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SHA 57TH AND SHATEC 35TH: ANNIVERSARY

A Culinary Theatre for the Senses

27th September 2018 (World Tourism Day), marked two significant milestones: The Singapore Hotel Association (SHA)’s 57th and SHATEC’s 35th Anniversary. It was a whirlwind evening filled with gastronomical delights and indelible surprises!

A stunning round of dishes created by six SHATEC Alumni chefs, from appetizer to desserts, replete with exciting lucky draw wins, commanded the attention of over 500 guests.

The dinner featured a star-studded guest list including notable personalities, accomplished hoteliers and industry leaders, from GOH Mr. Chee Hong Tat, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Education, Mr. Albert Teo, President of Singapore Hotel Association, Mr. Loh Lik Peng, Chairman of SHATEC, to celebrity host Justin Mission with his quick-fire humour.

Speech by Guest-of-Honour Mr. Chee Hong Tat, Senior Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Education.

Mr. Noel Hawkes, Vice President, Engagement & Partner Relations, Resorts World at Sentosa Pte Ltd

“Advice for these young people, they would have to be very creative, very dedicated, have lots and lots of passion. Without the passion, it just doesn’t happen.”

– Mr. Noel Hawkes, Vice President, Engagement & Partner Relations, Resorts World at Sentosa Pte Ltd

GOH Mr. Chee addressed two crucial aspects the hotels and their stakeholders are striving towards in the Hotel Industry Transformation Map: the need for innovation using new technologies; and for upskilling and upgrading of workforce to adapt to a revolutionising hospitality sector.

In line with SHA’s strategic role in championing the transformation of the hospitality industry, SHATEC will continue to nurture competent talents and develop future leaders.

THE STORY OF THE SHA AND SHATEC JOINT ANNIVERSARY CAKE: OUR SHATEC GLOBE

A stunning array of gold-dusted choux pastries on this croquembouche symbolises the SHATEC alumni shining like beacons in the hospitality industry around the world! They also pave the way for our future hospitality talents and SHATEC graduates to emulate.

Designed and created by SHATEC pastry chefs, Chef Amy Lee, Chef Chan Phui Yoke and Chef Zavier Lee, here’s how this inspiring masterpiece came to be:

- With 357 choux pastry used, this celebratory cake weighs over a whopping 50kg!
- The SHATEC chefs overcame the challenge of getting the globe size and its pillar just right!
- It took just 3-4 days to complete! We enlisted the students’ help in painting edible gold on the choux pastry and affixing them onto the globe.

A wefie not to be missed!

Distribution of SHATEC furry friends to surprised guests

Reflection

“Celebrating 35 years of hospitality excellence is indeed a milestone for SHATEC! It has been a meaningful journey for us to be able to nurture the many talents for the industry. Even more rewarding to know is that many of them are holding key positions in the industry not only in Singapore but all over the world. SHATEC is truly the industry school and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our stakeholders for your support. The school looks forward to working even more closely with the industry in the years to come.”

– Ms Margaret Heng, Chief Executive, SHATEC and Executive Director, SHA

Mr. Albert Teo, President, SHA

Our students who worked this night with aplomb!

Speech by President Mr. Albert Teo, President, SHA

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Thank you to our SHATEC Alumni for curating a standout menu for the night!

Left to right: Ms. Chua Siew Beng, Director, Academic & Student Development, SHATEC; Ms. Margaret Say, Regional Director, USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC); Ms. Margaret Heng, Chief Executive, SHATEC.

A Timely Reminder

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Revealing the lucky draw winners!

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Being responsible for the revamp of the Coral Sea Hotels group in Papua New Guinea, I focused on hastening the improvement of national managers in regard to technical know-how and its application, while building up the managers’ confidence to apply these new managerial skills on the job. Recalling my previous experience of a similar challenge in South-East Asia, the effectiveness of SHATEC’s Management Development programme, then applied to another chain of hotels, came to mind.

