

Metrolife

GOT A STORY TO TELL? EMAIL FEATURES@7DAYS.AE

Learn how to cook - in under an hour

Bored with the selection from your local takeaway? Learn how to prepare your own lunch with a new Media City cooking school

One of the biggest complaints voiced from most offices around Dubai is that there is absolutely nowhere decent to go and grab a bite to eat at lunch-time. Going to the same sandwich bar day-in-day-out, just because it is conveniently situated next to your building, can get quite sickening. And the one sandwich on the menu that is remotely palatable can usually end up tasting like saw-dust after you have ordered it countless times. So what's the alternative? Well you could prepare your own packed lunch in the morning, but whether you still want to eat what has usually turned into a soggy

concoction by lunchtime is another matter altogether. Or, even if you have the knack of packing a delightful lunch box, leaving it in the communal staff fridge until hunger strikes is a danger in itself. Such tasty looking lunch treats will undoubtedly attract curious and greedy foreign fingers from around the office.

But all is not lost - well not if you are lucky enough to work in the Dubai Media City vicinity, because a young German lady, by the name of Samira Rengert, has come up with a fabulous idea: Learn to cook on your lunch break. Samira has started up a cookery school, 'Cooking Sense', and on top of bundles

of different types of cooking classes, Samira and her three on-board professional chefs also offer busy professionals working in the area the chance to cook and eat their own delicious lunch.

The whole philosophy behind the company is that Cooking Sense is not only about cooking, but also about meeting interesting people and spending quality time with friends or colleagues in a home like atmosphere. Samira says she sees it as a new form of entertainment. 7DAYS was invited along to a class to brush up on some chef skills and see what the whole thing was all about.

The Cooking Sense kitchen is

beautifully housed in one of DMC's trendy lofts and the actual streamlined kitchen itself was originally designed to suit the loft, with the materials flown in from Germany. The layout of the place is perfect. A grand oak table, scattered with many cosy oak chairs of different shapes and sizes, greets you when you enter through the door. The kitchen area is spacious, airy and pristine clean. While upstairs the loft offers a type of chill-out area, with a couple of couches for exhausted chefs.

Our teacher for the hour was Lisa Colaso-Govias, originally from India, and raw papaya salad followed by fish with coconut and basil was the recipe of the day. The idea of the cook your own lunch class is to learn how to make simple but tasty recipes in about 35 minutes and then



sit down at the table and enjoy what was made for the remainder of the lunch break.

So armed with an apron, we got stuck-in straight away chopping peppers and grating raw papaya. Lisa had already prepared the rice, but she walked us through the rest of the menu and everyone played a helping hand in the final result - be it stirring, opening cans, chopping chillies or making a dressing. It is all very informal, which is favourable to encouraging conversation and it also allows members of the class to feel more at ease asking any questions they may have. Once the food was ready, the table was set and it was time to eat. I was a little dubious over the thought of the raw papaya salad, but its yummy taste and texture took me pleasantly by surprise. The red Thai fish curry was mouth-watering and know-



ing that your own sweat and blood went into preparing it leaves a further satisfying taste in your mouth.

Don't be fooled into thinking that cooking over your lunch break just sounds like more hard work, because it is anything but. It is fun and relaxing and a great alternative to the usual - sitting around with work colleagues talking shop over lunch.

And you leave, not just with the bill - but with a bunch of new friends, a delicious and easy recipe, new kitchen skills and a full belly.

Cooking Sense, located at Dubai Media City. Telephone 04 361 61 17 info@cooking-sense.com



WHAT'S ON THE MENU

COOKING CLASSES WITH CHILDREN - MINICHEFS

Together with the children, Cooking Sense chefs prepare easy to prepare recipes which than can be easily cooked at home. All classes include soft drinks and a small meal at the end of the class and a Minichef T-shirt.

ARABIC COOKING

Each class focuses on traditional dishes of a certain Arabic region/ country from North Africa and the Middle East.

BASIC BAKING

A set of five classes will introduce the skills for making basic dough and preparing different breads and cakes.

BEAUTY FROM THE KITCHEN

A class aimed at teaching you how to eat your way to beautiful skin.

SPECIAL DIETS

A healthy lunch served over a class on leading a healthy lifestyle. If you suffer from high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes, then this class is for you.