



PERSPECTIVES

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF TASTE AND ESTHETICS



Editorial

Dear friends of RAK Porcelain,
Dear partners,

Perspectives N°4, which you are currently holding in your hands, is our way of taking you around the world of food, beverage, design, and more. We recently experienced the enthusiasm and passion brought by chefs from around the world when they came to Erfurt, Germany for the IKA/Culinary Olympics. On our website and our social media channels you will discover details of this highly competitive and exciting global culinary event.

International trade shows are in their starting blocks as we look forward to Equip Hotel in Paris, Sirha in Lyon, Horecava in Amsterdam and, last but not least, Ambiente in Frankfurt. In this edition of Perspectives, you will meet Thomas Kastl, the Director Ambiente Dining.

Also in this edition, two incredibly talented and well-known chefs will let us know about their background and their passion: Gabriele Kurz from Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts and Klaus Erfort Chef and Owner of the 3-Michelin-starred GästeHaus in Saarbrücken, Germany.

With all the attention to healthier menus, this edition of Perspectives will also offer a close look to two rather diverse subjects: Foodpairing and traditional veggies. We think you'll find both articles timely and interesting.

The art of hospitality offered by two non-standard places, The Sun City Palace in South Africa and the OFF Seine in Paris, reminds us, if needed, the famous patchwork gathering the friends and the customers of RAK Porcelain around the world. You will enjoy a look behind the scenes at both of these outstanding hotels.



In this edition, we are also proud to announce the first contribution from Šárka Babická, a young blogger specialized in travel, food and lifestyle blogs. We love her thoughts and impressions of a trip to the Isle of Wight and believe you will, as well.

And, as an added bonus, if you go there and transit via London or Gatwick with the with the air company Virgin Atlantic Airlines, you will definitely want to visit their Virgin Clubhouses. Their culinary leader, Mark Murphy, who is in charge of Food & Beverage met with our editorial team and gave us a first-hand look at how they satisfy their guests at such a high level.

And finally, after a close look at the current product development evolution with Gemma Bernal and Mikaela Dörfel, you will meet Gene Williamson, the President of RAK Porcelain USA, our youngest affiliate that recently opened its showroom at 41 Madison Avenue in New York.

We hope that you will enjoy this truly outstanding issue of Perspectives N°4!

Yours sincerely,
Abdallah Massaad
CEO of RAK Porcelain

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HOTELS AROUND THE WORLD

SOUTH AFRICAN FLAVOURS

Sun City Palace

The Sun International Group has been operating in the world of tourism, entertainment and gaming across the African continent for nearly 50 years. Today it works in 18 prestigious hotel complexes worldwide. Each of its establishments is unique in its architecture, the experience offered to guests, its location or activities. Luxury, adventure, the quality of the offer and the dedication of the staff form the cornerstone of this empire, of which Sun City is one of the iconic properties.



The elephant, symbol of Africa

A jewel in the heart of the bush

Opened in 1979, this 25-hectare complex is located in the north-western province of the Rainbow Nation near Rutenberg, on the edge of Pilanesberg National Park. Popular holiday resort with the inhabitants of Johannesburg and Pretoria, Sun City is often considered a family version of Las Vegas. In addition to luxury hotels, there are casinos, a fitness centre, different stages for shows. Guests can enjoy various water sports, play golf on a course designed by the renowned South African golfer Gary Player or visit animal farms, all while enjoying a tropical garden with over a million plant species.



The most symbolic hotel in Sun City is undoubtedly the Palace of the Lost City, designed by renowned design firm WATG (Wimberly Allison Tong & Goo), which specialises in the hospitality, leisure and entertainment industry. The architecture of this five-star luxury centre geared towards family tourism is a representation of the royal residence of an imaginary lost African tribe, inspired by the novels The Jungle Book and King Salomon's Mines. The Palace has several dining areas, including the Crystal Court, which serves traditional South African dishes, and the intimate and elegant setting of La Plume, which offers African-French cuisine and a champagne bar.

A committed chef

As commander of the kitchen, chef Nicholas Froneman. After cutting his teeth at Southern Sun Hotels, he advanced at various institutions in South Africa before heading to Singapore, where he gained extensive event experience. Back at Sun International in 2002, he worked alongside chef Conrad Gallagher then became head of the Makadi Palace Hotel in Egypt, then of Seacliff in Tanzania, before returning to South Africa, to the Elangeni in Durban.

Nicholas Froneman is very proud of his international experience: “Whenever I work abroad, I discover the elements of the local cuisine, and I learn a different technique. In each country, I observe the changes that have occurred since my last visit and I assimilate this innovation into my work. Consequently, my own cuisine is constantly evolving, through my travels, through the products that I discover and through the chefs I meet.”

Nicholas Froneman
Executive Chef - The Palace of the Lost City



The Bar Grill Room



“The product should shine, it is the star, presentation also plays a major role.”



Another source of pride for the chef: his appointment in 2011 to the Directors Committee of the South African Chefs Association. This non-profit organisation has had the mission of maintaining the excellence of the cuisine in the country for 40 years. “This appointment was another way for me to serve my profession. The association is a fantastic springboard for young cooks since it offers specific training and supports them in the development of their careers. This is very important to me, to be able to help them realise their potential and to share with them our mutual passion for gastronomy. Participation in charity events is also key: the success of a professional career is not enough; you have to be good at something else. For me, this means an investment with organisations related to the world of food. With the chefs of Sun International, we try to produce lasting changes in the lives of our communities.”

Extracting the original flavour of the product

Modern, multi-ethnic and inventive, Nicholas Frone-man's focuses on the excellence of the ingredients. “I use as many regional and seasonal products as I can, and always from sustainable fisheries when it comes to seafood. My cuisine is simple. I avoid complex preparations and cooking times, and I strive to preserve the taste of the original product, not to disguise it. The product should shine; it is the star. Presentation also plays a major role: visuals are the key to the dining experience. This is also why I have chosen to use RAK Porcelain. Their colours, shapes and design make a concrete addition to the overall experience of our guests. Another reason behind my choice is that this dishware is unique in the area. No one else is using it.”

“South African cuisine is a reflection of the country: mixed and complex. We have various culinary traditions: our local cuisine, which itself originated from different tribes, is marked by influences from Indonesia, Germany, France, the Middle East, and even India. These trends are reflected in my dishes. My favourite at the moment is pasta with a satay sauce. This dish looks quite ordinary, but it is actually full of surprises, as in it you can find, among other things, duck confit and a sauce that has been transformed into powder.” Over the seasons, other dishes include an ostrich filet with sweet potato pie, drizzled with sauce made from Late Harvest wine and pear juice, or 450 grams of farm-raised beef, served with sautéed spinach, crushed corn and chakalaka, a spicy vegetable from South Africa.



When asked about what the future holds, the chef explains: Catering is exciting in the luxury hotel business, especially because of the high volume of business. But I know that I will open my own restaurant at some point. I imagine that in the next five years I will be running a place here in South Africa, or maybe even abroad. Everything is possible!”

www.suninternational.com





BIRTH OF A NEW COLLECTION

CHEF'S FUSION

The art of merging tradition and modernity



Interview

GEMMA BERNAL

“Nowadays we often try to adapt tools, customs, forms and materials that were used in the past to our modern reality”

The talented Gemma Bernal has already created several lines with RAK Porcelain, including the Marea and Giro collections. The most recent result of their collaboration: Chef's Fusion, an authentic and exciting line. Let's talk to her about her latest collection.

Assertive and successful, the Chef's Fusion collection has a strong personality. What was the inspiration behind it?

Nowadays, we often try to adapt tools, customs, forms and materials that were used in the past to our modern reality, because they had a certain charm. More specifically, in the kitchen, cast-iron, earthenware and stoneware cookware are part of a centuries old tradition. Most of them are still in use all over the world and many chefs even claim that it is their cookware that improves the taste of certain food preparations, especially for stews and other simmered dishes. However, they have some flaws: they are very fragile and are subject to cracking, and they're porous, heavy and not terribly aesthetic.



“...find traditional products in gastronomy using the advantageous characteristics of today's technology.”

Gemma Bernal, designer



Why getting the old in the style of the day?

Materials have advanced considerably with regard to their performance and their finishes: today there are porcelains that are perfect for cooking, and which do not react with food, are resistant to scratches, don't stain, don't retain odours. Because RAK Porcelain has managed to achieve the highest quality both in the material used and in the external finishes and colours, it then became possible to merge the old and new, to find traditional products in gastronomy but using the advantageous characteristics of today's technology.

Chef's Fusion



How do you start your creative work?

I started out thinking about all the different uses and dimensions of receptacles that might be useful in a restaurant, for both cooking and serving at the table. Keep in mind that the preparations are not necessarily cooked in the container: sometimes it is only used for reheating or browning in the oven. I then observed that in the culinary tradition, many countries used cast iron cookware, which is very popular, and covered with a textured paint. RAK Porcelain then successfully developed a special coating that is non-porous and grainy to the touch. It feels like cast iron on surfaces without the disadvantage of the heaviness of cast iron, while meeting the requirements of adhesion and heat resistance. There are four colours available: black, bright red, white and grey. These qualities, together with the appropriate functions and forms, guarantee optimal use.





GEMMA BERNAL

Gemma Bernal, a native of Barcelona and award-winning multidisciplinary industrial designer, has been creating street furniture, lighting, toys, appliances and dinnerware for 40 years. Sought after to address conferences and participate in exhibitions around the world, she is also an internationally recognised academic. She teaches at various higher education institutions in Argentina, Chile, Peru, Mexico and India, while transmitting her passion to future generations of designers at the University of Barcelona.

“The concept here is 'oven to table'”

How did you come up with the idea of the handles?