SHATEC, being a South-East Asian based institute offering avant-garde hospitality know-how delivered by its pool of globally-experienced trainers, is well-positioned to understand cultural sentiments that are key to the development and delivery of the high-level 6-module Professional Certification programme which Coral Sea Hotels has offered to 18 national managers in 2018. It was indeed a great success, with many managers already assuming more responsibilities, and making promising headway for a promotion in the future.

– Mr. Marc Ehler, Group General Manager, Coral Sea Hotels, Papua New Guinea

Management Coaching & Mentoring – a six module hospitality programme designed by SHATEC Global for executives and supervisory employees, was officially launched in the sun-soaked isles of Papua New Guinea (PNG) in April 2018, in collaboration with Coral Sea Hotels group.

A training and development initiative by the leading group of hotels in PNG, the Professional Certificate programme marks the beginning of an exciting line up of customised training programmes with a coaching and mentoring focus, as PNG looks to Southeast Asia for the very first time to address gaps in local leadership and staff development.

Riding on Papua New Guinea’s burgeoning hospitality scene, Mr. Marc Ehler, Group General Manager of Coral Sea Hotels, recognises the expertise of SHATEC Global in this strategic cooperation. The six-module programme will develop their managers’ competencies in providing guest services and delivering other key performance results.

Mr. Victor Seah, Divisional Director for Business Development of SHATEC Global, draws similarities between Singapore and PNG, where there is urgency in enabling more local talents to step up and be at the forefront of helming senior management positions in the hotel industry.

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SHATEC Global

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About SHATEC

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SHATEC Times caught up recently with Ms. Pei Sin Yee, SHATEC Alumna (Diploma in Hotel Management, 2009), who has had almost 10 years of industry experience in professional housekeeping, to explore recent trends and the integration of housekeeping practices, old and new in the digital economy.

I

BEHIND-THE-SCENES HOSPITALITY

In thinking about housekeeping, generally one might associate the nature of such roles as a ‘dirty job’ with no progression. One could contest that such widely held perceptions are in part, correlated to a substantial number of foreign labour assuming housekeeping roles locally, while natives frequently look past this option as a career of choice in pursuit of other job passions in the hospitality field.

Treading the path where few of her fellow hotel management course mates would, Sin Yee nonetheless found great job satisfaction in her role as a housekeeping coordinator. “Our job involves implementing hands-on procedures efficiently and finding real-time solutions,” she recounted. “Staff strength has a huge implication on our preparation of room assignments in daily reports, because room attendants and their supervisors work hand-in-hand to prepare and inspect rooms. The housekeeping department has one of the strongest team dynamics in the organisation.”

Impeccable service is important to the housekeeping function. While there have been occasional challenges such as language barriers or “elaborate” requests from guests (such as four dozens of bottled water and a dust-free room!), Sin Yee assured us that there have also been numerous instances of appreciation shown to the housekeeping department for going the extra mile.

Staff appreciation is an important part of the organisational culture, so in addition to thank-you notes from guests, supervisors like Sin Yee will also make it a point to check on staff welfare regularly through personal touches like ensuring they have ample time for meals or breaks.

Contemplating staff recognition by the hotel, Sin Yee explained, “Our brand standard is that everyone should feel welcome, across all departments. Every employee is a talent to us and we appreciate their work.”

HOUSEKEEPING IN AN EVOLVING HOTEL SECTOR

Adhering to the plan outlined by Singapore’s Hotel Industry Transformation Map (ITM) to foster a competitive industry and strong workforce, the burgeoning hotel sector is fast integrating industry-wide productivity initiatives with “future-proof” systems to overcome manpower shortage woes, while pushing for higher yield.

Apart from an increase in room numbers and jobs created, demands for specific service roles such as assistant housekeeping managers and guest relations officers are expected to intensify as a result of consumer needs driven by inbound tourism. There is strong focus on customer-oriented competencies, as delineated in the industry-applied skills framework and career progression re-design by SkillsFuture Singapore and Workforce Singapore.

