



Masterclass

A Le Cordon Bleu London chef gives National Hospitality Institute students an expert lesson

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When Chef Nicholas Patterson from Le Cordon Bleu, London, flew into Muscat to deliver an expert lesson to students of National Hospitality Institute (NHI), he brought along not just a complex recipe and an array of culinary techniques, but also his own simple conviction that there's no substitute for hard work.

The Muscat halt was part of his whistle-stop tour of the Middle East. On this trip, Chef Patterson is gaining deep insights about the culinary traditions as well as cul-

tural nuances of this part of the world. He said he also took note that bigger portions were the key differentiator, if any.

"My career history involved five-star luxury hotels, prior to the Le Cordon Bleu. I started off as a commis chef and slowly worked my way up the kitchen hierarchy," Chef Patterson told *TheWeek* on the sidelines of his masterclass at NHI. However, despite shining in various roles in esteemed hotels, the decision to turn to training budding chefs seemed to be a natural pro-

gression for him as he always loved doing that, he added.

Culinary skills run in his family - the chef's mother was a good home cook and his brother was a baker. Chef Nicholas revealed that the idea of being a chef slowly took over him after watching cookery shows on television and trying his hand in the kitchen on weekends.

What kept him bound to the profession was the ambience of the bustling kitchens, the camaraderie, the fun and jokes that culinary teams shared, all the while maintaining the seriousness and discipline of the job.

At the masterclass for NHI students, Chef Patterson demon-

strated his dexterity in preparing an apple tart tatin, which involves a whole range of techniques in making a linear sable, compressed apple millefeuille, caramel sauce, apple confit, blown sugar and cinnamon apple foam before the final assembly of a beautiful dessert.

"The tart tatin is a refined, traditional dish that's popular in France. It looks like an upside down tart and involves various techniques as

also a way of saying: It's just the same cake but we've looked at it differently."

He said that the apple tart tatin is usually introduced at a superior level at the culinary school to students who have already acquired a certain level of expertise. "The tart tatin was chosen to expose students at NHI to new techniques and many of them showed keen interest in the recipe from the preparatory stage itself," he said.

Chef Patterson has many feathers in his cap, including the UK Pastry Chef of the Year award and great memories of having cooked for the likes of the Queen of England and Nelson Mandela. However, he truly treasures every visit to different parts of the world wherein he gets to gain new culinary insights and further strengthen his own cooking curve.

Jonathan Moses, recruitment manager of Le Cordon Bleu London, who had accompanied Chef Nicholas, informed that Chef Patterson had been on the judging panel of a culinary contest held at the Horvca Exhibition in Kuwait, before coming to Muscat.

The invitation to visit NHI was in line with Le Cordon Bleu's initiatives to share the expertise of its chefs as well as information on its various culinary courses.

"The aim of this visit was to present our programmes through Chef Patterson's demonstration



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CHEF NICHOLAS PATTERSON

making different aspects of the dish like the caramel, the pastry and cooking the apple in an oven, besides new techniques like blown sugar and apple foam put inside the apple," he explained, adding, "It's

and we are looking forward to establishing good working relationships with schools such as NHI and potentially look at more collaborations in future," he said, hinting about more such visits.