

Just opened *Cater*

Masters of hospitality **Catertainment** bring the fruits of their practice to your own personal dinner table. **Sami Hochar** explains.



Why did Catertainment choose to set up its own catering business?

After 20 years in the hospitality business, I thought the time had come to provide my clients with a much more personal and intimate means of catering and entertainment. Catertainment itself has always catered events, but now marks the launching of its own catering service, 'Cater', bringing its years of expertise and *savoir faire* regarding high quality food and service.

What factors were most important to you when planning the service?

The key factor when planning a service is the client. Cater's team work alongside the client, making sure that their requests and wishes concerning the food, service and theme are being fulfilled and communicated before and throughout the event.

Exactly what range of services does Cater provide?

Our main focus is on private and refined dining, be it a corporate event, a private party or a cocktail reception. We cater dinners from 20 up to 250 people.

What great events have you catered recently?

The latest event we catered was 'Jamal', Roger Moukarzel's photo exhibition at Beirut Souks in December, where we introduced our own customised iced glass table used as a live sushi station – along with countless private intimate dinner gatherings held at our clients' homes.

I'm planning a dinner for 20 important business clients. How will Cater help me do this?

When you have a dinner for important business clients it's preferable to do set menus – it's more elegant and chic. Our chef suggests as a starter goat cheese, thyme and spinach wraps; as a salad, grilled vegetables with fresh mozzarella cheese and pesto sauce, and a selection of two or three main dishes for the vegetarian and non-vegetarian, such as risotto with porcini mushrooms, veal fillet with rosemary sauce and autumn vegetables or grilled salmon fillet on a bed of spinach.

(01 499099) www.catertainmentsal.com.

Q&A *Bethany Kehdy*

This food blogger learned to cook Lebanese food from her *teta*, and works it as an ex-pat and entrepreneur. She tells **Ellen Hardy** about her blog, Dirty Kitchen Secrets.

So, what's dirty about your kitchen?

Everything, including myself! When I cook it's like a hurricane ran through it.

How do you distinguish yourself from thousands of other food bloggers?

Ah, to distinguish! I did that a lot when I first started blogging and I think this very thing constantly preoccupies a lot of bloggers, which it shouldn't. We should just do what we do.

What's the dirtiest blog comment you've ever received?

LICK ME!

When you come back to Lebanon, where's the first place you go to eat?

Home, but I pick up a *lahme be3ajine* with a generous squeeze of *hamud* for the road. Restaurants I currently love: Seza, Chez Maguy and Tawlet. I recently had dinner at Le Gray and everything we ordered was perfectly cooked.

What do you order?

I like to order things that we don't often cook at home, particularly in the UK. I order little birds, sheep's brains... I absolutely love raw sheep's liver and of course one must have the rest of the mezze to boot.

What's the best thing about being a Lebanese American living in London?

Having a fresh, different perspective and learning the intricacies of a new culture.

What's Food Blogger Connect?

I founded FBC in 2009 because there was a real lack of support and community for food bloggers in the UK and Europe. FBC has become Europe's first and only conference and forum for food bloggers and food industry folks bringing together award-winning, star-profile guest speakers and attracting bloggers from all over Europe and beyond.

What are you getting excited about in the kitchen right now?

Developing modern, Lebanese-influenced dishes. There are some traditional dishes that should never be touched, but I love the liberating feeling of breaking boundaries. I also want to explore more of the lost dishes and recipes and try to reinterpret them in a way where people feel comfortable recreating them in their home.

Tell us a dirty kitchen secret...

I love to slurp tabbouleh *zoom*, so much that sometimes I do it in public – as discretely as possible, that is.

www.dirtykitchensecrets.com