I thought there should be an underlying theme that imparts unity and meaning to the collection, something that could be visualised and remembered, and that, if possible, would be functional. In pursuing this idea, I realised that the handles would be necessary for these receptacles. We then tested and worked this concept until we got the desired results.

The functional aspect of this collection is very important. What are its main features?

We wanted to design suitable recipients, in terms of volume, form and function, for different contents and uses. So for all our elements, the inside surfaces are flat and smooth to ensure stability and uniform contact with the surfaces. The handles, the underlying theme of the collection, are of a single piece, meaning, they

are manufactured in one piece. Extremely resistant, they provide an excellent grip and are designed for an easy manipulation.

All of the items in the Chef's Fusion collection can be used in ovens, microwaves as well as on ceramic and other hotplates. However, they shouldn't be used over a direct flame and the series is not suitable for induction cooking.

How do you envision chefs using your collection?

The round tureens are ideal for liquid preparations, such as onion soup or bouillabaisse, buffet style or single serving for table service. Any casserole is suitable for the casserole dishes, miniature or large, while the robust and ergonomic ramekins, with a high version

and another low version, are suitable for soufflés or sauces. The saucepans, each with a shock-resistant handle, come in three different diameters for theatrical and original effects for dishes ranging from scrambled eggs to mussels. Rectangular and oval terrine dishes, designed for baking and temperature maintenance on a buffet, are used for a wide variety of preparations.

What cuisine vision is conveyed by Chef's Fusion Collection?

The concept here is an 'oven to table' one, with items in hotel porcelain that are appropriate for both the kitchen and the dining room. The mood conveyed is that of a personal and unique cuisine: we cook for you, here and now, with the intention of bringing a stylish grace to your table.

www.gemmabernal.com





CULINARY TRENDS

THE PERFECT PAIR

As a creative art, cooking is not automatically associated with science.

Yet chemistry can be a real source of culinary inspiration! A concept that arouses curiosity has slipped in among the new trends, such as fusion cuisine, comfort food or world food: Foodpairing®. Its basic premise is that foods work well together when they share a number of chemical compounds, which can lead to entirely improbable associations. Have we reached the limits of creative cuisine or, on the contrary, are we peering into its future?



Olives



Raspberries



Chocolate



Red beets

Zacapa XO



Szechuan pepper



In the wake of molecular cuisine

Innovative and attractive, Foodpairing brings rigorous and scientific methodology to the kitchen, taking the imagination to an infinite world of possible food combinations. To understand it, we must first take a look at the dining experience as a whole: food is assessed mainly through taste, touch and smell, less so through sight and hearing. We easily recognise the five basic tastes, which are sour, bitter, sweet, salty and umami.

Yet only 20% of what we identify as the flavour of a food is derived from the tongue, while 80 percent actually comes from our sense of smell! A human being is capable of differentiating approximately 10,000 odours, which are made up of aromas consisting of volatile molecules, which we perceive through both the nose and the mouth. For example, many people say they love the smell of coffee, but not its taste. This is because 1,000 aromas are released from a cup of coffee, but if we isolate its flavour, the only thing that remains is the bitterness of the liquid.

A few scientific landmarks

The Foodpairing method is based on flavour profiles. Molecular analysis of food is carried out using physical and chemical techniques, gas chromatography and mass spectrometry, which can be placed on a tree of compatible flavours, from the most likely to the most hazardous. Concretely, the product is made soluble and injected into a tube using a gas to separate molecules based on their “weight”. The molecules responsible for our perception of flavour are called “rapid”. An identity card is then drawn up on the basis of the most relevant molecules. The process is repeated for each solid or liquid food, and the



Cauca's coffee-eggplant-chocolate

profiles are stored in a database on the basis of which algorithms calculate the potential combinations.

A method that can be used by amateur chefs?

Top chefs and bartenders use this massive database to discover the flavour profile of the ingredients, to draw inspiration and refine their creations. Even amateur chefs can give free rein to their imagination. You can test the tool online at www.foodpairing.com. It compares the chemical composition of foods with the ingredient entered, and presents the best results in a tree structure. Each branch represents a family of products (meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, dairy, spices, alcohol, etc.) and each leaf represents a potentially combinable product. The relevance of the flavour agreement, which depends on the quantity of molecules the products have in common, is indicated by a colour code and how close it is to the main ingredient. For example, you can find out that kiwis and oysters are made for an outstanding pairing!

The secret of flavours revealed

But where did this idea come from? Heston Blumenthal, the star British chef and creator of the restaurant The Fat Duck, and who is known for his molecular cuisine, found out one day during an experiment that white chocolate and Sevruga caviar are a perfect match. Eager to understand what was going on, he contacted François Benzi, a scientist working at Firmenich, the world's largest maker of fragrances and flavours. They realised that these two products have chemicals components in common, and they then verified this hypothesis using a wide range of ingredients, giving birth to the concept of Foodpairing.



Langoustine-cauliflower-orange-pistachio



“Associations of amazing ingredients, for pleasantly surprising flavours”



Peter Coucquyt and Bernard Lahousse

Subsequently, in 2005, Belgian Chef Sang-Hoon Degeimbre and French scientist Bernard Lahousse developed the method associated with the concept. Since then, critics have emerged: physical chemist Hervé This, who, together with Nicholas Khurti invented molecular gastronomy, regrets the lack of a real scientific basis behind the theory. Great chefs who advocate healthier and more authentic food, such as Catalan chef Santi Santamaria and French chef Olivier Roellinger, consider this new culinary wave to be a commercial pretence used by flavour manufacturers. Despite this, Foodpairing has since



Langoustine-Ajalanco-blueberry

“Science ends where the chef begins...”

been making its way, and is experienced by chefs, bartenders and pastry chefs eager to make discoveries.

Now being used throughout the world, this method produces real wonders: from the Ispahan macarons by Pierre Hermé, which combine rose, litchi and raspberry, to the Army and Navy cocktail of London Drink Factory, made from green almonds, lemon juice and gin, and the crab, strawberry, parsnip milk and black garlic of Spanish chef Adoni Luis Aduriz or the famous raspberry camembert by Pierre Gagnaire.

But beware: while anyone can use Foodpairing trees to create new dishes, the amounts of the ingredients, how they are cooked and at what temperature, as well as the quality of the products are all keys to success! Science ends where the chef begins... The database is, in any case, not only useful for impressing guests: it also makes it possible to vary food, adapt it in different ways or substitute foods with each other. A huge range of possibilities is opened up to flavour adventurers!

www.foodpairing.com



Pitahaya salad



Mackerel-cherry-apple-maji



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INTERVIEW

GÄSTEHAUS ERFORT

A relaxing gourmet experience in a green oasis

Nestled in a green oasis at the heart of the capital of Saarland, the Erfort Guest House at Saarbrücken has played host to foodies in search of tranquillity and culinary delights since 2002.

The villa, surrounded by a 10,000 square meters English garden, dates back to the end of the 19th century. Inside, it is decorated in a sober and modern style with pure tones. Large bay windows ensure that the restaurant is flooded with sunlight, while providing a stunning view of the garden. The room was designed for up to 35 covers on round tables, with tablecloths in clear tones which match the overall decoration.

An idyllic scene for tasting a refined and modern cuisine that chef Klaus Erfort, owner of the restaurant, tries to strip of eccentricity. His guiding principles: balance flavours while remaining authentic. His personal touch: a subtle mixture of sweet and sour. A blend which helps to enhance a dish but revisits the great gastronomical classics. The Erfort chef reworks both local and foreign products to bring his dishes to life, always making sure that the quality is up to scratch. To enhance the guests' eating experience, restaurant manager Jérôme Pourchère offers a wine list with 500 vintages. All of the ingredients are therefore in place to allow the guests to have a relaxing gourmet experience.





Interview

KLAUS ERFORT

*“Use aromas to create
a perfect balance”*



In 2002, kitchen genius and triple Michelin-starred chef, Klaus Erfort, took over the guest house formerly owned by the Saarberg group and transformed it into his own restaurant, the "Erfort Guest House". In barely a few years, this young chef, who ranks among the top nine cooks in Germany, managed to give it its glory and a place prized by any self-respecting epicurean. His recipe: a blend of aromas, balanced and authentic flavour. Pains-taking and meticulous, Klaus Erfort loves exploring all of the aspects of an ingredient so as to retain only the best part as a treat for his guests' taste buds. We meet the passionate chef.



Chef Erfort, what are your first memories in the kitchen?

The very first memories that come to mind are associated with my grandmother's kitchen, the tasty carrots from the garden and respectful handling of ingredients. I also remember some delicious dishes. Those memories are the source of one of my basic principles: avoiding waste. My first memory in a kitchen as a professional is connected to the initial training that I did when I was younger in a small restaurant in Saarland. The strict organisation and clockwork timing fascinated me. That was when my interest in cooking was born.

After spending a few years working at prestigious restaurants, what drove you to become your own boss?

The desire to become my own boss coincided with the opportunity to rent the former guest house from the Saarberg group. This opportunity presented itself in 2002. After spending years working for somebody else, I jumped at the chance and bought back the restaurant.

How would you define your cooking?

I would say that my cooking is a modern take on French gourmet cuisine.

As a chef, you have to taste and test out different dishes. Do you have a preference for any particular dish or ingredient?

I do not really have a favourite dish. What I like about cooking is making aromas stand out and taking them to a level where all of the flavours complement one another to form a perfect balance.



Has being triple-starred influenced your way of cooking?

Being a triple-starred chef has not changed anything about my way of cooking. I still cook today with the same respect for products, the same discipline and the same diligence as in the beginning. I also always respect my guests in the same way. It is only my dishes which have changed since I received my Michelin stars.