Now in the AccorHotels’ Learning & Development team, Sin Yee has aligned her service philosophy with her employer’s brand promise: to make their hotel “a home away from home” for all guests.

Recent developments have seen the rise of mobile e-housekeeping applications which are automating daily operations and streamlining communications through smartphones and tablets devices. These disruptive technological tools present opportunities for hotels which are honing in on competitiveness, increasing room occupancy and enhancing guests’ experiences.

GROWTH IN HOUSEKEEPING ROLES

Learning needs and areas of employee development are quickly being transformed by these automated systems, including the advent of robots serving as digital butlers at Park Avenue Rochester Hotel & Suites.

On her L&D role, Sin Yee shared, “With e-solutions covering basic guest needs, we can channel more time and manpower resources towards value-adding engagement by housekeeping staff. It also allows us to re-evaluate the areas of personalised services tended towards guests.”

Besides teaching her staff on use of robots, Sin Yee also encourages them to work on communication skills, as well as facilitates job trainings where digital savviness is key.

“Learning doesn’t just stop at any one position. [Housekeeping staff] are not resistant towards such technologies – they know these tools will help them with their work, not hinder it.”

Sin Yee was also quick to point out the challenges in the shift to a mobile-oriented workflow. There are learning curves to overcome and extra time required to develop digital proficiencies. The fluidity of staff movement, daily-changing duty rosters, absenteeism or even having inexperienced interns on the team are real-life work conditions which will continue to drive the need for manual systems and paper reports. Nonetheless, when balancing the fine needlepoint between having greater savings without compromising on service quality and exercising more sensitivity towards staff wellbeing, helping our professional housekeeper embrace the new digital workplace may still be the way to go.

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IMBIBING SUCCESS

A Vinous Journey with Lei Dong, the Certified Sommelier

Lei Dong, SHATEC Alumnus and Certified Sommelier of The American Club, Singapore, won the title of 1st Runner-Up at the Finals of the 2018 Singapore Best Sommelier in French Wines Competition on 2nd October. He will go on to represent Singapore in the 2018 Asia Best Sommelier Competition in French Wines in Seoul, South Korea this December.

We caught up with Lei Dong to find out more about his journey as a wine professional, and how he had first caught the vinous bug!

WINE EDUCATION

How did you become a Certified Sommelier?

I self-studied and prepared for half a year before flying to Auckland, New Zealand for my examination. I passed last June. In fact, many people who pursue a career as a sommelier do not go to the extent of getting themselves certified. They can follow the guidance of a mentor, such as a head sommelier and slowly gain the knowledge they need through experience.

However, if you wish to become a Certified Sommelier, you will need to pass the examinations conducted by the Court of Master Sommeliers, an organisation founded in London, UK.

Did your time at SHATEC influence your interest in wines?

Oh yes! I first learned about wines when I was pursuing a Diploma in Hotel Management at SHATEC. My first wine mentor was Mr. David Chan (previous Assistant Director of Food and Beverage Studies). He was one of the most senior wine trainers at SHATEC back then. He imparted valuable knowledge which helped build my foundation as a professional sommelier today.

Is there adequate education and training opportunities for aspiring sommeliers like you in Singapore?

There are increasingly more institutions providing wine courses in Singapore. At SHATEC, there are WSET (Wine and Spirit Education Trust) courses. However, if we look at more advanced or more specialised qualifications, to be a Certified Sommelier, for example, we will have to fly to countries like Hong Kong or Australia for the examinations. These exams are usually conducted twice a year and are usually held overseas instead of in Singapore.

Do you feel it is important for people today to learn about wines?

Definitely. Wine appreciation is very much a part of our F&B culture and a common social activity these days. Wine knowledge will give us more confidence in selecting wines, thereby enhancing our social etiquette as hosts.

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What type of red wine would you recommend for beginners?

We usually recommend light-bodied wines like Pinot Noir and Gamay which are lower in tannins and are generally more fruity, which makes them easier for beginners to accept. If we start them off with a full-bodied Cabernet Sauvignon or Shiraz, beginners may not be able to appreciate them.

