him from most other chefs and this gift ensured that we had a very informative and interactive session with him where he spoke about the fusion of Indian Cuisine with other branches of gastronomy. He spoke to us about the latest trends happening around the world and how Indian Cuisine is modernizing and how people's palates have begun to evolve. He told us the secret of his Goila Butter Chicken and kept quizzing us about Indian food! There is so much to learn.

Later that Evening, Chef Saransh Goila conducted a cooking demonstration at the Department Of Culinary Arts. He started off with the new concepts of Indian Contemporary Cuisine and also showcased his Indian Fusion recipes like "Meen Moilee with Spaghetti" and "Beetroot Halwa on Shahi Tukda with Rabdi". Post the cooking demonstration, he spoke to us about his career and how he reached this position at such a young age. He graduated from IHM Aurangabad and later on worked with The Leela Hotels. He narrated the story of his journey and the things he had to do to establish himself as a renowned Celebrity Chef as he is and become a day to day face in the culinary scene in India. Even the demo was so interactive. He kept asking us for other ideas and innovations and there was a constant flow of dialogue with ideas bouncing off every wall of the room!

As the day ended, he spoke to each of us and advised us to follow our hearts and cook passionately. We also served him "Gajar ka Halwa Ice Cream" which he enjoyed. It was a memorable experience, giving us a valuable insight on how much passion one can show towards food. This interaction encouraged me to pursue my passion on Contemporary Indian Cuisine.

The next day, Chef Saransh, along with Chef Manoj and Chef Dayanand, took some of the third years to see the Malpe fish harbor because it is so important to know where your food comes from. I spoke to some of my seniors and they said it was a valuable experience and a first time for many! They also ate breakfast at the renowned Mittr Samaj in Udupi where the masala dosa is said to have been invented.

We will always be thankful to Chef Saransh Goila for sparing his valuable time to share all his knowledge with us and to our faculty without whom we wouldn't be well on our way to becoming the chefs of tomorrow!

-Written by Ashutosh Verma



What's Cooking at BACA?



International Chefs Day 2015

Over the years the humble chef has evolved from a cook to a culinary impresario. WGSHA and the Department of Culinary Arts used this opportunity to show to Manipal what this day means to them. In today's world, a chef is no longer the dictionary definition of a professional cook. He is a front line manager, entrepreneur, artist, engineer and a magician to many. The culinary world has progressed at such a rapid rate and it is extremely essential to be aware of the happenings in the industry today.

International Chefs Day is an event held on the 20th of October every year by the Indian Federation Associations of Culinary and World Association of Chefs Societies. World bread day is also celebrated on the 16th of October every year. Today at WGSHA and Department of Culinary Arts this affair was celebrated with great grandeur and pompousness. The students in their brightest Chef whites proudly paraded across various lanes of Manipal till the Manipal Edu building, announcing their presence in the student society. They took an oath to be committed, disciplined, impartial, environmentally aware and up to date with the industry's expectations. A few weeks prior, many activities were conducted in the name of this day. Events such as Indian cookery, Continental cookery, Culinary quizzes, Knife skill challenges and Bread making skills were all put to a test by various faculty and student coordinators. To get the creative juices flowing poster making and photography competitions were also held.

What's Cooking at BACA?

Knowledge is the greatest modern day weapon which can change the world. This being said, the Department of Culinary Arts took the initiative to visit various schools across Manipal to educate children on the importance of healthy eating and healthy living through various interactive sessions and activities. This was done in accordance to this year's theme of International Chefs Day being 'Healthy kids, Healthy future' On the 19th of October 2015, a very renowned culinary professional Chef Ramesh Babu Javvaji, the Senior Executive-Kitchens of Adarsh Realty and Hotels Pvt Limited honored us with his presence and educated us on various topics such as food education; the process of planting not only sustainable food but also sustainable ideas into the minds of the future generation. He spoke about the values every aspiring chef must possess to stand apart from the monotony that already exists in the industry and also spoke about the drive each person must have. He inspired students through Gandhi's philosophy of "Be the change that you wish to see in the world". He also spoke about food honesty where menu truth and label truth were two of the subtopics. "Communication is key" he says, and better quality of food enables healthier lifestyles for all.

