



Aneke Spacie

We are often asked how we arrived at our chosen career. For me it was easy, in the sense that it was the career that chose me.

I knew at an early age that I was destined to become a chef after almost setting the family home on fire trying to make pancakes at 2am at the age of 7 - after watching one too many episodes of 'Why Don't You'.

At the age of 13 I was fortunate enough for my parents to refuse my much needed pocket money increase from 50p a week to £1, so here I started with my first ever job, washing up in a 30 cover à la carte restaurant for £ 1.80 per hour.

Gradually moving up the 'food chain' from scrapping stockpots to scrubbing mussels, opening oysters and then chilled starters and desserts. I felt very privileged to be asked to squeeze Freezing lemon sorbet back into a hulled out Lemon and popping the lemon lid back on - funny how that Lemon Sorbet is now the highlight of my local Indian.

My weekend job moved into an evening vocation and I spent my summer holidays working on my father's ship - he is a captain in the navy. Hanging out in the galley with the navy chefs, something unheard of now through Health and Safety, I learnt so much about discipline, organisation and fishing from a great height!

At the age of 14 I persuaded my parents that I was ready to commit to catering for their "highly anticipated" New Years Eve bash. As 40 guests arrived for champagne and a buffet I joyfully piped fillings into eggs and made fun canapés, stilton cheese straws (the rage back then) and stuffed countless olives. At midnight I broke my folks' hearts by convincing them that nursing - the path they had in mind - was NOT going to work. After one snowball too many they relented and handed me a five-pound note for a "12 hour day". "What?" I gasped... To which they both replied "it won't get better in catering."



Back to my bistro at night and reading countless cookery books during the day. I loved learning classic French cooking with a handle bar moustache wearing sweaty French chef who loved his Brandy.

After qualifying in the commence sense and basics of cooking I purchased a one-way ticket from my small Lincolnshire village and headed to London.

After spending a couple of years working in numerous bars, pubs and restaurants around the world I found my footing and realised that all my hard work was paying off.

I have been lucky enough to work with some of the finest chefs in the world and in some of the finest restaurants: Rainer Becker at Zuma, Mark Hix and Alan Bird at the Ivy and Alain Ducasse in New York.

I have prepared and cooked food in such diverse locations as game reserves in Africa, on amazing yachts in the med, ski resorts in Canada and spent a summer learning to cook authentic Italian in Naples.

From intimate Dinner parties to functions of 3000, Royal bank of Scotland Rugby, VIP Vodafone Derby, Royal Ascot, and Chelsea Flower Show.

I have presented my knowledge in the culinary skills theatre kitchen to hundreds of people at London's Olympia and won Rosettes while head chef at the Sotheby's Café.

I have both designed and created exposés for Harrods food halls and enjoyed the fun of working at the Ivy and J Sheekys, created 'fashion food' in seasonal fashion colours for Giorgio Armani and recently left my position as Executive Development Chef for British Airways First and Business class where I looked after a culinary council and taught young students as well as creating restaurant quality meals to be eaten at 35000 feet.



I enjoy all aspects of food nutrition and have created menus and meals with a wide range of diets – religious, health and fads. Also using nutrition as a tool in combating stress in the work place, through teaching simple but fun methods of making your daily dietary requirements work for you.

Development has been my path since joining Harrods as Development Chef for the 26 restaurants and food halls.

I enjoy food photography as a hobby and some of my work has been used for Waitrose Food illustrated, The Caterer and Hotel Keeper and restaurant Magazines.

I enjoy a hands-on approach to both working in detail and in teaching, leading a team and being part of a great team - along with motivating and organising to ensure that functions run smoothly.

For the past 5 years I have been the sole supplier of canapés for the Venice Simplon Orient Express.

I have written and been published on the subject of elegant and easy canapés and enjoy creating Japanese-Italian fusion and modern British food.

Now living on the Isle of Wight looking to open a cookery school whilst I am the food editor for Style of Wight Magazine.