

Multicultural cook book on sale now

Multicultural mums in Edinburgh have written, tested and curated recipes for a new cookbook. Profits from the sale of the book will go towards further supporting minority ethnic mothers in Edinburgh.

The women cooks and authors have settled in Edinburgh from around the world and were brought together at a weekly support group for minority ethnic mothers at Leith-based charity, Multi-Cultural Family Base (MCFB). They have put together a collection of their own recipes in a new cookbook, 'Mums and Spices,' which contains recipes from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Syria, The Cayman Islands, Malaysia and Sudan.

All of the women who contributed to the book are mums from minority ethnic communities who were referred to MCFB because they needed support to deal with social, emotional or practical difficulties, often associated with issues of identity, loss, displacement and trauma. The MCFB 'mums' group', which is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and the Robertson Trust, has provided a safe, supported and empowering environment in which the women can share their experiences, build positive friendships, offer each other support, and develop new skills.



Sultana, one of the mums and contributors to the book, used to be a successful chef but has found it hard to return to work in the catering industry since she had children. She said: “Now I am a mother of 3-year-old child, I don’t work in big hotels, but my food still rules everyone’s hearts and my passion for food is always alive in me. I still make my unique fusion twist, mouth-watering food for friends and family, and I invite them to give me feedback. Their comments give me so much happiness.”

All of the women have gained their Food Hygiene certificates since they started attending the group and have catered for a number of community events, including a Scottish Refugee Council ‘New Scots’ gathering, welcoming newly arrived Syrian families, as well as a multicultural ceilidh run by MCFB in Leith.

Emma Watt, project worker at MCFB said: “It has been humbling to work with the women, who have weaved their stories of childhood meals and journeys to Scotland into our weekly cooking sessions and delicious lunches. Working on the book has provided a focus for the weekly mums’ support group. Most

importantly, it has given the women a voice and a sense of empowerment.”

The book was launched at Ostara Café at the end of last month, led by two of the mums in the group and attended by Pam Brunton, multi-award winning Chef-Proprietor of Inver Restaurant in Argyll.

Pam spoke about her own experiences of being a female chef in a largely male-dominated industry, and her own path to becoming a successful chef. The book is now available for sale at Ostara Café Leith and the Leith Collective at Ocean Terminal as well as at MCFB offices.

Pam Brunton said : “Even in the most challenging lives, food is about so much more than just something to fill your belly. It’s inspiring that these women have used their skills in the kitchen to make a meaningful place for themselves in our small country, while giving us so many delicious things that we can all enjoy. Making a space on your bookshelves for this cookbook might be the most satisfying vote you get to cast all year!”