The day ended on a celebratory note with the recognition of laurels won by various students of the institution. A chef is a magician that dispenses happiness and change in the world and the budding chefs of The Department of Culinary Arts wish to be the pioneers of change.

Written by Shreya Velidanda & Niketa Mohan



CONGRATULATIONS WINNERS



Continental cooking :
1st place Vijud Lincoln



2nd Venkatesh Lella



Indian cooking:

1st place Anjani Arvind Mandke



2nd place Ankur Namdev



3rd place Amrita Ravi and Soumya-jeet



Culinary quiz:

1st place Divya Harikrishnan and Aathira Sethumadhavan



2nd place Avanti Kumar and Vikram David James



3rd place Kavya Krishnamurthy and Lulu George



Bread making competition:

1st place Drishya Prasad



2nd place Anjira Mehta and Ananya Verma



3rd place Aathira Sethumadhavan, Danielle Lewis and Lulu George



CONGRATULATIONS WINNERS



Knife skills:
1st place Pankaj Negi



2nd place Rashmi Ravishankar and Amrita Ravi



3rd place Anurag Nambiar



Photography:
1st place Siddhi Laad



2nd place Tarun Anand



What's Cooking at BACA?

Theme lunches



A mother holds your hand and helps you through your baby steps and lets you go only when she thinks you're ready to take any challenge thrown towards you. The Department of Culinary Arts truly follows this and believes that this is the moment to shine and release your inner creativity. Our department hosts simulations, food festivals and the faculty lunches to polish our skills and to gain more exposure and attain professionalism. Amidst the very many theme faculty lunches hosted by the students of 3rd course BACA, these are the two most prominent ones hosted with utmost grandeur.

I'm gonna make you a fish you can't refuse

The first one was an exclusive seafood themed lunch. There was a plethora of items such as seafood and cheese poppers, lemon and rosemary sorbet, an assorted seafood platter, quiches and dessert included a trio newyork cheesecake and caramel popcorn in petit fours

What's Cooking at BACA?

Theme lunches



The best of both worlds!

The second prominent theme lunch was an Indian contemporary menu which was a perfect amalgamation of traditional Indian flavours with-westernised 'minimal plating

The menu was called 'Fिरangi Tadka

The dishes on this menu were almond coriander soup, a melange' of kadai vegetables served on a bed of beetroot pulao and smoked banana route ,galouti kebab served on a toasted cumin brioche with pumpkin and peanut sauce and tender coconut pudding



Roxanna's Table

The Department of Culinary Arts hosted its first simulation for the academic year on 19th September 2015. It was called "Roxanna's Table". The theme was based on the journey of Alexander the Great. After he traveled through the various countries of Middle East, North Africa and the Mediterranean region, he returned home to his wife Roxanna and cooked her a great meal, an amalgamation of everything he had tasted and learnt. Roxanna's Table was the present day interpretation of that meal. It consisted a 6 course meal – welcome drink, tapas, salad, two main courses, and of course dessert. The menu included exotic and innovative dishes like sous vide cooked chicken served with fufu and baked vegetables, tabbouleh with barbequed baby corn and grilled cherry tomatoes, and a trio of desserts- Muskmelon and Ginger Sorbet, Canoli with Pomegranate Cream Cheese and A Mango Fudge Panna Cotta. It was a complex menu, difficult to pull off, and yet the students and teachers outdid themselves. The students did a roaring marketing and completely sold out the 100 tickets a day prior to the simulation. On the day of the simulation, the two classrooms of the department were completely transformed into mesmerizing dining rooms, using a lot of fresh and artificial greenery and hand crafted artefacts. The set up and service were great, and the food, even better. Overall, the event was a huge success, with all the guests loving the food and promising to return for the next simulation, no matter when it would be scheduled.



trio of desserts- Muskmelon and Ginger Sorbet, Canoli with Pomegranate Cream Cheese and A Mango Fudge Panna Cotta



-Written by Aathira Sethumadhavan



Chicken Satay with bao and peanut sauce



Singapore sling



Vegetarian stuffed wonton soup



Raw Papaya Salad



Indian Affaire



An array of pickles at the Indian Affaire



M. Sweet Salad

Black Chickpea Sal





Dry Ice Competition

On 7th November, 2015, a challenge was given to us by Dr. Prabhakar Shastri to use dry ice in an innovative way. We had to somehow incorporate dry ice in the preparation of a dish. As soon as we heard about the competition, there were many creative ideas that our class came up with and there were eight teams that participated in the competition.