In gastronomy, the container matters as much as the content. How do you select your tableware?

You can't have one without the other. The tableware represents the canvas, the stage, on which we present our dishes. I tend to select simple and refined tableware which sets the scene. It should not overshadow the dish being presented. The food plays the starring role. As I often like to say: "For us, truth is often found on the plate".



What excites you or fascinates you in your profession?

What excites me in this profession is providing people with pleasure and ensuring that they have an unforgettable experience. I am also fascinated by all of the possibilities and combinations which exist in cooking. Simple and similar ingredients can give rise to countless varied dishes.

Your profession is absorbing and requires a lot of personal investment. What do you do when you are not cooking?

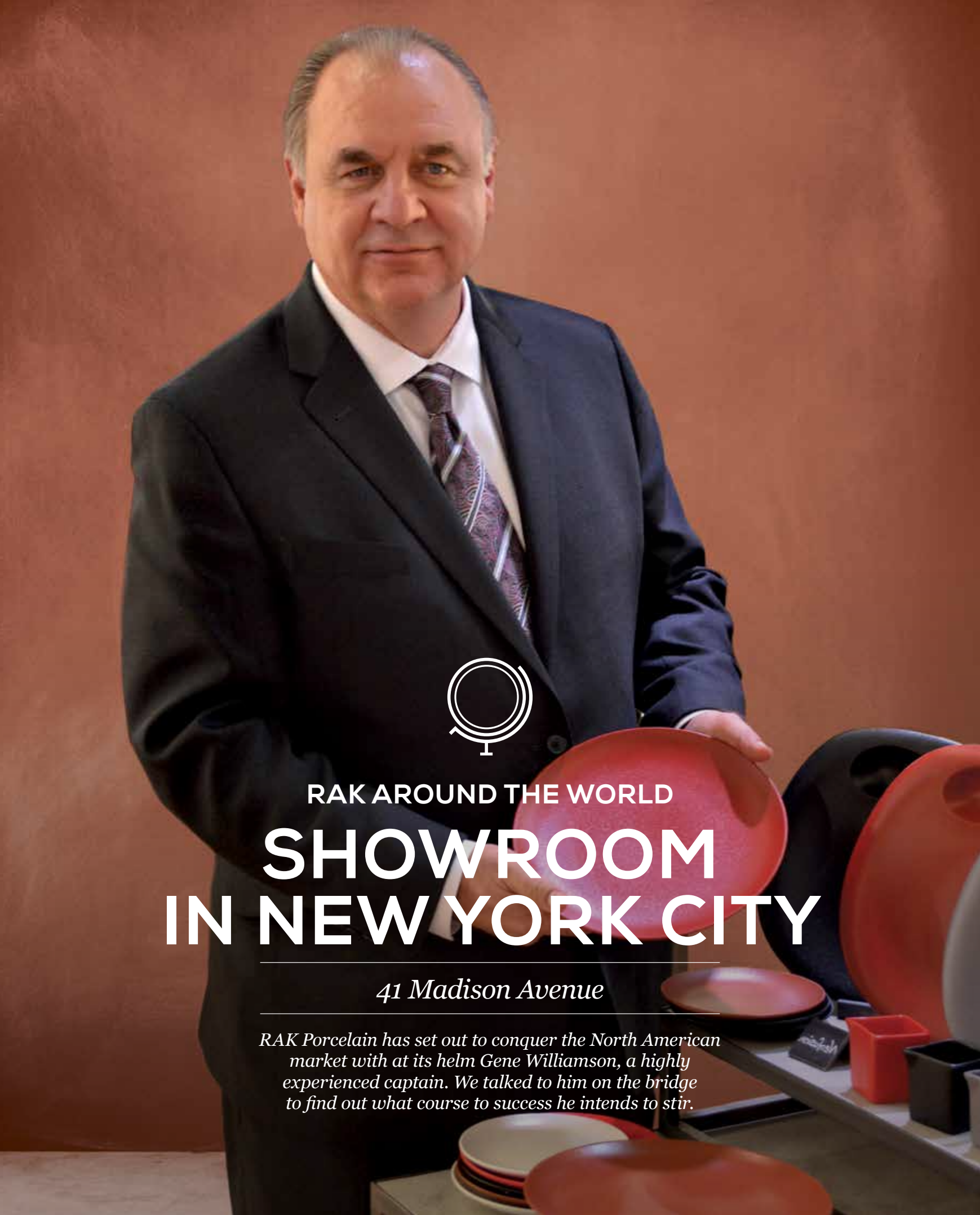
It is true that I live my work so intensively that I barely have time to spare for hobbies. My priority is my family. If I have free time, I take my Porsche for a spin to wind down.

www.gaestehaus-erfort.de

KLAUS ERFORT

Born in March 1972 at Saarbrücken, Germany. Following his training, he learned his trade in various restaurants in Saarland. In 1992, he became sauce chef at the Bareiss de Claus-Peter Lumpp restaurant (3 stars). In 1993 and 1994, he took a position at "Scharzwaldstube" in Baiersbronn (Baden-Württemberg) and worked with Harald Wohlfahrt (3 stars). Between 1995 and 2002 he occupies the kitchens of renowned restaurants and obtains on two occasions 1 star. In 2002, he opened his own restaurant, GästeHaus, at Saarbrücken in a magnificent 19th century house, which received its 1st star that same year and its 2nd in 2004. In 2008, he received 3 stars and a total of 19.5 in the Gault and Millau.





RAK AROUND THE WORLD

SHOWROOM IN NEW YORK CITY

41 Madison Avenue

RAK Porcelain has set out to conquer the North American market with at its helm Gene Williamson, a highly experienced captain. We talked to him on the bridge to find out what course to success he intends to stir.



Interview

GENE WILLIAMSON

“Quality, design, durability, and, of course, service are the ways we expect to compete.”



In your opinion why is RAK Porcelain so successful?

First, RAK Porcelain designs are made for today's hospitality customer...top quality materials, with designs that are relevant to the menus of today. Even our “classic” designs have been updated to fit today's dining concepts. The range of products from RAK Porcelain is wide, but also deep in terms of the pieces available in each collection. Therefore, RAK Porcelain counts among its many global customers star-rated restaurants, premier hotels, colleges and universities, and very large volume caterers.

What are the main challenges facing the USA Market?

The hospitality marketplace in the U.S. is likely the most competitive in the world. Every type of product imaginable is available here. And we compete against products from every corner of the world. Additionally, this is a fast-changing hospitality market that often leads the rest of the world in tabletop styles and types of products used. So, we must move quickly to stay on top of trends and to capture our share of market. RAK Porcelain has lead the way with more branded product introductions than any of our competitors.

What has been the reaction to Neofusion in the USA?

Launched here in the U.S. at the NRA Show in May, initial reactions were very positive from both a color and a texture standpoint. We are highly optimistic that Neofusion will do well here in this market, just like it has done in other parts of the world.



What RAK Porcelain ranges have been successful in the USA?

While there are a number of our products I could point to as being appropriate for a variety of operators, Access and its bright white body color has special appeal for certain type of our customers. But, keep in mind that we have such a source of products that we have solutions for everyone. Our breadth of products is a major strength for RAK Porcelain.

Should there be a range designed especially for the USA?

While our range of products is sufficiently wide for the moment, we're always looking at trends to see what tomorrow's customer is looking for. Our new MOON dinnerware design, which we'll introduce here in early 2017, is an example of where we think the U.S. hospitality market is headed.

Does the RAK Porcelain collection fit the culinary trends in the USA?

There's no question that nearly every type of global cuisine or menu type is available here in the U.S. market. That's another reason why we are successful now and will continue to be in the future. Our dinnerware – and now, flatware – designs appeal to such a wide audience of customers. It's a very exciting time in the dining-out world and we intend on leading the way by continuing to introduce existing new products to fit these fast-changing trends.

What is the current status of RAK Porcelain USA?

In ten short years, RAK Porcelain has become a leader in the hospitality dinnerware market. Our intention is to continue that here in the U.S. market. Since January, we built up our organization, we have more than tripled our inventories to insure great service to our customers, and we will now continue to create brand awareness as we have done in other markets around the globe. An example of that is our support

of the American Culinary Federation (ACF). RAK Porcelain is the exclusive dinnerware sponsor for the upcoming IKA Culinary Olympics in Germany and RAK Porcelain USA is a major supporter of the ACF USA Teams heading to Germany.

Which will be the key factors of success of RAK Porcelain USA?

Quality, design, durability, and, of course, service are the ways we expect to compete. While we certainly have some very fine competitors here in the U.S. we think we will be able to achieve a level of success similar to what we have in other global markets.

Please talk about the new showroom located at 41 Madison Avenue in New York City.

Yes with great pleasure. We opened our showroom on July 1st of this year and are very excited to have that as a great selling tool in what we hope will ultimately be our best overall market here in the U.S. It is over 2100 square feet and will provide a great showcase for RAK Porcelain and our products.



The famous Flatiron Building

Neofusion,
the rising star
collection





What's next for RAK Porcelain USA?

We have been extremely busy since the launch of RAK Porcelain USA in January of 2016. But, this is really just the beginning. We will have more new products, additional people, and our new showroom in NYC will continue to evolve to reflect those new changes. It's a very exciting time at RAK Porcelain USA, for sure.

Please tell us about your sales team in the USA.