After being a sommelier for so long, are there any pet peeves that get to you over the years?

Many sommeliers will encounter this situation: guests who bring their own wines to the restaurant, or BYO (Bring Your Own), complaining about the corkage charge. This is definitely a pet peeve with many sommeliers!

Most restaurants will charge a corkage fee on wines usually ranging from $10 to $50. Sommeliers do not just open a bottle and pour the wine. We provide professional services such as matching wine glasses, preventing breakages and so on. Therefore, the charge takes all these costs into consideration.

Tell us more about career pathways for sommeliers.

We usually start off as Assistant or Trainee Sommelier, after which we can proceed to be a full-fledged Sommelier. We can step up to become Head Sommelier and eventually, clinch the spot as Wine Director.

Sommeliers also go into other professions in related fields, such as Beverage Manager in hotels and Sales Manager in the wine trade. In fact, many SHATEC graduates such as Lim Hwee Ping and Timothy Golf are doing very well in the wine industry right now.

What would be your career goal?

My long-term goal is to become one of the best Wine Directors in Singapore. For now, I am working towards being Head Sommelier at my current establishment, The American Club.

ABOUT SHATEC

What do you feel was most special about your SHATEC experience?

I had a great experience at SHATEC, because there were many experienced trainers who imparted deep skills and really bonded with us students. My trainers were also my friends; they shared their industry experience and gave me career advice. As students, we were well-informed on industry news and this was beneficial when we first started out working.

Any word of advice for your SHATEC juniors who are aspiring wine professionals?

The SHATEC Diploma in Hotel Management is a very good starting ground for budding sommeliers. You get to take subjects such as Restaurant Service Skills, Food and Beverage Cost Control, Principles of Accounting and even Professional Development in Hospitality, which are essential skills for a professional sommelier. In the F&B industry you must have patience and true passion. You work long hours - almost 10 to 12 hours a day, and diligence is a must. You must be diligent not only in work but in learning too. To achieve the goals you set for yourself.

Feeling inspired?

Check out our WSET (Wines and Spirit Education Trust) courses and SHATEC wine tours to jumpstart your ‘winsome’ career now!
The year 2018 has been an eventful one for our teeming island nation! Amid biennial mega-events like Food & Hotel Asia 2018, Singapore Airshow, and yearly hot-ticket highlights like the Singapore Grand Prix, Singapore features enviably in multiple world ranking lists.

“The World’s Best” is a stellar record of Singapore at her finest, a riveting medley of dining or tippling hotspots with trend-setting concepts and award-winning establishments that drive the nation’s international prestige - and bring the world closer to Singapore!

In 2019, there will be greater opportunities for the economy to benefit from rebounding tourist arrivals, regional expansion and new collaborations.

The 25 Best Countries in the World 2018°

The 2018 World’s 100 Greatest Places²

COO Boutique Hostel & Sociatel
Housing a wealth of spirits when you encapsulate the qualities of a dynamic backpackers’ community through tech design.

Atlas Bar
Housing a wealth of spirits commanding Art Deco-style opulence. Also ranks 8th in the World’s 50 Best Bars.

The 2018 World’s Best Transportation³

1st
in The Top 10 International Airlines
Singapore Airlines

1st
in The Top 10 International Airports
Singapore Changi Airport

The 2018 World’s Best Hotels’

Raffles Hotel
A 131-year-old Singapore icon with memories abound in the Tiffin Room and Long Bar held by visitors and guests. It continues to refresh the culinary scene with 10 restaurant and bar additions due early next year.

71st
in The Top 100 Hotels in the World

9th
in The 10 Best City Hotels in Asia

The World’s 50 Best Restaurants⁴

The World’s 50 Best Restaurants will hold its awards ceremony and events in Singapore next year, the first for The Oscars of global gastronomy to debut in Asia.