The Rules of the competition are as follows:

1. There had to be four members per team
2. We had to follow certain safety measures while handling the dry ice
3. A 3 hour time limit had to followed

The judges for this competition were: Chef Thiru, Chef Manoj, Dr. Prabhakar Shastri, Chef Vasanthan.

There were many innovative ideas that came up like Carbo Rasam, Chilly Cheese Toast ice Cream and Deconstructed Pesto Cheese Cake.

After researching how dry ice is used in making food, we came up with a bunch of ideas and we finally decided on making a deconstructed pesto cheesecake. We first froze basil leaves using the dry ice and then crumbled it, we then infused it into sweetened hot cream along with gelatin and cream cheese and sped up the process by whisking it over a bowl filled with dry ice. We also made a herb biscuit crumble, a sweet tomato coulis and almond praline to go along with it.

After serious discussion and analysis by the judges, the results were out and the winners were as follows:

1st place was procured by the Chilly Cheese Toast Ice Cream team and the Deconstructed Pesto Cheese Cake team.

2nd place was procured by the Carbo Rasam Team

3rd place was procured by the Cranberry Sorbet team.

It was a good experience for all the 1st year students who participated as they were given the opportunity to experiment and innovate. We also thank the judges and the department of Culinary Arts for giving us such a platform to present our ideas and thoughts and having us learn from it.

-Written by Madhavi Kumar



Bring out the scientist in you

Step 1

Prepare the Ice Cream Base

Since this recipe doesn't contain egg you don't need to worry about cooking it to the correct temperature or consistency (usually 82°C, or when it coats the back of a spoon).

Instead just weigh all your ingredients into a pan, then stir over a medium heat until the sugar dissolves.



Step 2

make sure you've got some thick, protective gloves, a sturdy pillowcase to discharge the CO2 into, and some protective eyewear – in my case a pair 3D glasses left over from when I went to see the thought-provoking historical drama 300: Rise of An Empire.

Since discharging the extinguisher is going to put a lot of CO2 into the air you're breathing we'd also recommend you do it outdoors, or at the very least by an open window or door.

Shake out the pillow case into a large plastic bowl. You should end up with a load of dry ice crumbs like this



Step 3:

Pour some of your ice cream base into a second big plastic mixing bowl, then start adding the dry ice (don't use your hands).

You should see the mixture start to set. Carry on adding more ice cream base and more dry ice. Eventually the mixture will chill until it's solid but malleable. At this stage it's a good idea to use a flat spatula to smooch it against the sides of the bowl to make sure there's no whole crumbs of dry ice left in the mix – those crumbs are still at minus 80 and you don't want them in your mouth.

Congratulations, you've just made Heston Blumenthal's Dry Ice Ice-Cream!



Inside the mind of a Chef

Creative juices

“Any one can cook”, a very well known dialogue from the movie Ratatouille. But according to me, only the fearless can become great cooks. Yes, it can be learned, but you have to have the innate ability to speak to your ingredients and that only happens naturally. While most friends of mine spent summers playing ball and trading cards and picking on people, I spent it in the kitchen helping mom prepare meals. There is a reason why most of them are fat, unemployed and some even convicts, and why I Anthony Lumiero am the Head Chef and owner of one of the finest restaurants in New York ‘Piccadilly’s’

You know the kind of feeling a father goes through when he walks his daughter down the aisle on the day of her wedding? That is exactly what I go through every time I take my food out, to the people. There are so many random thoughts that go through your head when you’re in the kitchen. Exactly the way it does when you take a leak. So you have your wife who provides the comfort, the care and all that you need. But Food for me is like a combination of a Mistress and a Wife. Wife for the comfort and Mistress for the adrenaline rush that passes through my body making every hair on my body stand erect every time I eat something that blows my mind. Food is a gift that unites the world.