We are truly fortunate to have been able to build such a strong sales team in a very short period of time. I believe that's a strong testimony to what these industry professionals see in the future for the RAK Porcelain brand. All our team members have strong tabletop backgrounds and our talented teams at the RAK Porcelain distribution center in West Virginia as well as in our offices on Long Island stand ready to

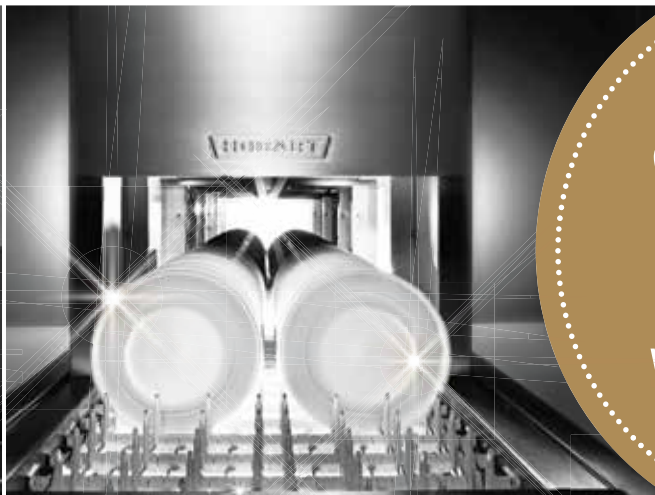


GENE WILLIAMSON

Gene Williamson, 59 year old, father of three, was raised in Ohio and has been President of RAK Porcelain USA, Inc. since July 1st 2015. After earning a Masters degree in Business Administration, this industry veteran has gathered a long trail of experience in the tableware business, working for V&B and Rosenthal among others. In his little spare time, Gene likes to wind down by travelling or enjoying a good game of basketball.

provide whatever support is necessary. So, I believe we are ready to move the RAK Porcelain brand ahead in this critical market. All these efforts allow us to cover 75 percent of the market place, even though the United States are pretty huge from a geographical point of view. The ultimate challenge for all of us then is this: to be exactly where we need to be throughout the whole country.

www.rakporcelainusa.com
www.41madison.com



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BEST IN WAREWASHING!



HOTELS AROUND THE WORLD

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON PARIS

OFF Paris Seine Hotel

The Seine, also known as the 21st arrondissement of Paris, never ceases to amaze us! It is now possible to enjoy a new sensory experience on the river. The dream of a four-star floating hotel, OFF, has become a reality – drift off to sleep in the heart of the City of Light to the sound of the gently lapping waves of the Seine.



Designer Silver Suite

“The idea is to discover the offbeat and unusual side of Paris.”

Time to switch OFF

Moored at the Quai d’Austerlitz, OFF blends urbanism, design, style and nature. “The idea is to discover the offbeat and unusual side of Paris. On board, the city feels different, the views are unique and the sensation of sleeping on the Seine is truly spectacular. Each one has an OFF experience to share,” explains Margaux Lindé, Co-General Manager of the Hotel. For customers with a thirst for discovery, OFF offers 54 rooms and four suites with a view of the quay or to the Seine. “Maurizio Galante and Tal Lancman are two designers who created the blueprint for the bar as well as two suites: the Sunset and the Silver, both set out in monochrome: one in orange pop and the other in tones of grey and canary yellow.” The bar in this unique setting is open to everyone who wishes to share bistronomy-style tapas served on RAK Porcelain, carefully selected to complement the surroundings.

Water is the centre of attention

At 75 metres long, the two hulls of the catamaran are connected by an interior glass-covered promenade. “Water is the backbone of the construction. OFF was designed in order to make the river experience as authentic as possible: the smooth finish of the pontoons that cradle the structure; the creation of vast, unobstructed views onto the Seine; the setting, merely 10 metres out from the river bank; the integration of the port to the bow, etc. At night, the connection to water is further strengthened by the lighting work devised by Franck Franjou. It was vital for us to maintain the large vistas onto the exterior, to have large bay windows in the rooms in order to fully immerse yourself into the surroundings,” added Margaux Lindé.

OFF is not just a delightful experience, it is also embracing voluntary environmental responsibility: a vacuum toilet, heating pump, dual flow air treatment and a micro-filtration optimiser to reduce the overall consumption are a few of the hotel’s eco-friendly structures. “The use of quality, sustainable and recyclable materials (wood, steel, glass and zinc) also contributes to the sustainable approach. Steel, the crowning feature of the building, is 100% recyclable by remelting.”



Having breakfast with Neofusion



The accommodation of the future?

This project was born in 2013 when the city of Paris launched a tender to revitalise the port of Austerlitz. Christophe Gallineau, the former managing director of the Bateaux Parisiens and Chairman and Founder of CitySurfing, joined forces with Gérard Ronzatti, Chairman and Founder of Seine Design and a specialist in marine architecture, to design the first floating hotel in Europe. They won the tender, and Elegencia Hotels was selected to run the establishment. The aim of CitySurfing is to allow city dwellers to reconnect with their river by respecting the environment, to take back control of port and river activities and put them at the heart of the cities of the future: this four-star hotel of today aims to create a model for the floating accommodation of tomorrow, accessible to a large number of people.

“A hotel committed to the environment”

In the meantime, the promise of a unique and magical experience on the capital's waterways has already arrived, and shall continue to expand with “the opening of a summer terrace on the river bank and the opportunity to take a cruise directly from OFF,” concluded Margaux Lindé, enthralled by the success of Paris' latest attraction.

www.offparisseine.com



CULINARY OLYMPIC CHAMPIONS COOK WITH MKN!



MKN ist Spezialist für thermische Premium ProfiKochtechnik und statet als Exclusive Partner alle Wettbewerbsküchen der IKA/Olympiade der Köche mit modernster Multifunktions-technik aus.

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MKN est le spécialiste pour la technique de cuisson professionnelle et équipe, en tant que partenaire exclusif, toutes les cuisines de compétitions du IKA/Olympiade des cuisiniers avec la technique multifonction la plus moderne.



www.mkn.de



CULINARY TRENDS

OUR VEGETABLES HAVE A HISTORY

Skirret, pale-leaved sunflower, mertensia maritima, chayote, Peruvian oca... Between poetry and nostalgia, these names straight out of the past are now high on the list of new flavours. Back in full force, today these so-called “forgotten” vegetables are a true breath of fresh air in our gardens and on our plates!

Old vegetables are cultivated crops which are too many to be listed exhaustively and have been simply forgotten over time, at least part of them. Some were rejected because they brought back memories of wars, others were shunned because their appearance is too rustic. But they all have a history. For example, parsnips, available again at the greengrocer, were already known to the Greeks and Romans, and were even mentioned by Pliny the Elder.

In the Middle Ages, it was a staple food because it was frost-resistant, so much so that the French revolutionary calendar had a “Saint Parsnip Day”. Then it vanished for no reason. Maybe fatigue? The Peruvian oca, native to the Andes, very nearly took the place of our potato. Introduced to England in 1829 when crops were being ravaged by potato blight, the oca arrived at just the right time. But its low yields consigned it to oblivion until today.





Pumpkin soup



Pumpkin and parsnip pie



“Vegetables offer a real source of creativity.”

Virtues of the taste of the day

Confronted with the standardisation of food and the industrialisation of agriculture, the authenticity and flavour of the olden days has touched the souls of foodies, who are tapping into the treasure trove of abandoned vegetables. Original and varied, they are easy to grow, require fewer pesticides and are more nutritious than conventional vegetables. Their flavours are being popularised by many chefs who are sensitive to how they can contribute to healthier food, and are now even included in fine dining. For example, the smoked salsify by American chef Colin Bedford can be found on the table of the Ferrington House Restaurant, while in Japan, chef Hiroshi Yamaguchi makes it an accompaniment to his fugu-based signature dish at Kobe Kitano Hotel.

In France, nature lover Marc Veyrat puts forgotten herbs and vegetables at the heart of his organic cuisine, as in his Alpine aperitif based on mountain lichens or his pumpkin soup with virtual bacon, made from squash and bacon foam.

The star vegetable garden

The revival of vegetables goes hand in hand with the revival of the market gardener. Long relegated to playing a bit part, this artist in the vegetable garden is now on centre stage. Many chefs currently prefer to grow their own vegetables. Among these are the celebrated chef of Arpège, Alain Passard, who cooks products from his own gardens in the Bay of Mont Saint-Michel, the Sarthe and the Eure every day.

Through the work of his chief gardener Sylvain Picard, every year he harvests 50 tonnes of vegetables. For his part, Yannick Alleno, at the head of the Pavillon Ledoyen kitchens, works with Laurent Berurier, who has recovered nine heirloom vegetables from the Ile-de-France, such as Gennevilliers leeks, Argenteuil asparagus and Montmagny dandelions. Vegetables have a history, they are part of our collective memory and we can count on the creativity of our finest chefs to offer us the best. The “naturalness” that means so much to Alain Ducasse is a must!





RAK AROUND THE WORLD

THE SKY IS OUR ONLY LIMIT

VIRGIN ATLANTIC CLUBHOUSES

Before a flight, or between flights, time often passes slowly. Virgin Atlantic Clubhouses bring some colour to stopovers and give them a rhythm. The lounges are balanced yet intriguing, relaxing and entertaining, offering a full range of services tailored to the needs of passengers throughout the world.



“We spend a long time planning and training so that our guests feel pampered and respected.”



Comfort and elegance

There are now ten members in the family of Virgin lounges set up in London (Heathrow and Gatwick), Hong Kong, Johannesburg, New York (JFK and Newark), Washington, Boston, San Francisco and Los Angeles, the latest addition in 2015. Whatever the mood of guests, whether they need to work in peace and quiet, or want to pass the time sipping on a cocktail or playing on a video console, Virgin has thought of everything, in a sensational and futuristic system.