The World’s 50 Best Bars⁵

Singapore’s tippling scene comes out strong this year, testimony to its ascending reputation as a world-class cocktail destination.

The World’s 50 Best Places²

Resources:
5. https://www.worlds50bestbars.com/
Ho-ho-ho! Sedap lah!

Christmas yearly celebrations are central to the hearts of many without fail! Gift-giving, making festive orders or dining out in fine establishments are prevalent options. Conversely, hosting a Christmas party, replete with a sumptuous spread presents more considerations that may deter the novice party planner or home cook.

But switch up your festive plans this year! We’ll show you that Christmas planning doesn’t have to derive from luxury – you can feed your crowd affordably with something delicious, using easily sourced, everyday ingredients!

Evolving Traditions

In the spirit of an occasion that dictates tradition as Christmas does, we take on the classic, unpretentious pudding, with a need to innovate!

The Christmas pudding has indeed stood the test of time as a quick-fix for frugal cooks using leftover bread.

Recognising the pudding as a dish of thrifty origins, we infuse this traditional recipe with a dose of local identity, adapting to common ingredients for hints of new flavours.

Everyday Ingredients

At the centre lies a quintessential comfort food, there is much room for creatively varying this pudding’s form and flavour. Test the versatility of this dish using various types of bread and pairing complementary ingredients.

Here, we have reinterpreted and incorporated the elements of the popular local dish, Nasi Lemak, spinning off a unique take (and an equally affordable option) on this familiar treat.

This recipe that turns the traditional bread and butter pudding on its head will have your loved ones returning next year for more! Enjoy!

Nasi Lemak-Inspired Christmas Pudding

Serves 4

Ingredients:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Custard Mixture</th>
<th>Garnish</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 slices White bread</td>
<td>50 gm Roasted or sugar-coated peanuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 ml Coconut milk</td>
<td>50 gm Silver fish or fried anchovies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 gm Caster sugar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 gm Melted butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Eggs (beaten)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>5 ml Pandan paste</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 stalks Pandan leaves</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2 slices Young ginger (sliced)</td>
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<td>1 stalk Lemongrass (sliced)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Garlic cloves</td>
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Method:

01 Warm up coconut milk in a pot, stirring in sugar, salt, pandan leaves, garlic, lemongrass, and young ginger.

02 Infuse for 5 minutes, then strain the ingredients using a fine sieve to remove.

03 Pour the coconut milk gradually into eggs and mix well with pandan paste.

04 Grease a baking dish with melted butter.

05 Butter the slices of bread generously and layer in the baking dish.

06 Add custard mixture and leave to absorb into bread for 10 minutes.

07 Bake over a water bath (bain-marie) at 190°C until the pudding is set and browned.

08 Sprinkle anchovies and peanuts to top it off before serving.

Hot-Tip!

Incorporate chilli paste in custard mixture for a kick!

Nasi Lemak-Inspired Christmas Pudding

Recipe by Samson Lin, Chef, SHATEC

Pro-Touches:

• Use chilli paste in custard mixture for a kick!

• Use the buttery rich Brioche as an alternative to spreading butter on bread.

• Infuse the coconut milk mixture for longer to draw out its flavour.

• Stir in blade of fresh cinnamon for extra savoury notes.

Savoury Notes:

• Integrate cooked bacon pieces into soaked bread before baking, or top pudding with bacon before serving.

• Substitute sugar with 1 teaspoon of salt. This savoury pudding is perfect to go with turkey!

Recipe by Samson Lin, Chef, SHATEC

HAVE IT YOUR WAY

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Garlic cloves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 gm Salt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Method:

01 Warm up coconut milk in a pot, stirring in sugar, salt, pandan leaves, garlic, lemongrass, and young ginger.

02 Infuse for 5 minutes, then strain the ingredients using a fine sieve to remove.

03 Pour the coconut milk gradually into eggs and mix well with pandan paste.

04 Grease a baking dish with melted butter.

05 Butter the slices of bread generously and layer in the baking dish.

06 Add custard mixture and leave to absorb into bread for 10 minutes.

07 Bake over a water bath (bain-marie) at 190°C until the pudding is set and browned.

08 Sprinkle anchovies and peanuts to top it off before serving.

Hot-Tip!

