

PHOTO: NAGESH POLALI



HOME CHEF TO EXPERT

Offering delectable cuisine through her blog and classes on Google Hangouts and food consulting is Archana Doshi. Read on about her culinary exploits

SANGEETHA SAMUEL | BANGALORE

A path untrodden for this software engineer has become a passion now. Straying away from a lucrative job, this home chef has transformed from a food writer to a culinary expert in a phased manner. With close to 200 followers on Google+ and 430 followers on Twitter, Archana Doshi runs her own food blog, www.archanaskitchen.com.

She regularly holds cooking classes on Google Hangout. What started as a blogging routine about cooking soon transpired into a full-fledged work-from-home for this mother of two. For four-and-half-years, Archana's taught people to dish out easy-to-cook vegetarian food.

"It started when I quit working, as I had two children and was involved in full-time parenting. The experimenting with recipes began during the spare time and blossomed into full time online cooking classes now," says Archana.

Archana's Kitchen has spread out on Google Hangout and YouTube, giving a taste of vegetarian cooking to several visitors. From blogging, Archana went on to food consulting, gourmet and European cuisine.

"It feels good when one's work is recognised. Food consulting, expertise on restaurant, online culinary training around the world through Google, has kept me busy. She focuses on smart and healthy cooking. Be it appetizers, beverages, cakes, puddings, pies or pastas, she has delectable recipes to suit your palate.

The online video coaching classes too have been of great help in terms of getting the recipes done," she says. Archana is also penning her second cookbook. Donning the hat of food consultant, Archana helps in research and development of healthy food.

Some of the services extended are crafting recipes and conducting video training sessions when required by the client. Archana is also involved in menu design, menu re-engineering and maintenance, food presentation and photography.

Sharing a tip, Archana says that for any restaurant or food service organisation, a good menu is the most important and basic ingredient towards providing the highest level of service. "The menu is the key marketing tool for any restaurant. A fine dining restaurant will require a menu that is al-

ways fresh and engaging to the clients" she says.

Menu maintenance services are also offered from Archana's Kitchen where a dynamic menu that changes with seasons or months can be designed throughout the year.

Talking about her challenges, she says, "Every cuisine is unique, but to create vegetarian recipes is a huge challenge. To find the right ingredient to be replaced without having to change the taste is a huge task." She believes Indian food

is becoming increasingly popular in the West and has thus inspired many restaurants to incorporate Indian cuisine into their menus. Archana specialises in various regional cuisines of India.

Archana aims to set up a high end cooking studio where many cooking and food enthusiasts can come together to learn, create and become well informed about healthy living and food habits.

Explaining about the present venture, Archana says that she is recreating Moroccan and Japanese recipes. "Oriental recipes are generally an all-meat recipes. To create the same version in a vegetarian manner is a big challenge and knowing it is difficult has inspired me to pursue it with vigour to get the same recipes intact with vegetarian ingredients," she says.

Her journey of transition from a home chef to a culinary expert would not have been possible without the support of her husband. "My husband has been and is the pillar of strength ever since I began my blogging. He stood by me in all my endeavours and has given me the support and encouragement to carry forward the online cooking programmes," she signs off.

— sangikrish@gmail.com

The menu is the key marketing tool for any restaurant. A fine dining restaurant will require a menu that is always fresh and engaging to the clients — Archana Doshi

FRIENDLY COACH

R KALPANA

CHENNAI

She is the founder of The Academy for Communication and Learning



INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

To Kalyan, being a part of a good office group and sharing comradeship has always been important. Unfortunately this remained a wish. After joining a company, he always admired the way his colleagues and others in the office were able to share a camaraderie. Somehow he was not able to be part of any of their interactions and conversations. He did not have too many good friends.

SHEDDING INHIBITIONS

He had a mental block to start conversations, initiate and develop relationships. He was always reserved and inhibited. Building a rapport with colleagues is something we need to consciously cultivate in the corporate world. We cannot be single drivers when we are working together. In order to achieve good results in our work it is important to develop good interpersonal skills.

Listening to others, relaxed communication, choosing the correct words in our conversation, the confidence and ability by which we are able to interact, understanding the barriers in communications are important aspects of interpersonal skills.

CONFIDENCE BUILDING

In order to overcome his inhibitions, Kalyan has to take that first step of approaching others. Many like him have not understood that lack of interpersonal skills will be an impediment to success. We need to collaborate and cooperate with others. We need to be liked by others.

We need not submit to others to be liked, but we have to develop relationships and people skills, which ensure that we share and enjoy good rapport with our fellow human beings — be it in our personal, social or professional lives.

STEPS TO BE TAKEN

Facing the fear and developing more confidence is important. We have to learn to speak and talk what is accepted and does not cause controversies or hurt others. Knowing how to speak to different groups or people of different statures is important.

Similarly, we need to know how to sustain these relationships and ensure that people trust us. We need to project our skills and talents to the world. If we do not have the necessary exposure, we need to acquire it and train ourselves, become motivated, confident and inspire others too.

— kalpana@acl-india.in