The testimonials reveal that the high connectivity of the spaces and the friendliness of staff are the aspects which make Virgin Clubhouses favourites among travellers, not to mention the calm environment and their exceptional design. And yet the opinions of users are unanimous: the main draw is the catering. Perspectives met the person behind their ever-changing catering and bar services.

The Food and Beverage Executive of Virgin Clubhouses, Mark Murphy, knows what he is talking about: he has spent 15 years of his life as chef in the kitchens of luxury hotels; his passion for good cooking is part of the very fabric of his being. After the birth of his second daughter, he decided on a change of pace to find a new balance between his family and professional life, but he does not regret anything. Thanks to those years of hard work, he has achieved a special position which allows him to do what he loves, while also dedicating time to his family.

There are currently 10 Virgin Atlantic Clubhouses. Were they all designed in the same way and up to the same standard?

Each of our lounges has its own atmosphere and gives off a unique vibe. Some offer a SPA, in London we have a "Revival Lounge" for those arriving at Heathrow. The way in which our teams create these magnificent environments is strongly influenced by their location: we are developing partnerships with major prize-winning local design companies, to build a space in the Virgin image with a local feel. The consistency of what we offer is therefore demonstrated through our services.

Virgin Atlantic is facing tough competition. How do you manage to stand out?

We are extremely proud of our catering possibilities and of the high level of our services. We spend a long time planning and training so that our guests feel pampered and respected. We do not immerse our-

selves in sterile processes, but do our best to recruit people who "naturally" exude our values at Virgin: warmth, hospitality, efficiency and a great ability to adapt, in the image of our company. Our range of services is constantly evolving. I never like to compare us to our direct competitors but always keep an eye on what is happening in the service sector in general, where things evolve very fast, and that is why we are leaders in our sector. We spot the trends and apply them straight away. It is like building a permanently moving model while keeping absolute control over service quality.

One of the main draws of the lounges is their catering services. What are guests of Virgin Atlantic Clubhouses looking for?

We have spent a long time keeping track of our customers' desires and needs. Most of our passengers are not looking for high-class dining during their journey, but at the same time, they recognise quality and appreciate the fact that we understand their dining habits. We have defined our culinary style as elegant comfort food. Well-made dishes that taste like home cooking. Our biggest seller is the burger, which customers have with beer or a cocktail. Pretentiousness is not our thing! Each Virgin Clubhouse has its own head chef who supervises the quality of our products. Our current catering partner is Sodexo, which has appointed a catering manager to work side-by-side with me to understand what we are looking for and help us achieve it. Working together we are really creative, and yet we keep ourselves focused on the feasibility of our ideas in each of our locations so that we never promise something that we cannot deliver perfectly.



Mark Murphy, Food and Beverage Executive of the Virgin Atlantic Clubhouses

How do you respond to their needs?

All of our lounges have a restaurant, except for Boston which has a buffet, but the travellers can eat what they want, where they want and when they want. In the past two years, we have paid particular attention to our cocktail list and I can honestly say that there is no other lounge that makes them better than us. It's true! We are currently in partnership with the most famous bars in the world and they entrust us their brand without any hesitation. Tableware is also a distinguishing factor. Last year, we introduced the

RAK Porcelain range. It was a smooth transition and the flexibility of their supplier chain allowed us to obtain some standard product ranges and other tailor-made ones. RAK Porcelain brings a viable solution to each problem which works for every part. It comes up with original proposals to back up our new concepts. All our stock has now been replaced and the changeover has been completed at the start of 2016. We are impressed by the sophistication of the design of the porcelain and love how sleek it is.



“RAK Porcelain brings a viable solution with original proposals to back up our new concepts.”

You started your career as a manager in luxury hotels. Your day-to-day job must be very different now. What difficulties have you had?

As Food and Beverage Executive, my role is to guarantee that guests get the very best, which makes each day really exciting; there are certainly some days where I sit in my office and work on the overall management operations, but most of the time I am travelling. I have the chance to work for a company which understands the field and realises that everything cannot be managed from an office. I travel once a month and visit each lounge twice a year. I try to analyse the dining patterns of our guests, at the bar... it is crucial to observe this because it puts us a step ahead and means that we can offer unique services in the airline sector. The most difficult thing in this career change has been to adapt to the airport environment, where security is paramount, which has created a number of obstacles, especially in trying to bring in new products that many companies do not offer because it is a hassle.

What do you get from the role at Virgin Atlantic?

Aside from this, my job has expanded my horizons. The travel opportunities are fantastic. I have learned more in six years here than I have in the twenty years of my career. Tasting different world cuisines is a lot more interesting than reading about them! Working for Virgin Atlantic means being part of the success of one of the most recognised and innovate brands in the world, which encourages us every day to be more creative in our professional approach. Sometimes we have to adapt our ideas to make them work, but very often, the sky is our only limit!

www.virgin-atlantic.com



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www.wuesthof.com





RAK AROUND THE WORLD

ISLE OF WIGHT WEEKEND GETAWAY

"Cook Your Dream" - the blog

Šárka Babická lives in London and works as a freelance food, lifestyle and travel photographer. She grew up in Prague the capital of the Czech Republic. She started her blog www.cookyourdream.com in 2008 as a recipe blog. It has since evolved along with her, becoming her creative outlet, a place where she occasionally shares her work and love for food, travel and photography.



How do you choose your travel destinations?

I like to explore new countries with interesting histories, cultures and obviously the cuisine that goes with them. However, any travel destination is interesting for me because you can find new exciting places even in your own town.

What is the origin of the name "cookyour-dream.com"?

Before I started my blog, I wasn't too keen on cooking, really. I started cooking when I moved to London and suddenly my life took a different course. Originally, I simply gave the blog my name but thankfully, through the blog and the cooking, I discovered my real passion of photography and decided to follow my dream which later turned into a career. I somehow "cooked my own dream", so to say.

www.cookyourdream.com



How did your blogging activities begin?

When I moved to London in 2008, it took me some time to discover what I really wanted to do. Before that, I worked in IT. I was fascinated with London's food scene and its generous access to ingredients from all around the world. Blogging was the easiest way to share my favourite recipes with friends and family.

What is in your eyes the evolution of this popular activity around the world? Could you describe the situation in a nutshell?

Blogging has changed so much over time. When I started, seven years ago, there were only a few of us, cooking, writing and taking photos just as a hobby. Since then blogging has become an industry and a profession for many. There are obviously still hobby bloggers but many run their blogs as a successful business, earning a good living out of it. I personally don't consider myself a blogger. Blogging is a demanding job and I'm not able to update my blog on a regular basis anymore. Instead I share most of my photos on my Instagram account @sarkababicka.

You are also working as a photographer. Please tell us more about this.

I'm a professional food and lifestyle photographer based in London. I work with clients locally and internationally on a variety of editorial and commercial assignments. I really like working on editorial projects. I photographed a few cookbooks and I've been shooting for a Prague based food magazine called "Gourmet" for the last two years. My favourite assignments, however are those that involve food and travel.

Following our recent seafood obsession, a trip to Isle of Wight fulfilled our ideas of a relaxing weekend trip in all ways. A beautiful small island with gorgeous nature and fantastic seafood offered in many restaurants throughout the island is the right place for a long weekend getaway.

We took a ferry from Portsmouth when it was already dark and enjoyed a beautiful view of Portsmouth Harbour and the impressive Spinnaker Tower at night. Saturday morning offered another pleasing view over the famous golden sandy beach in Sandown which was still deserted as the season hasn't started yet.

Friday's weather was nice and sunny with very little wind, a perfect day for a coastal walk. After a nice walk along the Bambridge coast we had to compensate for lost energy at The Crab & Lobster Inn which is located ideally almost on the beach. We delighted our taste buds with a fabulous cold crab and lobster platter for two.

Our Saturday trip started in a wonderful farm shop in Arreton Old Village. Artisan sourdough bread, local tomatoes and cow cheese didn't last longer than lunchtime. Smoked garlic was actually the only item that made it all the way back home. Feeling we should