You have a couple fighting? Keep a plate of Lobster ravioli; they’ll forget what they were even fighting about! That is the magic of good food. There is a lot that goes into cooking a great meal. It is merely not ‘Chopping and Popping’. That is kind of why Chefs tend to be temperamental, moody and high strung. It’s because they put in their heart, to prepare you a meal that’ll make you smile and that’s all that matters to them. Yes, he may be a highly paid chef, but there’s no greater joy than when he sees a person relish each bit of what he prepared and that he is the reason for that happiness. Not only that, but making sure that he gets every table’s order right. A hungry man is indeed an angry man and one bad review and you’ll be cleaning dishes for another high end restaurant. Indeed a job of risk but also a very exhilarating one.

So as I chopped my carrots, I heard the jingle of the Peruvian charm on the door and glanced through the hinge of the kitchen only to see that, the love of my life Penelope had arrived with her family. This was a very big day for me .My only chance at getting her family to like me and allow me to ask her hand for marriage. As she was French, her family lived in Bordeaux and were in the city only for two days. I had all the staff to take leave for that day, and only asked my Sous chef Andrene to help me with the meals. The specialty of our restaurant was that fact that we had an experienced harpist to soothe the atmosphere who began to strum when they took their seats. We made sure we chopped all the required vegetables and prepared the sauces needed for the dishes earlier that day. Penelope’s family consisted of her parents Madame and Monsieur Belgard, their younger daughter Amelia and Grandpa Monsieur Alexandre. Amelia was a late born and was quite young. She and Penelope had an age gap of about 12 years.



Creative juices

'The French Love Food'

ENTREE

PARMESAN RISOTTO WITH POACHED EGG

'Age is something that doesn't matter unless you are cheese'. My entree is a lot like Monsieur Alexandre. Just like how risotto is not a risotto without Parmesan cheese, the Belgard family is a mess without M.Alexandre. Even though he is Seventy years old, brittle like carnaroli rice, he has the 'aroma' of a twenty year old. He is the life of the family just like how it is the ambrosial smell of the stock that brings life to the risotto. He doesn't need constant attention but at the same time he shouldn't be abandoned. The surprise elements are what keep him alive like the poached eggs and the variety of grains that come to you as a completely unexpected thing in this dish.

Getting back to the recipe now.

The stock is made up of chicken wing, carrots, celery sticks chopped, a brown onion and some sea salt to taste. While preparing the risotto butter balance is very important. Knowing your proportions in general is a knack one must have. Last comes the espresso syrup made up of caster sugar, Culatello(cured meat), snow pea tendrils and garlic flowers. Also since risotto is known as a peasant's dish, plating should be done with grandeur.

I finished plating the dish and it went out to be served. This was an impression maker or breaker, All of them took their first bite, their second, their third and not a reaction on any of their faces .M.Alexandre did seem very engrossed which gave me some assurance.

I could see how Penelope was constantly observing their reactions to see whether they liked the food or not. Not once did I go out to talk to them. Prominent trait of unprofessionalism which is a definite faux pas.

MAINS

CANADIAN PEPPERCORN STEAK

French men are supposedly raw, edgy, protective, patriotic and impression striking people. They prefer fellow French men for company. One thing they dislike to a very high degree is we Italians. If you are called an 'Italian mutt' by a French person you better stay away from him or he may just knock the daylight out of you and cause some serious unrepairable damage. In the culinary world certain adjectives go with certain textures of food. Raw equals Steak. Exactly what I planned for Main course.

Steak is traditionally a man's dish. Because of its beefy content and alcohol. The most important part about cooking steak is frying it 'just right'. The sauces don't seep in that much so it is the outer skin that takes in all the flavour. The sauce includes butter, minced shallots, brandy, red wine, beef broth and cream. I personally don't prefer handling steak which is when Andrene comes to the rescue. She grew up with her father who always kept 'Barbeque Saturdays' and called their entire family for lunch and so she grew up watching him and it just naturally came to her. I was busy preparing the sauce and choosing the right wine to go with it. Since steak is extremely dry on the inside, a drink on the side is a must and choosing the right one is even more essential. It also depends on the tenderness and thickness of the steak. Cabernet Sauvignon is an excellent choice because it brings out a balance of flavours not making it too fruity.

Creative juices

The steak along with the wine went out for service. Impressing the father is a task and this had to be a done deal. Penelope never told me what her family preferred eating. She always told me to trust my gut and to believe in my observations.

After it reached the table smoothly, I rushed to my counter to prepare the second Mains.

