



Bombay Lures Top International Chefs



Reflecting the cultural *mélange* that is Bombay, comes a salacious spread with flavours from all across the globe, served by top brass in the international culinary dome. Chefs, Sergio Millet Corbera, John Paul Carmona, Stefan Czapalay, Vivek Singh, Alain Coumont, Kobi Mizrahi and Adam D'Sylva displayed gastronomic genius when they touched upon our shores... which *UpperCrust* was delighted to experience. Take a look at what they left behind, as we present to you the 'seven-course' International Chef Special

Text: **Lyle Michael** Photographs: **Farzana Contractor, Prashant Jadhav**



Chef John Paul Carmona

Private Chef,
former Chef de Cuisine at *Manresa*
USA

To be a mentor at the young age of 29 is quite a feat. Yet Chef John Paul Carmona is as unassuming as can be, ably guiding his once understudy, Alex Sanchez- Executive Chef of *The Table*, who considers it an honour above all else. For Chef JP (as he is lovingly known), cooking was a childhood hobby, growing up on a farm in El Salvador and assisting his grandmother in preparing simple meals and warm bakes: tastes and smells that he misses tremendously today.

Being a namesake of a most beloved pope, one would only imagine big things for Chef JP. And big barely covers it all, for the man who has worked at some of the world's most renowned establishments earning him the accolade of 2010 San Francisco Bay Area Rising Star. A very wise decision indeed it was, for a young, ambitious JP to move to America and graduate from *Johnson & Wales University* in Providence, Rhode Island, following

which he was selected to join the school's team at the *IKA* or *Culinary Olympics* in Germany. His talent would only take him further to gain privilege to work at top establishments such as *Clio* in Boston, under Chef Ken Oringer, the exemplary 3 Michelin-star *Alinea* in Chicago with Chef Grant Achatz, and the 2 Michelin-star *Mugaritz* in Spain – the World's third best restaurant – with Chef Andoni Luis Aduriz. His heavy profile earned him entry into the 2 Michelin-star *Manresa* in California (as a cook, where all have to begin), and later, acquired the coveted position of Chef de Cuisine. A fun experience, JP notes, is his stint with stardom, while assisting *Manresa's*, Chef David Kinch on *Iron Chef America*, and emerging victorious too! Today, working as a private chef in California, JP comments, "I believe a ranking is not what it's all about, as at the end of the day, you have to love what you do, treat your staff right and maintain an ethical standard of food sourcing, preparation and service."

Visiting Bombay, Chef JP was at home (taking very well to the *vada pav*), dishing out exquisite fare to add to *The Table's* award-winning array courtesy Chef Alex, quite the young achiever himself (read, Best Chef of India accolade). JP obviously has a part in this, as Alex recalls, "Working with him was great, but I remember he got pissed with me when I added water to leeks, when he specifically told me to stir-fry them in butter." And that's JP for you, committed to every ingredient!

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Saffron Rice Cakes with Herb Soubise

For saffron rice cakes:

- 150 g Arborio rice
- 60 g onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1/4 tsp saffron threads
- 150 ml white wine
- 500 ml vegetable stock
- 50 g butter
- 50 g *Parmesan* cheese, grated
- 1 tbsp oil
- salt to taste
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 100 g flour
- 100 g fine breadcrumbs
- 1 ltr oil, for frying
- 1 portion herb *soubise*

On medium heat, add 1 tbsp oil to a small pot and gently sweat the onion and garlic. Once onion is translucent add saffron and infuse oil with it. Add rice, lightly toss the rice in the oil and deglaze with white wine.

As the rice cooks, it is very important to stir the rice constantly to release the starch. Once the wine has evaporated, add the stock in increments. When

the rice is perfectly cooked, *al dente*, add butter and cheese. At this point, stirring should be very gentle to avoid breaking the rice. Taste and season with salt to your liking. Transfer finished *risotto* to a proper container lined with parchment paper. Use another piece of paper to cover the top to avoid a skin from forming.

Place container in the refrigerator and cool throughout. Shape into golf-size balls and bread in flour, egg white, breadcrumbs respectively. Fry at 180° C. Season with a little salt and drain on a paper towel.

Serve with herb *soubise*.

For herb *soubise*:

- 600 g onion
- 200 g butter
- 50 ml water
- 5 g oregano, leaves only
- 10 g chives

Cook onions in butter until soft. Blend with water and herbs. Cool over ice immediately.

Warm Quail and Fregola Salad with Young Onion-Brown Butter Vinaigrette

For quail salad:

- 4 quails (boneless)
- salt to taste
- 2 cups *fregola* pasta, cooked and cooled
- 2 Roma tomatoes, peeled and seeded, cut into strips
- 6 pieces of asparagus, blanched, trimmed, cut into thirds
- 2/3 cup young onion-brown butter vinaigrette

Heat a large sauté pan with a thin film of oil on medium heat, season the quail with salt, and cook for 2 minutes on both sides until golden brown. Transfer the quail to a cutting board and cut each piece into four pieces. The meat should be light pink (about medium doneness). In a mixing bowl, toss the quail with the remaining ingredients and serve warm.

For young onion-brown butter vinaigrette:

- 500 g butter
- 400 g onion, sliced
- 40 g garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup Balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 cup soy sauce

Brown butter and pour over onion and garlic. Keep the butter solids. Add soy and Balsamic.



Ratatouille Tartare with Chickpea Fritters

For tartare:

- 1/2 kg zucchini, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 kg tomatoes, whole
- 1 kg white onions, peeled and halved
- 1/2 kg red peppers, roasted, peeled and de-seeded
- 250 g eggplant (1" pieces)
- 125 g garlic, peeled

Toss zucchini, onions and eggplant with a little oil and roast at 190° C until light brown. Separately, do the same with tomatoes and peel skin off. Combine all vegetables in a deep pan and cover tightly with silver foil. Bake at 150° C for three hours and let them cool down without opening foil.

Strain the vegetables overnight in a colander lined with muslin cloth. Once the vegetables have strained, chop them coarsely.

For fritters:

- 300 g chickpeas (dry)
- 800 ml + 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, microplaned
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp chilli paste
- zest of 1 lime
- salt to taste

Combine dry chickpeas with 800 ml water and cook until they are mostly done, with a slight crunch. Combine the cooked chickpeas with the remaining ingredients in a food processor and blend until it becomes a dark meal. Roll into small balls and fry in 180° C oil.

To finish:

Place a mound of *Ratatouille Tartare* on a plate, garnish with chickpea fritters, torn basil leaves and broken pieces of *lavash* crackers.