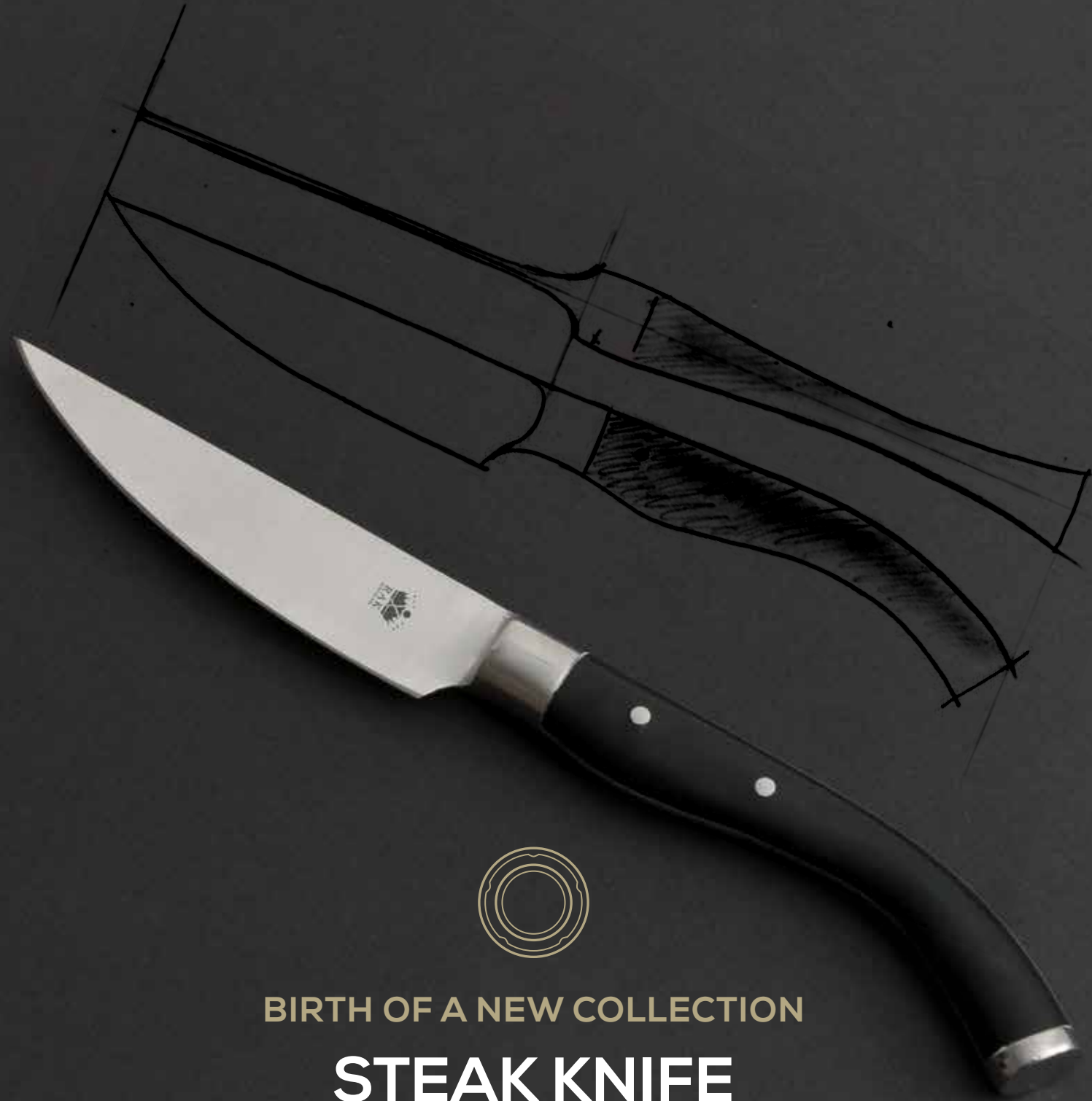
experience a bit of culture we headed to medieval Carisbrooke Castle where King Charles I was imprisoned, followed by St. Cathrine's Oratory, a medieval lighthouse on St. Cathrine's Hill.

After a day of cultural indulgence and stunning views, we let our growling stomachs lead us and found another wonderful restaurant on the island. The New Inn pub is a charming old stoned pub with a country-style interior and fantastic food offer.

Sunday morning was time to say goodbye to Isle of Wight and get back to "mainland". A male part of our gang decided to explore hidden secrets of HMS Warrior and HMS Victory while I strode around the Portsmouth harbour with my camera. What a fantastic weekend it was!

www.cookyourdream.com/2011/03/isle-of-wight-weekend-getaway.html





BIRTH OF A NEW COLLECTION

STEAK KNIFE

Elegant and ergonomic

The creation of a new collection is always something quite special. Especially when it comes to developing a flatware line for a client, in this case RAK Porcelain. With this as our focus, we talked with German designer Mikaela Dörfel, who is responsible for the creation of the entire collection, including, of course, the steak knife, which merits special attention due to its versatility alone.

“A good knife must meet requirements with respect to ergonomics, function, shape and weight”

What makes a knife good?

A good knife must meet requirements with respect to ergonomics, function, shape and weight. It is important for the designer to strike a balance between these components. Otherwise, the knife will not be harmonious.

What is important in the ergonomics of a knife?

How do you grip a steak knife? Where is the pressure point? How does the blade cut? How does the handle feel in the palm of your hand? For my tastes, a steak knife can have a slightly larger handle. However, because it needs to be a kind of universal steak knife to go with all eight RAK Porcelain flatware lines, something a bit more graceful was required.

What about appearance?

An important factor: The blade of the steak knife is typically rather pointed and long. The crucial factor in appearance is therefore the ratio between handle and blade. Millimetres make the difference in a significant change in form. This steak knife has to be exciting. At the same time, of course, the proportions have to be right.

What about weight?

This is a crucial factor, and it is not easy to calculate with knives. But the flatware manufacturer helped us out here based on the company's experience. I think the RAK Porcelain steak knife really succeeded in this regard. It doesn't tilt forward and didn't need to be readjusted.

Be honest: Is there any such thing as the perfect knife?

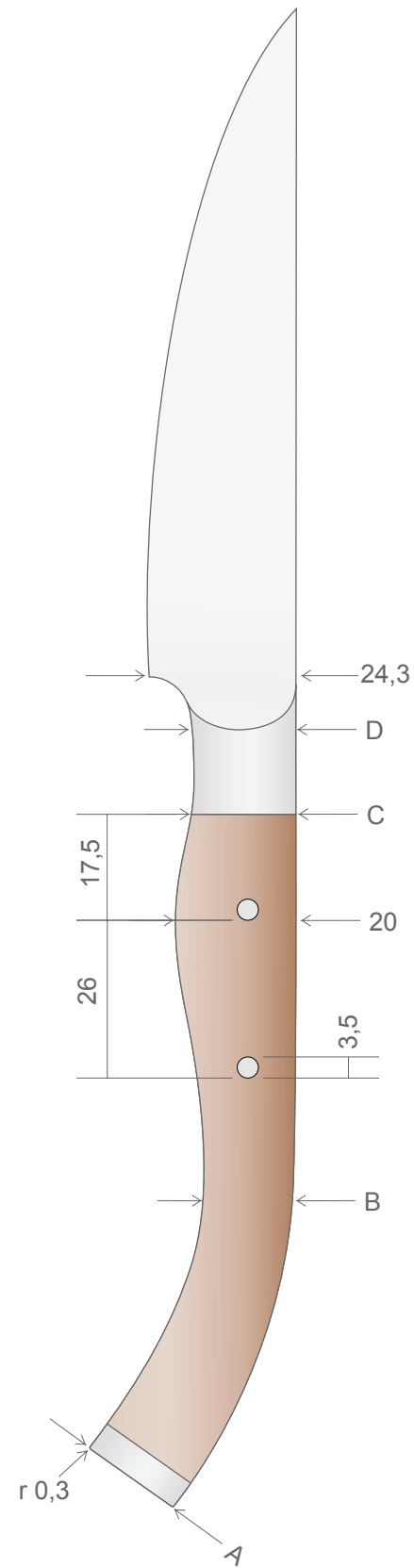
Oh, that's a matter of taste, of course, but at least from the viewpoint of ergonomics/function, you can certainly get close. But since every hand is different and therefore how the steak knife is held is also different in each case, “near-perfection” is probably as close as you can come.





MIKAELA DÖRFEL

Mikaela Dörfel grew up in Finland, which is where she developed her love of Scandinavian forms. She has now settled down in an old farmhouse surrounded by horses, meadows and scattered ponds. The inspiration for her design work also comes directly from the natural world, and is supported by a clear structure. For over 15 years she has been working from her design studio north of Hamburg and her customers include brands from all over Europe, Asia and the USA. Mikaela Dörfel employs a hands-on approach to design, and loves feeling the porcelain against her fingertips as she checks the practicality of her forms for day-to-day use. Her love of form has led her to create collection pieces that avoid the whims of trends and are designed to last, and some of her collections have now been in existence for several decades.



Tell us something about the position of the logo - how did that come about?

The distinctive RAK Porcelain crown on the round metal cap fits perfectly! It imparts a bit of elegance to the knife. Of course, the decision was also affected by the visibility and the best possible placement of the company logo.

Would you also describe the knife as timeless?

Yes! I think that if in the design of a product you focus on the correct proportions in terms of function and ergonomics and you don't "over-decorate" it in pursuit of short-term trends, then you design a timeless product.

How do you proceed to design a piece of flatware like the steak knife?

For certain objects, I often already have an idea about how something might look. This was also true of the steak knife. Then I start making sketches to try out the idea, and I use small samples to explore the idea to see if it is actually viable or interesting. Then we make an exact 1-to-1 dummy and examine the initial idea using proportions, function and ergonomics, and then create the final technical drawings. There were clear guidelines for the steak knife: It should be compatible with all eight lines. In addition, the handle had to be made of high-quality plastic, specifically polyoxymethylene, so that it would be dishwasher safe for use in the hospitality industry.



“Before we present an idea to the client, we investigate the market thoroughly.”

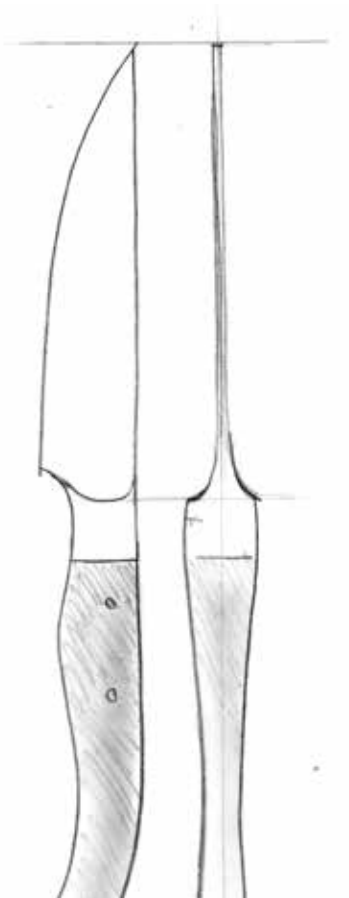
What is the next step?

Before we present an idea to the client, we investigate the market thoroughly. We do this, on the one hand, to check that we are not copying anything that already exists and are actually creating something new, and, on the other hand, to define the positioning of the product.

A final question, then - what do you find more fun: designing a new porcelain collection or a flatware collection?

