

BACKGROUND OF THE PROPOSAL/PROJECT

Have you ever wondered what will happen to your families' customary recipes after your parents or grandparents pass?

Will those authentic family traditions, cooking methods, tips and tricks disappear, be lost forever?

We all have fond memories of our family dishes and those food adventures from our childhood. Memories of our huge vegetable garden, trips to the market and family gathering to make pasta, that was spread on our beds to dry; and my parents creating delicious delicacies from their homegrown local produce.

Also let's not forget the array of sweets created and lovingly laboured over for special occasions and events; still bring me back to a place of happiness.

These foods may have looked simplistic but were bursting with flavour, intensity, passion and of course the secret ingredient...love!

I also recall them using every part of a carcass, with nothing left to waste from an animal or fish, or any protein. I also remember them making jelly with bones, stocks, sauces and even soap with the fat!

These cooking methods and bi- products produced, were matched by stories from their hometown. Unknowingly we were being educated about life, food and its history. The authenticity of the struggles and creating meals based on availability and necessity.

Food was the avenue for sustenance, but more so as a means of showing love and appreciation to family, friends, the community, the farmers, stall holders and more.

No matter what part of town you were from the market was and still is the place to be for great local and fresh produce.

With the passing of my father who was an exceptional cook, and with my mother taken ill, I found myself wondering about all my family's traditional foods and if the cooking techniques would be lost with them, and me, should my children have no interest in learning them?

This brought a desperation as I saved every memory and opportunity to learn the traditional foods from my mother in an eager bid to preserve our heritage and others across the globe, that have made Australia home.

This also primed me to ponder about the multitude of cultural cuisines facing the same fate.

I wanted to not just preserve these precious foods but figure out a way to make them popular in modern society, and in the same way give respect to the originality and authenticity of each dish served.

Many of our foods served in cafes and restaurants look appetising; but lack the flavours and that wholesome goodness from our past. As the Japanese say the Umami in a dish.... The humbling and satisfied feeling during food; let's be honest the dishes should take you somewhere.. to spike a goodtime feeling in our memories, that's what good food is to me and to all of us.

Videos like “Pasta Grannies”, do an excellent job in showcasing exquisite authentic simple cuisine; however, influences of celebrity chefs have seen us striving for new cooking techniques, buzz foods and words and wacky trends; therefore, food brand awareness may “wash out” and forgotten along with the history, the beauty of the simplicity of foods from our ancestors food approach.

My proposal is designed to bring back the traditions or at the very least document them in a way to incite interest and create excitement not just to our own families, but more so amongst up-and-coming chefs and have them re-created in a sexy’ manner that would appease any 5- star diner!

Current shows, such as My Kitchen Rules, and Master Chef have helped enthuse the public and interest in the industry; but as it is scripted reality and competition based, and much is edited to create gossip controversy and drama, rather than the love of food and its heritage.

THE PROJECT/PROPOSAL

There is no question mainstream television and social media are influential in advocating a new generation of chefs. Hence my proposed concept is designed to educate, promote, and highlight traditional foods from the creators themselves and then have these transformed into modern day dishes by upcoming chefs.

I have created a reality show (the name yet to be finalised), that will follow similarities of ‘Master Chef’, and my kitchen rules with many distinctive differences.

- There are 2 groups of participants.
Group one. Men or women who are exceptional in cooking good, tasty wholesome food, must be over the age of 65. Preferably in their seventies or eighties. They will be referred to as the “OG” masters and are more like the teachers.
- Group 2 are the contestants consisting of newly qualified chefs of no more than 5 years. Contestants and OG masters will be of mixed nationalities.
- There is no time limit to create a dish

First half of the Episode

- The Senior cooks “OG” masters will need to produce an array of authentic dishes as they would have in their hometown (one per episode).
They will be filmed in their own kitchens of familiarity to avoid confusion, unnecessary stress and to promote authenticity. An interpreter may be used if they do not speak well enough English. The interpreter will not be seen on camera.
- A young chef or group of chefs will be present and observe and assist only with limited involvement and only under the direction of the “OG” masters. They must be in uniform to highlight professionalism. They may ask questions.
- The senior contestants’ dishes will be presented to a panel of 2 or 3 judges for tasting.

- The Judges are to be respected Executive chefs such as Peter Wright from Global Hospitality Group and Matthew Maslak from Borthwick Foods. Perhaps a 3rd guest judge who is an expert in the area of each dish can be introduced for a particular dish. For example, a dessert pastry chef if a sweet dish is being created.

Second half of the Episode{When edited}

- The young, qualified chef or chefs will then need to re-create the dish in all its authenticity but present it in a modern eye appealing manner, that may be served in a restaurant. This will take place at a later stage as it will allow them to research and provide any resources, they feel will assist them.
- Cooking will take place in a commercial kitchen with plenty of workstations. For example, at William Angliss or other cookery school, or the Master Chef Kitchen in Flemington, Melbourne.
- These dishes are also presented for judging and scores will be calculated in 3 parts.
 1. Taste comparison.
 2. Presentation.
 3. Dishes must also receive approval from the “OG” master, who will also judge the dish, primarily from a taste perspective. They will be flown down for the event and may give commentary with the judges during and after the chefs have presented their dishes.

The chefs are encouraged to add their own spin on the dishes. For example, if a pasta dish, and the “OG” master serves with parmesan and bread, the chef may choose to hollow out a parmesan cheese wheel and present it there, or add additional components that they feel will complement the dish; such as by making a web’ of parmesan to add ascetics.

They are also encouraged to use anything they learned about the history whilst asking questions that they feel will play homage to the dish and promote conversation.

- The winning dish of each segment is put into a beautiful hardcover cookbook along with a photo of the “OG” and a short bio. This could be sold to the public and would make a beautiful heirloom for the family.
The “OG”’s dish will also be accompanied by the young chef’s recreation on the following page.

The Finale /Challenges

OPTIONAL

The finale is the “OG” masters will team up with a young chef. This could be chosen by raffle or the “OG”’s can choose.

They then need to work together and create a feast for a celebration or dinner party.

4 course meal consisting of a

- Starter
- Entrée
- Main
- Dessert

They need to work together on taste and presentation and will be judged. The “OG” may have the support of family in the audience.

Additional challenges may include:

- The "OG" masters trying to plate up under the direction of the young chefs?
- Teams consisting of the young chefs and “OG” Masters having to utilise all parts of an entire carcass.

Prizes and cost of production will be paid for by sponsors. Two trophies can be awarded. All “OG” will receive a secondary trophy.

The intended screen time is just after the evening news and aimed at teenagers all through the elder generation. It is also aimed to inspire chefs alike to rekindle with the beauty, taste and originality of the food source.

SCOPE

The project is created and designed to motivate young chefs to be creative and to educate them on history and traditions of food techniques, flavours and source. The project will also offer them a unique opportunity to advance their careers by adopting methods, tastes and flavours by creating unique dishes, all the while paying homage and giving respect to the history of the “OG” master.

The project is also designed to preserve the antiquity and authenticity of generational dishes; and give respect to the “OG” Masters as their stories are being told.

The program is also designed to inspire chefs to research their own history of food and use this as inspiration to develop and establish their own take on an array of dishes. Taking advantage from the teachings which is unique and can be the catalyst for new dining experiences.

With the public viewing, it is hoped future generations of Australians would consider a profession in cookery or at the very least respect and think about the food they are consuming and appreciate the work that goes into preparing a meal.