MAINS (2)

STUFFED PEPPERS WITH PESTO RATATOUILLE AND COUS COUS

Penelope was never her mother's pet. She never agreed of her habits and her pretentious attitude. Her mother always believed in outwardly show even if the thing inside is rotten. A dish like ratatouille is a simple lay man's dish but it is the cous cous and the pesto and the garnishing that makes it look all fancy. This exactly describes how her mother was. Not very difficult to prepare, I made the cous cous, mixed the pesto with the rice, stuffed it neatly into the peppers, garnished it with lavender flowers and sent it to the table. Not once did she taste the dish. It just laid untouched. May be because she didn't want to ruin its outward beauty. The way a person reacts to the food kept in front of them tells us a lot about their traits.

Her mother was the easiest to convince.

DESSERT

RASPBERRY SOUFFLE

Stressed spelled backwards is desserts .Coincidence? I think not! Half of the problems in the world have been solved by the presence of sinful desserts.

This was needed to break the tension at the table. Everybody forgets their table manners when there's dessert on the table. Under the pressure at the table poor little Amelia was all alone .I decided to dedicate my dessert to her. She seemed extremely cheerful every time I spoke to her and every cheerful person is a berry lover.

I pre-heated the oven, blended the raspberries, beat the eggs, buttered the tray and kept the rhubarb ready. After I got the soufflés out of the oven, I kept them in the blast freezer for a quick chill got them out and with my spatula spread a thick fuschian colored glossy layer of blended raspberries on the soufflés giving it just the right amount of glaze.

I saw how Amelia's face lit up when she saw the waiter bring it to the table and dug into her dessert which lightened the mood at the table.

I was still nervous. The food that went out was fabulous. I have never cooked better in my whole life, not even the time George Clooney came to the restaurant. Penelope came over beaming. I was nervous and my idiosyncrasies with my hand continued. Her dad looked at me from the door as M.Alexandre limped his way out. He looked stern and then gave a huge smile. This looked really weird and nice with his pomaded moustache. Penelope was smiling like never before. I was going to get lucky tonight! The look on Penelope's face made me realize how blessed I am with a quality that brings everlasting smiles.

"A good cook is like a magician who dispenses happiness to the world"

I asked her for a formality how her family liked the food. I already knew the answer from Monsieur Belgard's smile. She held my hand. Now that the family is in, I need to prepare myself for the next round of servings. The proposal!

-Written by Niketa Mohan

Hogger Blogger

Through the Gullies of Vietnam

-Meenakshi Amonkar



Ho Chi Minh City, previously known as Saigon, is the largest city of re-unified Vietnam. Teeming with communists and tourists alike, the city is situated in the south of Vietnam and was the hub of democratic Vietnamese activity. It was into this city that I ventured, looking forward to the food and experiences that the Pearl of the Far East could provide me with.

Being highly populated and rich with natural resources the street food scene of Vietnam is on another level entirely. From loud, family run, night food stalls, to doddering old women with their traditional, conical, straw hats perched atop their bicycles as a loud speaker hawks their wares in a sing song voice, Vietnam has a variety you will not be able to see anywhere else. Being the tourists that we were, my travel guide and I signed up for a Vietnamese street food tour from a local agency, which meant that a tour guide would take us into the dark underbelly of Ho Chi Minh City to show us the actual street food of South Vietnam.

Our smiling tour guide with an unpronounceable name picked us up as the clock struck seven and off we went, zipping through the streets and weaving through the traffic in a way a van should not have been able to move. Soon we were dropped off on the kerb of a busy street, ready to sample some delicious food.

The tour began with what our guide described as Vietnamese pizza but can be more accurately described as a Vietnamese kaathi roll. A thin crisp flat bread made of a mixture of wheat flour and rice flour, filled with egg, vegetables, chicken, and Vietnamese secret sauces (most likely ketchup with a touch of noxious fumes from motorcycles and soy), the roll was hot and tantalising on the tongue, with tart flavours from the lime and the fattiness of the runny egg yolk.