After I had developed a few porcelain series one after another, the flatware collection was a delightful change of pace. And its complexity was also a wonderful challenge that we had a lot of fun tackling, but it also took a lot of attention and time for all the adjustment phases! Maybe there will be yet another entirely new subject and a new challenge.

www.doerfel-design.de





RAK AROUND THE WORLD

LIKE HOMEMADE

Nestlé & the "Moon" collection

Modern kitchen appliances, high-quality products, perfect preparation, a few clever ideas and a pinch of improvisation. These were the ingredients for a rendezvous at the Nestlé Professional Center in Frankfurt, where the brand boss was in the spotlight. The new Moon porcelain series by RAK Porcelain also cut a good figure in the eight-hour photo and cooking session.





“The mise en place is ready!” Carsten Esser is awaiting us with a broad smile in the entrance area of the test kitchen. His kingdom is equipped with countless appliances and is located on the first floor in one of the two Olivetti Towers at Lyon-erstraße 34 in Frankfurt. These buildings are the former headquarters of the Italian company, which manufactures computers and office equipment. Today, they are home to the Nestlé Professional Service Center. The German headquarters of the world's largest food group, whose roof is crowned by the company logo, is a stone's throw away.

Back to Carsten Esser. Beside him is a trolley with countless foods labelled “RAK Esser”. For the last few days, the head of the kitchen expert advisory at Nestlé Professional was travelling on business. But there is an ambitious menu for today. Seven different dishes, to be individually photographed by Stefan Wildhirt. Also present are the sauces and stocks from the Nestlé Professional Chef Range. The brand is 40 years old this year. The premium products, all of which are prepared according to traditional recipes and made from 100 percent natural ingredients, are being repackaged for the anniversary. A number of plates and bowls from the new Moon series by RAK Porcelain are also in use at the cooking and photo session.

Everything smells delicious. The MKN range is going full blast and oil is sizzling in the AMT pan. Esser handles the sea bass almost lovingly. He strokes the pieces a single time across the bottom of the hot frying pan before placing them in the pan. Then it goes very fast. In other pans, shellfish foam and beluga lentils are being prepared. Beluga lentils were so named because they have a striking resemblance to the sinfully expensive fish eggs. The freshwater crayfish are then sautéed. Then everything is placed on the rectangular plates of the Moon series, which are also ideal for sushi. Esser conjures up two var-

Plates and bowls from the new Moon series by RAK Porcelain in use at the cooking and photo session



iations at the same time. A few fennel greens from an ice-water bath (so they stay green) are added for a splash of colour.

While sea bass is a classic dish, the next stop is Asia. After all, Moon's mission is to fuse Western and Asian cuisine. Or in the socio-political formulation: to unite two different cultures in a single design language. “Try the broth,” says Esser. Tastes delicious. A real taste explosion. Garlic, lemon grass and ginger. With a sharp finish! “Pot au feu of hake in Asian broth.” The finest spring vegetables, with rosé-coloured radishes, which were previously vacuum packed and cooked sous vide. The glass noodles go in the bowl first. Then the fine steamed vegetables, with perhaps a slight glaze to the spring onions. He then

adds Japanese enoki mushrooms, which taste very earthy. And finally the hake. With a sake jug, the broth is poured. It not only tastes great, but also looks fantastic. Esser again prepares a second variant, for which a smaller bowl is used. It all looks so easy. “Preparation is everything when you are cooking,” he says. The only person who has broken a little sweat so far is the photographer.

The presentation, a visual foretaste



In the meantime, Carsten Esser has time to tell some stories about himself and his area of responsibility. After training in fine dining, the 47-year-old came to Nestlé after detours into catering. He has been the head of kitchen specialist advice at Nestlé Professional for eight years. He spends his spare time challenging himself with distance races and mountain climbing. And professionally? His credo: “Keep inspiring customers to use our products and develop solutions for them, because there are fewer and fewer trained professionals in the kitchen.” “The food industry,” says Esser, “is there to make the daily work of its customers easier and to help them produce high-quality food.”

Meanwhile, we are switching from fish to spring chicken. Spring chicken with jasmine rice, mango, cucumber, green apple and coconut. The breast of spring chicken is seared until crispy and cut into slices. The sauce that goes with it is also ready. Once again the dish is served on the rectangular plates of the Moon series. A cream whipper is also used. In kitchen jargon, it's called an “ISI” after the Austrian producer. This kitchen tool is a must when it comes to the professional presentation of foams, purées or a mousse on a plate. The next dish, the only cold one, is quickly prepared and photographed: After a short time, the small soup cup accommodates a marinated scallop garnished with a few delicacies.



“We are the link between sales and marketing.”



What motivates him? The joy of cooking. Curiosity about learning new things from customers and colleagues and working with that new knowledge. Keeping up-to-date with technology. Developing new recipes and being innovative. Participating in regional, national and international fairs. And, last but not least, leading a team that consists of seven chefs. “In addition, there are presentations to customers in order to establish a foothold for our products. Through workshops, seminars and a solid network for top German gastronomy,” says Esser.

He takes joy in the fact that there have never been so many starred restaurants in Germany as at present, and a lot of young and talented chefs are at work in the upscale segment. That leaves room for hope, even if there is concern about the next generation of chefs. “Being a cook is a tough job. Irregular working hours, Sunday work, shift work. That will never change. The great thing about our job is that there are always new challenges.” Added to this is the new awareness of the importance of nutrition. “People want to eat healthier and have developed different requirements.”

Back to the Service Center and its mission: At Nestlé Professional in the Lyon Street in Frankfurt, they also test products targeting the German market. Sensory taste tests, for which there is also a specially adapted room where lighting conditions play a major role. The room's lighting changes the perception of taste. But that's another topic. In short: “All products that go on the German market go through our hands. Together with our colleagues from marketing and sales, we make the final decision on whether the product reaches the market. We are, so to speak, the link between sales and marketing.”



“Now we are slowly coming up to half-time,” Carsten Esser quips, alluding to the fact that the semi-finals of the European Championship will take place between Germany and host country France later in the evening. It's time for the Duroc pig now. This ancient breed originated in the United States. Its meat is nicely marbled and aromatic. The sauce that Esser conjures up for it is a perfect match. It consists of a strong craft beer and honey gravy. As a counterpart to the sweetness of the sauce there is also a pepper purée. The meat tastes wonderful and is also very low in fat. While so far we have only been having little tastes now and then, now it's time for lunch. As mentioned, it's half-time. It's an opportunity to philosophise a bit with Carsten Esser over Duroc pork.

Making of



It's getting late. Beef and lamb are still on the programme. The American beef, which was slowly cooked using the sous vide method at a constant, low temperature, has become as soft as butter after searing and a pass through the Salamander. In combination with the nougat, the sweet potato purée, beets and the chef's sauce, it is simply poetry. Also visually. “The sauce tastes like it's homemade, right?” In fact, all the sauces taste homemade. This is irrefutable.

www.nestleprofessional.de



At the close of the eight-hour photo and cooking session, there is lamb. That goes quickly as well. The meat, which had also previously been cooked sous vide, is seared and finished. Fermented garlic, radishes, carrots and watercress complete the picture and impart to the lamb its own unique flavour. A parting souvenir photo will be taken at the entrance to the kitchen. A plaque with the following quotation hangs there: “Chefs are people who are always on the lookout for unusual, previously undiscovered delights to create culinary productions that engage the senses time and time again.” There is nothing more to add.



Nestlé in Frankfurt

NESTLÉ

In 1867, Swiss pharmacist Henri Nestlé was able to produce a viable powdered milk product that was a substitute for breast milk. One year prior to that, Nestlé founded “Farine Lactée Henri Nestlé lk.A.” He used the family coat of arms as the company logo. His name means “little nest” in the Swabian dialect. The family coat of arms with the brood of nestlings was appropriate for its first product and is still the corporate crest. In 1875, Henri Nestlé sold everything and retired from the company. Today, Nestlé S.A. is the world's largest food company. The head office is located in Switzerland, in Vevey. The Group generated sales of 81.92 billion euros and net profit of 8.74 billion euros in 2015. Active in 197 countries, Nestlé operates 447 production sites and employs about 339,000 people worldwide. A Belgian, Paul Bulcke has been CEO of Nestlé S.A since April 2008.



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Portrait of a chef - Perspectives

PORTRAIT OF A CHEF

THE PIONEERS OF WELLNESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts

While the luxury and refinement of the Jumeirah Group hotels and resorts achieve perfection, the true pillar of its prestige lies in its capacity for innovation, modernity and originality, which is found in all its offers and across all brands of the group, especially in gastronomy.



Interview

GABRIELE KURZ TALISE WELLNESS EXECUTIVE CHEF

“Developing a concept of gastronomy that specialises in wellness.”



Since its debut in Dubai in 1997, Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts has quickly become a luxury hotel leader, as evidenced by the international awards it has received over the years. So far the group has 22 hotels in 9 countries, from the United Arab Emirates to Shanghai, as well as London, Istanbul, the Caspian Sea and the Maldives. Part of its success is due to the original and exciting experiences offered to its visitors, always at the heart of a rich cultural environment, accompanied by attentive and generous service. At the Burj Al Arab Jumeirah, the most adventurous guests can get married on the helipad of the building, about 300 metres high, with a breathtaking view. In Frankfurt, Jumeirah raises 40,000 bees on its roof to provide honey directly for its guests. At the Pera Palace Hotel in Istanbul, guests enter the hotel-museum via the first Turkish elevator, which is over 120 years old.



