

BEST RESTAURANT MANAGER PRESENTED WITH PRIZE FROM NHI

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ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

The winner of the OmanToday Best Restaurant Manager Award gets an extra prize valued at RO4,000 which could lead to a sparkling future in hospitality

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Dushyant Tittawella, who won the OmanToday Award for Best Restaurant Manager 2008, has been further rewarded with a scholarship to study at the National Hospitality Institute (NHI) free of charge.

The two-year course in restaurant and hotel management usually costs RO4,000 and comes in association with Investors In People in the UK and the American Hotel & Lodging Association, which means completion of the 12 modules involved will result in a qualification that is internationally recognised.

"This is a really good thing," said Dushyant, who is restaurant manager of Tuscany at the Grand Hyatt. "I wanted to have it before, but I couldn't afford it. I had it in my mind that I wanted to do the course for a

long time, so I'm really happy that I've got it. It makes me feel very good."

Robert MacLean, principal at NHI, said, "It's great to be able to award people with genuine skills. This is an opportunity to put our money where our mouth is and invest and promote companies and people who have done well.

"This could well become life-changing for Dushyant. It's an opportunity for him to start climbing the ladder and it could take him right to the top."

Dushyant sees himself continuing in the hospitality trade, rising beyond the level of restaurant manager. "I like to work in hotels. It's more of a hobby for me than a career. I really enjoy coming to work. I prefer working to going on holiday.

"I think I would like to be a general manager for one of the hotels one day. That's my goal. Not soon, but

with time and experience, that's where I want to be."

For now, though, he said that he is happy to continue working at the Grand Hyatt. "They're good people here, and I like it very much. I would not have got any of this without them."

Thirty-three-year-old Dushyant, from Kandy in Sri Lanka, started in the hotel business in 1993 when he attended the Sri Lankan Hotel School on an 18-month, full-time course. From there, he went to a small four-star establishment called Hotel Sapphire. In 1996, he graduated to five-stardom by working for the Hilton in Colombo before moving, in 1998, to the Grand Hyatt in Muscat. For the last five years he has been in the position of restaurant manager.

"We have been involved with the OmanToday Restaurant Awards since they started," added Robert.



"We were consulted during the very first awards and, when they introduced the judging system, I was one of the first judges.

"We're great supporters of the awards and want to be a part of it because it is all about human resources development and the

development of the hospitality industry in Oman."

Dushyant will be studying for five hours in the mornings, twice a week, at the NHI, which is fully operational as a restaurant and B&B. He will also be continuing his award-winning work at Tuscany.