

Dining

Follow the chefs and eat well!

Why do so many acclaimed chefs come from around the world to practise their culinary arts here in Bermuda?

Because they can! They get to work in The Fairmont Southampton, Coco Reef Resort and other such renowned hostelrys. It means that today, Bermuda's chefs are better trained and more professional than ever, treating diners to the world's best.

Any list of leading chefs would have to include Sanjay Leeme, the thirtysomething Sri Lankan star who just took over the Ocean Club, with South Shore views from The Fairmont Southampton as inspiration. There he blends Asian ingredients with European techniques to create unexpected delights like miso-marinated butterfish.

A recipient of numerous awards, Chef Leeme won the coveted Escoffier Cup at Bermuda Gourmet Getaway 2008. For his final presentation, he incorporated Oriental and fusion styles, impressing the judges with peanut-and-sesame-encrusted medallions of beef, mango curry, seafood satay and sweet soy. "I am very proud to be a chef," said the winner, thanking his colleagues for their support and guidance.

Other finalists were Chef Timothy Palmer, of Bacci, The Fairmont Southampton's Italian restaurant, presenting a pork dish; Chef Rajander Singh Bhandari, of Café Coco at Coco Reef Resort, with scallops; and Chef Michael Gomes, also from Café Coco, preparing a duck recipe. Sixteen of Bermuda's finest competed in the

event, hosted by Chef Rahman “Rock” Harper, who won the “Hell's Kitchen” competition.

The 2010 Bermuda Gourmet Getaway is planned for fall, featuring meet-and-greets with celebrity chefs, gourmet food tastings, wine and cocktail tastings, dine-around events, workshops for kids and aspiring chefs, and culinary competitions from fish chowder to cake decorating. Events climax with the Escoffier Cup, for which four finalists go head to head, iron-chef style, to determine Bermuda’s best. (bermudagourmetgetaway.bm)

Here are some of Bermuda’s other favourite chefs:

- At Blû Bar and Grill since it opened, Chef Baba works hard and has fun creating art with food. His Southwestern steak house, with postcard views of the sound, features beef, fish and impressive wines. Try the chef’s signature barbecue baby back ribs. His Sunday brunch includes all the standards plus lamb, sushi, smoked salmon, grilled chicken breast with salsa, and the local codfish and potatoes.
- At Bone Fish Bar & Grill, in Royal Naval Dockyard, Chef Livio Ferigo offers fresh fish and top meats at reasonable prices.
- Beau Rivage, overlooking Hamilton Harbour from the Newstead Belmont Hills, boasts Chef Jean-Claude Garzia, a winner of the Best Chef of France award.
- Chef Tony Gonsalves, of Rustico Restaurant & Pizzeria in Flatts Village, offers both Italian classics and local innovations.
- Chef Jonny Roberts says the food at his Bolero Brasserie, in Hamilton, is unpretentious brasserie-style fare — but it tastes like fancy French to us.
- The new 64° Bar & Grill, teeing off at the Port Royal Golf Course, promises memorable meals with Chef Troy Smith at the helm.

- Silk Thai Cuisine offers Bermuda something new by a team of Thai chefs from the Shangri-la hotel in Bangkok.

The Chef's Association of Bermuda, representing most of the islands' leading restaurants, is very active throughout the year, hosting summer beach barbecues, Oktoberfest celebrations, Christmas parties, wine events and regular dinner socials. Can you imagine the food at a meeting of Bermudian chefs? (chef.bm)