

CCA, Manila opens Makati campus for flagship internationally recognized program

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Cook Magazine



Vincent Leroux, director of ICDE and president of Disciples Escoffier Hong Kong

CCA, Manila, the country's pioneer culinary school, recently opened its new campus in Makati for its flagship program that will expose aspiring chefs to the best practices of French cuisine.

Locally-based students now have the chance to train under French Michelin-star chefs and masterchefs through Disciples Escoffier Diploma in Culinary Arts, a six-month introductory course developed by the Center for Culinary Arts, Manila (CCA, Manila) and Institut Culinaire Disciples Escoffier (ICDE) of Hong Kong. ICDE is the professional culinary school of Disciples Escoffier International, a non-profit organization with presence in 26 countries and has more than 25,000 members that include the world's most prominent chefs, guided by the standards established by legendary chef Auguste Escoffier.

"When you speak of French cuisine, it refers not only to food but also to a cultural and historical concept. Through the ICDE program, we teach students not just techniques and skills but more importantly philosophy, history, and culture," said resident Chef Instructor Bruno Tirel. Students have the chance to learn from resident ICDE chefs and visiting masterchefs from around the globe.



Chef Michel Portos with one of the CCA Makati students who worked with him during the demo

Masterchef Michel Portos visits CCA's Makati campus

French masterchef Michel Portos recently visited the Philippines for the first time to conduct a cooking demo at CCA's Makati campus. The cheerful 2-star Michelin chef prepared three dishes, all of which were served at one time at his restaurants "Le Malthazar" and "Le Poulpe" both located in his hometown Marseille.

Together with resident Chef Instructor Bruno Tirel and some of the graduating students from the pioneer batch of the ICDE program, Chef Michel prepared a mouthwatering dish called Roasted Monkfish in Risotto with pomelo and

botarga (fish egg lasted and dried in wax to preserve it). The chef emphasized that one must respect the correct cooking method for ingredients such as risotto so that the flavors of the dish will come out perfectly.

Next, he prepared an elegant dessert made of pastry cream topped with pears cooked in passionfruit juice, and decorated with translucent crystalline biscuits prepared by Chef Bruno. He finished the enjoyable demo with Watermelon “Beef Carpaccio” style.

Through visiting chefs like Chef Michel, Filipino students obtain world-class training without the need to travel halfway across the world.

Mastering consistency

Chef Michel also shared some personal insights and lessons he has learned in his more than three decades in the industry. His father did not support his career choice because he pictured a chef as someone fat who cooks inside a dirty kitchen all day.

“One of the reasons why I wanted to master this craft was because I wanted to make my father understand that a chef is a highly skilled and professional person,” Chef Michel said.

The chef also spoke about understanding the philosophy behind French cuisine, which involves respecting and selecting the best ingredients that ties in with his belief of being transparent about food sources.

And if there are three things that young culinarians must remember to succeed, it would be artistry, consistency, and keeping an open-mind to so you can learn from colleagues and other people in the industry. “Consistency is the key. Once you master the craft, you need to transmit it. Transmission is very important. You cannot stay in your own restaurant doing your own recipes forever without looking at what’s happening around you,” he stressed.



2-Michelin Star Chef Michel Portos

Poised for the global arena

Through this innovative program at CCA-Makati, young culinarians have a strong foundation of French techniques that will help propel them towards an international career.

Enrollment for the second batch of CCA-Escoffier French Cuisine course program is now ongoing. For inquiries, call (02) 218-8566, email: talktoccamanila@gmail.com or visit www.cca-manila.edu.ph. CCA Makati is located at 139 H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