Incorporate chilli paste in custard mixture for a kick!

Nasi Lemak-Inspired Christmas Pudding

Recipe by Samson Lin, Chef, SHATEC

Pro-Touches:

• Use chilli paste in custard mixture for a kick!

• Use the buttery rich Brioche as an alternative to spreading butter on bread.

• Infuse the coconut milk mixture for longer to draw out its flavour.

• Stir in blade of fresh cinnamon for extra savoury notes.

Savoury Notes:

• Integrate cooked bacon pieces into soaked bread before baking, or top pudding with bacon before serving.

• Substitute sugar with 1 teaspoon of salt. This savoury pudding is perfect to go with turkey!
Copenhagen: the capital of Denmark, a fixation for foodies the world over, meets one SHATEC culinary graduate.

Among the handful selected from a planetary pool of applicants to intern at the 1 Michelin star Restaurant 108, SHATEC alumnus Marcus Ong returns after his 3-month stint to share first-hand accounts of his breath-taking culinary pilgrimage 6,000 miles away from home.

A SHATEC CHEF GOES TO COPENHAGEN:
My Michelin Star Internship by Marcus Ong

The restaurant has high volumes nightly, averaging about 150 persons on slower evenings and hitting 250 on our busiest nights. I was only able to complete washing around 5kg of artichokes working from morning till night, which were all used up within two days.

The Changing Room
Each morning, I climbed up three storeys of steep, old wooden stairs with the rest of the interns to change into our uniforms. Our changing room was in fact the dry store, with no privacy. Side-by-side, both male and female staff (interns as well as full-timers) changed into their uniforms together. Us interns had a large plastic box to hold our belongings, which we lined up along the old wooden floor. Only full-time staff were allocated lockers.

Morning Workouts
One morning, 50 bags of coal weighing 10kg each came in. We formed a human chain from the restaurant to the next building, tossing bag after bag to the next person in the line. Large ingredients like celeriac or rutabaga came in every two to three days in quantities over 200 kilos each time, which we moved in the same manner. This was how we began work each day with what we considered our usual morning workout!

At One with Nature
On rest days, we volunteered to harvest for pine shoots, herbs, flowers or whatever the season had to offer. The foraging usually took about two or three hours in the morning.

A Taste of Nordic
In making the most of our internship, we also explored Copenhagen, savouring mind-blowing pastries with coffee in the mornings and sipping fine Nordic wines in the late afternoons.

A SHATEC CHEF GOES TO COPENHAGEN:
My Michelin Star Internship by Marcus Ong

“Choke-ing” Up on My First Day
My first task was to wash and scrub artichokes until its skin turns from brown to almost white, using my bare hands and a sponge. The pulp of the flower is baked and pureed while the skin is deep fried into chips. The toughest part of the scrubbing is the irregular shape and curves of the vegetable, making it virtually impossible for fingers to reach into the crevices to remove the trapped dirt. Having to hunch over working on the intricate ingredient for long hours also took a painful toll on my back.

Last Day
On our last day of work, our Chef de Partie took out a few bottles of wine to celebrate with the interns. We proceeded to our favorite spot, enjoying the wine with pizza, shooting the breeze with great camaraderie until the wee hours of the morning.

Hygiene 101 (Times Two)
We do a thorough cleaning twice every day, once before we eat lunch where we do a full cleanse of the kitchen and set up for dinner; then again after service where we would deep clean the whole kitchen, including the stoves and kitchen countertops.

From Kitchen to Table
Service staff are scarce in the restaurant, so all of us had to double up serving food to the guests and explain in detail what they would be eating and how they should eat it. We would walk with calm and ease away from the guest into the kitchen – and once ‘safely’ behind the doors, rush madly to plate up for the next table!
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