Carrot tart

A philosophy of life

The Emirates-based group is not limited to hotel operations: it also manages Jumeirah Living, luxury residences, a hospitality school, about fifty bars and restaurants and a wellness brand. Launched in 2007, Talise offers a unique health, relaxation and revitalisation experience for the body, mind and soul by addressing all the elements that define our lifestyles: nutrition, sports, alternative therapies, traditional or innovative treatments. Each Talise destination is an invitation to live well and experience happiness through a selection of treatments and experiences. Catering and nutrition issues are basic components of the concept. Chef Gabriele Kurz, nicknamed “Chef Gabi”, is responsible for this aspect. She is involved in the creation of the menus for the entire Group and, of course, she is in charge of the kitchens at the Talise Spas.

“I want to promote the benefits of a balanced nutrition and a balanced lifestyle.”

From Bavaria to Dubai

Graduated of the Steigenberger Hotel School in Germany, Chef Gabi completed her internship at the Park Hilton Hotel in Munich and then joined the family hotel-restaurant in Bavaria. A vegetarian herself, she is extremely interested in food and is fascinated by the impact of food on our health, so she decided to make it her area of expertise.

She joined Jumeirah in 2007 to manage the kitchens of the Madinat Jumeirah in Dubai and develop the concept of gastronomy specialized in wellness. Her role evolved until 2014 when she became responsible for the entire Talise wellness catering business. “Jumeirah recruited me in Germany, where I thrived in my little eco-hotel, which is also still managed by my family today. What I found interesting in their proposal was that I would be bringing a new style of life to the Middle East through healthy food. We were, at the time, pioneers in the region by opening the first vegetarian restaurant dedicated to wellness!”



A choice in our hands

The bounty of her cuisine is reflected in her intention to be beneficial in everything: “I offer delicious and nutritious food that provides energy and helps to build a healthy body. Food is a very powerful instrument. With each bite, we can improve our health, become slimmer, more beautiful - or not. The choice is in our hands.” Chef Gabi prepares very light cuisine. In her raw, vegetarian and vegan menus, she chooses the highest-quality ingredients: fresh, organic, local or regional. One of her signature dishes is quinoa vegetables with pumpkin and avocado medallions with a lemon sauce. It is an ideal blend of vegetable proteins, complex carbohydrates, vitamin A and C,



and healthy fats. But if nutritional quality is the keystone to wellness, the aesthetics of the site are also part of bringing balance to the body and the mind. “All of our restaurants are designed and decorated differently, depending on the local culture. For the most part, we use RAK Porcelain: I like the creativity, quality and versatility of their products. We even use it in the family restaurant in Germany!”



Red beets carpaccio



A meaningful profession

Chef Gabi does not just work in the kitchen; she also offers popular courses on education and nutrition in Dubai. In addition, she is the author of several vegetarian cookbooks, including one that won an award in Paris in 2011. “I want my work to be meaningful. I want to promote the benefits of a balanced nutrition and a balanced lifestyle. For me, eating healthy does not mean dieting. Making healthy food enjoyable, attractive and competitive has been my goal from the beginning of my career. Unfortunately, we lack education in this field. Chefs are not sufficiently trained in nutrition and the fact that many believe that light cuisine and gastronomy are incompatible is a misunderstanding with a very high cost.” Healthy cooking is also a daily challenge for mothers. Gabriele Kurz’s books and courses are a gold mine of information on how families can live healthier. Professional chefs can also learn a lot from her.

A varied and healthy buffet



The alliance of taste and diet is possible, and gastronomy may even pave the road to an ecological way of eating that is beneficial for the health of all.

www.jumeirah.com





EVENTS

PURE GLOBALISATION

RAK Porcelain at the Frankfurt Fair

Ambiente, the world's largest consumer goods fair, will run next year from the 10th to 14th February at the Messe Frankfurt, as usual.

Against this backdrop, we talked with Thomas Kastl, the Director for Consumer Goods Fairs, about the high expectations, the competition, the innovations planned and the organisational effort involved when 4,400 exhibitors and 140,000 visitors come to town.



Interview

THOMAS KASTL DIRECTOR AMBIENTE DINING



“Exhibitors and distributors from around the world come to Frankfurt to trade.”

How is the planning going for the 2017 edition of Ambiente?

We are right on schedule. But there is also still quite a bit to be done for an event which, for example, attracted more than 4,400 exhibitors and 140,000 visitors last year. In addition to exhibitor placements, we also have to plan a series of events and special shows.

Do you have to make these plans along the lines of “after Ambiente is before Ambiente”?

Planning for a major event like Ambiente is never really finished. While all the processes and timings have been defined in great detail, the agenda keeps going right up into the event.

What innovations /new features should visitors and exhibitors expect for next year?

First and foremost, Ambiente will be very British next year. The partner country for 2017 is the United Kingdom. The UK is always producing world-class design across a broad range of styles. This applies to the area of Dining as well as Giving and Living. We are looking forward to the partnership and the enthusiasm for design it will generate, which we will see live in Frankfurt in February. The United Kingdom also offers exactly the right mix as a partner country for Ambiente, both thematically and in terms of exhibitors. It is also incredibly rich in terms of lifestyles. This can be seen in particular in their dining culture.

What expectations do you have of the UK?

Expectations are high - that much I can say. Personally, I would be happy if the exhibitors from the United Kingdom brought everything they had to the event. There is an enormous amount of divergence between classical designs and contemporary creations. To get an impression of the range, just make a mental comparison between an English floral decoration and a Brit-punk design. The special presentation on the partner country in the foyer of Hall 4.1 will make this clear, I think.

What specifically is different in the area of tableware?

We are maintaining the highly successful Ambiente concept. It is ideally suited to the needs of Ambiente's visitors. Nevertheless, new features are always being introduced, primarily by new exhibitors. Themes we are currently further expanding are buffet dishes, small electrical appliances and BBQs.

What changes will there be in the Horeca sector?

Horeca* is a fast-growing segment that is increasingly important at Ambiente. Hotels, restaurants and caterers emphasise buying quality in large quantities. Ambiente serves the middle and high price segment in this market, which is currently deeply influenced by the provision of cruise ships as well as by a relentless hotel boom, among other factors. To support the industry, we will further expand this segment in the years to come. We are particularly pleased that Ambiente has become a fixed date on the annual calendar for Horeca buyers.

How many exhibitors will be present and how many countries do they come from?

We won't publish the figures until immediately prior to the event. But we expect a level similar to that of the previous year. The exhibition centre will once again be filled to the brim with innovations and trends. Our entire eastern section - for those who know the exhibition centre in Frankfurt - is, in fact, dedicated to the area of Dining.

Are any exotic countries going to be there?

Is anything even considered exotic anymore? Last year, we were pleased to have a number of new exhibitor countries. We had, for example, Burkina Faso, Jordan and Mongolia.

How much of a logistical challenge is it?

The organisation of Ambiente is a mammoth task every year. The main challenges are the number of exhibitors and their provenance from all over the world. This affects not only the trade fair itself, but also the set-up and dismantling of all the stands. On top of that, every day the equivalent of a medium-sized town - 30,000 to 50,000 visitors - comes to the exhibition centre. These are challenges that make a major music festival or other public events look very small by comparison. But the Messe Frankfurt is well prepared to take on challenges just like these.



THOMAS KASTL

Thomas Kastl has been the Director Ambiente Dining since March 2000. He studied business administration and started his career at Messe Frankfurt in 1993 as a sales consultant on the Ambiente and Tendance team. Thomas Kastl is himself a passionate amateur chef, and knows his way around the table and kitchen both as a professional in the field and as a practical user.

*“The fairs are always
a barometer of the economy.”*



Thomas Kastl, Director Ambiente Dining

Trade fairs are always a kind of economic barometer - what's your take on that?

That's right. Ambiente is pure globalisation. And so it has a finger on the pulse of the economy like few other similar events. Exhibitors and distributors from around the world come to Frankfurt to trade - Americans with the Chinese, Australians with Argentinians, South Africans with Swedes - and it also provides ideal access to the German market. Once a year, the world comes to trade at Ambiente - the leading trade fair for consumer goods.

What would you say distinguishes Messe Frankfurt GmbH, as the organiser of Ambiente, the world's largest consumer goods fair, as well as of the IAA and the Frankfurt Book Fair, which are both guest fairs?

Frankfurt has been an international exhibition centre for almost 775 years, which makes it a stage for consumer goods producers from around the world. As you can imagine, from this we have a fair amount of experience in dealing with changing economic conditions - experience that we have been building on for centuries. Our aim is to meet the individual needs of thousands of exhibitors and visitors alike. After all, it is the success of each individual who decides to make Frankfurt their exhibition destination year after year.

How are you doing against the international competition?

Our objective is to have the leading events in our markets and industry here in Frankfurt. Being number 1 is one thing, but staying number 1 is a much greater challenge. In addition, with 29 subsidiaries and 57 international sales partners, we have a unique presence in more than 160 countries. Of course, we have to keep an eye on what is happening at the other exhibition centres around the world. It is important, however, that we continue to develop our own events on an ongoing basis, together with the industries represented - because a fair is only possible with exhibitors and visitors. A recent example - as already mentioned - is Horeca at Ambiente. This programme for hotel, restaurant and catering buyers contributes optimally to the needs of designers of major projects and their customers, and has become a crowd puller.

And the growing Internet competition?

The exhibition industry is currently experiencing a real boom because people want to have a live experience with products, innovations and creations, in person. Personal contact is increasingly important in our increasingly digitised age. But as trade fair organisers, we of course also have to think about what opportunities the Worldwide Web has opened up to us, in order to have more targeted interactions with our customers and to open up new opportunities for them. The business contact of the future will not just be digital.

www.messefrankfurt.com

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where I think,
the room
where I dream,
the room
where I design.
Now, this room
is limitless.”

Erich,
Architect



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