

Focus on Kumud Gandhi – food scientist

Feature



After a career in the commercial world, Kumud Gandhi went on to pursue a life-long ambition of working with food and re-trained in food science at the London Food Centre.

She now runs a very successful cooking academy and catering company The Saffron House. Often called upon to provide expert comment for national print media, radio and television, Kumud offers a unique insight into the diverse world of cooking and a deep understanding of the nutritional and medicinal value of foods.

In April 2009, stunning canapés created by Kumud made their debut in a sophisticated cocktail party scene on our TV screens alongside actors Ray Winston and Parminder Nagra in the compelling ITV drama 'Compulsion'.

Kumud has also worked closely with fashion TV and recently catered for the launch of 'The World's Most Expensive Suit'.

Born in Lancashire, Kumud moved to London at the age of 17 to study Economics at the London School of Economics. She went on to work for the Bank of England, Microsoft and the Ceridian Corporation.

In her final year in commerce, Kumud juggled both motherhood and a demanding career. With one young daughter and a second on the way, she decided to follow her passion for cooking and gave up the corporate world for good.

Kumud's passion for food grew from her Indian heritage as well as her own experience of British fare. Her parents, who emigrated from India in the 50s, passed on their love of both Indian and European dishes, giving her the best of both worlds.

Kumud has travelled widely throughout the Middle East and Asia, developing an understanding of the different styles of food and how ingredients are combined across the different continents and cultures.

In 2004, Kumud consolidated her knowledge of food by gaining a diploma in Food Science at the London Food Centre and the following year she launched her first business venture, The Saffron House. This is a full service catering company which delivers a stylish and sophisticated catering service to both corporate and private clients.

Her clients include the Saudi Royal Family and celebrities such as Madonna and Guy Richie, Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin. In 2005 she successfully pitched her own range of Indian chilled ready made meals to Selfridges.

Kumud is a firm believer that "we are what we eat", and is campaigning to bring healthy cooking skills into the classroom so that schools offer education in basic nutrition and food science to learn fundamental every day life skills.

In 2006, Kumud set up The Cooking Academy; a unique cookery school that teaches how to cook real food whilst exploring the chemical composition, nutritional and herbal values of food so that recipes look and taste wonderful, are quick and easy to make and encourage well-being.

Kumud currently lives in Rickmansworth with her husband and two daughters, aged 8 and 13. For more information on both The Academy and The Saffron House please visit www.thesaffronhouse.co.uk.

Businesses face big challenges as recession goes on



News

Businesses in Birmingham and Solihull were left facing the harsh realities of the recession as the UK economy surprisingly shrank by for a record six quarter in a row.

The shock 0.4 per cent third-quarter fall takes the total loss of output since the recession began last year to 5.9 per cent, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported recently.

Will Rogers, policy adviser at Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCI), said: "These figures came as a shock with most experts expecting the UK officially to be out of recession.

"This underlines that the regional and national economy faces many challenges, not the least of which is the manufacturing sector of which the West Midlands still heavily relies.

"Our latest surveys showed that economic output was no longer declining in the West Midlands but there are no signs of growth. This coupled with the fact that unemployment in the West Midlands is higher than anywhere else in the UK, presents sobering reading.

"It's important that the challenges facing business are not underestimated. The Bank of England's inflation report is due out next month and this will highlight the prospect of any recovery.

"These deeply disappointing figures will raise the prospect of the Bank Monetary Policy Committee extending its quantitative easing programme."