Presenting Scottish Curry Chef of the year

Presenting Scottish Curry Chef of the year, Ashok Ram

When did your interest in cooking begin?

It really started at the age of 11 in Katmandu in my native Nepal when I saw my mother, father and grandparents cook for friends and family. Ever since then cooking has been in my blood. In Nepal the culture of hospitality is a big thing – as normal as good manners!

How did you train to be a chef?

That grounding within the family gave me a good start on which to build a career. When I came to the UK in 1996 of course I had to start at the beginning and that was as a kitchen porter – a very underrated but key part of any restaurant team. I worked my way up in the Khan Group of restaurants in the Lothians including Itihaas in Dalkeith, and was trained up by Group Director Matin Khan (also a previous winner of Scotland's Curry Chef of the Year) to be Head Chef of Radhuni.

What's the philosophy behind your menu at The Radhuni?

Good simple food, a true taste of India/Bangladesh which is quite moderate in taste, flavour and texture.

Any interesting plans for the future?

I think I'm creative so have lots of ideas such as opening a cook school and launching a new type of restaurant with various influences of food and spices, and a modern art of cooking. For the time being, though, I have my hands full with such a busy restaurant!

If you could cook dinner for anyone, who would it be?

The Queen. I'd love to serve her a true taste of South Asia at The Radhuni and give her dining memories to cherish.

Ashok Ram Scottish Curry Chef of the Year