

Midlothian restaurant boss named UK's top curry chef

Matin Khan, who runs two restaurants on the outskirts of Edinburgh, has been named the UK's top curry chef by the industry's trade magazine.

Khan is executive chef of Itihaas in Dalkeith and The Radhuni in Loanhead and he received the award at the Curry Life Awards in London. What's more, Radhuni was awarded the title of the UK's best curry restaurant.

Khan opened the 80-seat Itihaas restaurant in 2007 and the accolades include Scotland's Curry Chef of the Year, Best South Asian Restaurant and Restaurant of the Year in the Midlothian and East Lothian Chamber of Commerce awards.

His son Habibur, who accepted the award on his behalf, has managed Radhuni since it opened in 2011. At the age of 23 in 2019 he became the youngest person to win a major award in the British Curry Awards.

The audience at the awards, which celebrate the best of the UK's multi-billion-pound curry industry, included Minister for London, Paul Scully, former UK Health Secretary, Baroness Virginia Bottomley, her MP husband Sir Peter (longest serving Member of the House of Commons), and Lord Karan Bilimoria, founder of Cobra Beer and a former President of the Confederation of British Industry. The event was hosted by ITV news presenter Lucrezia Millarini.

Bangladesh-born Khan has been a chef for over 40 years. His family moved to Cambridge when he was a teenager and it was there that he began honing his cooking skills in the family home.

He said: "It's a great honour to be described as the finest curry chef in the United Kingdom. There are so many wonderful chefs working in thousands of restaurants all over the country that I am truly humbled and very proud.

"My emphasis has always been on developing authentic recipes and working with the finest kitchen and front-of-house staff."

The 120-seat Radhuni (its name means passionate cook) is one of only three Indian-style restaurants in Scotland to have been awarded an AA Rosette for culinary excellence.

It is regularly placed in the British Curry Awards' Hot 100 and the Radhuni was named Scottish Curry Restaurant of the Year in 2020 and 2021. In July this year it took the same title in the Scottish Restaurant Awards.

Habibur Khan commented: "These are remarkable achievements for my father and the restaurants he established. Helped by my father's guidance, the team at Radhuni have worked tirelessly and with great skill to create a constantly first class dining experience."

FOOTNOTE: Curry Life magazine reaches 10,000 Indian, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Nepalese and Pakistani restaurants serving millions of customers a year and the curry industry is said to account for two thirds of all eating out in the UK.