The next stop we made was to a little shellfish stall, where we sampled freshwater snails from the Mekong Delta. Though I was hesitant it was not as slimy as I expected it to be, with the snails having been tossed with chilli and lemongrass, it made for a unique experience but not one I would like to repeat very soon. The same stall also offered a variety of assorted molluscs, oysters, crabs and balut, a fertilised duck egg that is considered a delicacy in Vietnam and the Philippines. A hop skip and jump away was a stall that called our names and beckoned us closer with their display and neon fairy lights. We sat down to my personal favourite, rice paper spring rolls, stuffed with sweet basil, prawns, pineapple and goodness, dipped into a fish and chilli dipping sauce.

My mouth still waters at the thought of these little nuggets of glory, so perfect, so see through... but I digress.

I would like to clarify that sitting down at these stalls involved squatting on the tiniest footstools as your knees bumped into the low table, an experience that cannot be replicated nor repeated too for the fear of getting stuck.

Around this time we were feeling quite satiated due to the massive portions each place provided us with, and also our greed, but we persevered on, ploughing our way through a crisp corn flour poppadum like taco shell that was stuffed to the brim with spring onions, sweet basil and mung bean sprouts.

When the belts had been loosened and groans of overeating had been sounded we decided that it was time for dessert! And dessert on the streets of Vietnam brings to mind only one word... Ché. Literally translated into sweet soup, Ché is a crazy combination of tapioca jellies and kidney beans in a sweetened coconut milk base. And let me tell you, that's when I understood why dessert goes to the heart... and also to the bloodstream because the amount of sugar in it had me riding a sugar rush for hours after. Pieces of crisp toasted coconut perfectly balanced out the tapioca jellies, and the kidney beans contributed an odd by pleasant mouth feel to the entire affair.

Stuffed to the brim we sauntered to the dark streets often amused to see flashes of Indian television soap operas dubbed into Vietnam on the screens of people's houses, and deafened by the wailing ensuing from one of the numerous karaoke bars that dotted the landscape like cows on the roads of India.

Full and tired, we trudged back to our van, making high and mighty promises to skip the next couple of meals (which no one stuck to because... spring rolls exist). The experience as a whole was incredible and I recommend it strongly for when you find yourself in Ho Chi Minh City next. I conclude with a small piece of advice: do not under any circumstances forego a spring roll place when you see one. It will almost always change your life for the better... this is the power of spring rolls in Vietnam. The gullies of Vietnam are dark and scary but the food always makes it better!

Read between the lines

Directed by John Wells and written by Steven Knight.

Starring : Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller, Lily James, Uma Thurman, Emma Thompson, Daniel Brühl

It has a dash of salt which gets lost in a bland background of cliches.

Burnt is a movie which follows a chef who had it all but lost it all as he regains his lost life. Full of exciting twists and turns. It's a funny story full of emotional bends which showcases Adam Jones (Bradely Cooper) love for food and how deals with the culinary evolution that has taken place during his exile. It showcases fabulous acting by Bradley Cooper without which the movie was nothing short of a lost cause. Pretty much like the lead character, Burnt is a movie which had it all and lost it.



Kitchen Confidential

Author: Anthony Bourdain.

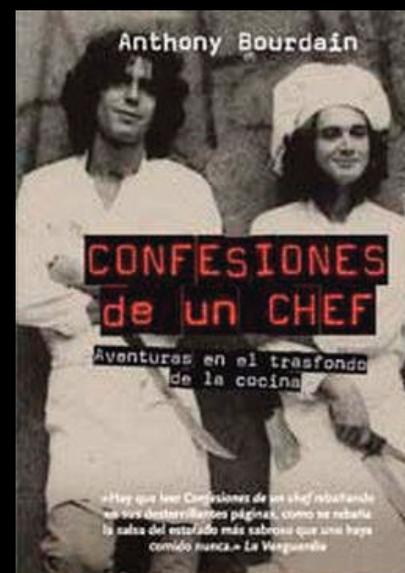
Genre: Non Fiction

It's a funny banquet of shockingly true tales from the culinary trade coupled with his experience with drug abuse and his years at the Culinary Institute Of America.

A rather tedious read for the average reader but for those with an obsession for food. It is nothing short of a caffeine fuelled drive.

For those of us with a palate for it, it's quite similar to a good restaurant. Once you've been there, you will want to take your friends there.

-Written by Nalin Goel



MUTTON CHOPS



Source-Google

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



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Edited and published by

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