

The Week : 29 June, 2011



Resort and Spa, has been rewarded for all her hard work by winning the Chef of the Year award.

Junior sous chef Wafaa al Hadrami, the 2011 Chef of the Year, has had a keen interest in cooking ever since she was a small child when she would watch her mother cook and learn about the different techniques and recipes she used. When she got older, Wafaa used cookery TV shows and cookbooks to further her knowledge before deciding to embark on a culinary career and enrolled in a course at the National Hospitality Institute. Before joining Shangri-La in 2005, Wafaa spent one year training at the Al Bustan Palace InterContinental Hotel.

This is the first time that the hotel has won the award and Wafaa was up against over 130 chefs from around the world. "I was very happy when I found I had won and felt that by winning this I was helping make other Omanis proud. When my boss called me, I didn't believe that I had won and it was a big surprise for me." She also thanked everyone at the hotel for encouraging her since joining six years ago.

After being nominated by her

available for customers to try during the themed Oman Night at the hotel's Al Tanoor restaurant where Wafaa is based. While for some chefs the idea of cooking all day then going home to make dinner would sound like a nightmare, Wafaa enjoys cooking for her husband and two children, but normally saves the fancier dishes for her day off.

"At home, I get a headache from my eldest son because he wants to come in and see what I am doing, but he is too small so I cannot give him anything to do yet. I think he will be a good chef one day though."

However, Wafaa is not the only chef in her family as two of her brothers have also trained in the profession. She is yet to tell her family that she won the award, but was looking forward to sharing the good news.

When it comes to her favourite cuisine, Wafaa said she most enjoys making dishes that originate from Europe, but added she does have knowledge of Indian and Iranian cuisines plus her own national dishes. She is very passionate about how she presents dishes, and said, "I want people when they look at our dishes to not just be impressed with the taste but also with the presentation."

When the chef makes food, it is like they are drawing something

- Wafaa al Hadrami

CULINARY REWARDS

Wafaa al Hadrami, junior sous chef at Shangri-La's Barr al Jissah Resort and Spa, has been named 2011 Chef of the Year

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Once in a while when out for dinner, expectations and isn't just a feast for the taste buds but on the eyes as

well. Yet how often will the chef who has cooked this dish get the recognition they deserve? Thanks to an annual programme held by Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, one of the chefs from Shangri-La's Barr al Jissah

submit a recipe for the competition and she chose to give one for kingfish soup. On her choice, she said, "I chose it because kingfish is a famous ingredient used in many traditional dishes, but a lot of people don't use it as much now and instead favour things such as beef. I wanted to make something different and when I started working on the dish, I tried lots of different variations before coming up with the final recipe."

The award-winning recipe is

when the chef makes food, it is like they are drawing something because people want to see something and not just taste it. This is really important for me."

