



# CHAÎNE GANG

By Katrina Valkenburg

The Chaîne des Rôtisseurs is a pre-eminent gastronomic society that tops the scales when it comes to staging astoundingly extravagant culinary dinners. Only the Romans did it better – or perhaps not.



THE doors to Gourmet Garage uncharacteristically closed to the public at 2pm on Saturday, 16th February...but it wasn't for any humdrum reason like stocktaking.

The doors were shut so that the up market food store could be transformed by a bevy of hotel staff into a dining room for 72 extremely fortunate gourmands. The aisles were cleared of freezers and move-

able shelving was shunted out of sight to make way for tables and chairs and a multitude of cooking equipment to take centre stage.

Entitled 'Gourmet Grazing', this was a dinner showcasing foodstuffs from all corners of the globe, expressly for the enjoyment of members of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs.

Brave stewards wearing Antarctic clothing served Beluga Caviar and shots of Grey Goose Vodka in the freezer storeroom; five varieties of North American oysters; shaved Spanish Navidul Jamon Iberico; locally grown yabbies served in their own broth; wild salmon from the cool depths of the Atlantic baked in a course sea salt; grain fed rack of baby Australian lamb; eight-hour slow-roasted rib of Waggu beef; Chambord Flambéed Berries with Hazelnut Financier; Reblochon, Stilton...the list went on and on. Oh – did I forget to mention the

wines? Delamotte Champagne, Henschke, Domaine Laroche, Chateau Guard-Laros, De Bortoli Noble One and, and, and...so, who are these gourmands and what is the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs?

The Chaîne des Rôtisseurs is an extraordinary gastronomic society launched in Bali in 2001 with the goal of showcasing and supporting the immense talent and creativity of Bali's chefs – both Indonesian and those drawn here from all corners of the world – and to share the passion for the enriching combination of fine food with equally fine wine and good company.

Founded in Paris in 1950, the Chaîne is based on the traditions and practices of the old French Royal Guild of Goose Roasters (these birds were particularly appreciated in that epoch). Its authority gradually expanded to the roasting of all poultry, meat and game.

The Guild of Goose Roasters was one of

several guilds founded by Louis IX in Paris in 1248 to thank the craftsmen who had contributed to the building of the Sainte Chapelle, next door to the Cathedral of Notre Dame.

In 1610 the Guild received its Royal Warrant as The Brotherhood of Roasters and its coat of arms was granted. The brotherhood flourished for over 500 years until the French Revolution, when it was abolished along with all the other guilds in 1793.

Reestablished in 1950, the society today has members in more than 100 countries around the world. The society follows the programmes and policies set forth by the international society headquartered in Paris.

The Chaîne actively encourages the raising of catering standards and the training of future chefs. Both of which it achieved at Gourmet Garage. Guest chefs from some of the best restaurants and hotels on the is-



Left to right: David Wilson, Heinz von Holzen, Michael Burchett and Yanie Mason.

land, along with their staff, ensured that this was a night to remember for a very long time. And the time and effort by the team at Gourmet Garage and Lotus Distribution was astounding. We are all incredibly lucky to live and play on an island with such an abundance of fertility for growing arguably the best produce in the world, which, when handled by such passionate chefs, becomes sheer culinary heaven.

*The Yak* spoke with a couple of members of the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs and asked them a few pertinent questions:

### Bill Busch, Gourmet Garage

#### What is your profession and job title?

I am the Personal Assistant to the Director Henny Santoso at Gourmet Garage, providing coaching, working with and sharing my experience with the dedicated Lotus Food Service team.

#### Why did you join the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs?

I have been in the arena of importing and distributing fine foods for F&B operators since the 1970s. The Chaîne des Rôtisseurs venue provides the opportunity to have a dinner with the culinary professionals, and that's a special treat.

#### How has it developed in Bali since you joined?

Over the years, I have been a member in Jakarta and Bali. Bali is fortunate to have a professional committee that maintains the

highest standard and continues to strive for culinary excellence.

#### Why did you decide to host a Chaîne des Rôtisseurs event at Gourmet Garage?

David Wilson (GM at The Ritz-Carlton, Bali Resort & Spa) suggested that we use the Gourmet Garage. The venue and ingredients were our contribution. The credit for the success goes to the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs, Bali Chapter, Mr Heinz Van Holzen, who coordinated the menu for the evening, supported by a cast of executive chefs and F&B Managers from the Bali Culinary Professionals (Markus Krickelberg – F&B Director Westin, Herman Feigl – F&B, Discovery Kartika Plaza; Hans Jurgen Gorsler – Executive Chef, Discovery Kartika Plaza; Stefan Mueller – F&B, Nikko Bali; Juergen Domani – Executive Chef, Nikko Bali; Darren Steven Lauder – Executive Chef, Nusa Dua Beach; Andreas Krampf – Executive Chef, The Ritz-Carlton, Bali Resort & Spa; Ida Bagus Wisnawa – Executive Chef, Bumbu Bali Restaurant and Billy Marinelli – Marinelli Shellfish Co.).

#### Have you Chaîne-d elsewhere in the world?

Not yet!

### David Wilson

#### David, why did you join the Chaîne?

I joined after attending a dinner at The Oberoi a few years ago. As a newcomer to Bali we attended as guests and found a wonderful group of people who were

members. Since then we have always tried to ensure that Chaîne dinners provide an experience that cannot be bought by regular diners.

#### Based on the traditions of the Guild of Les Oyers (the old French royal guild of goose roasters) would you say that the Chaîne is Masonic in nature?

Hmmm...never really thought about that, and as I am not a Mason I am not well versed on their practices and rituals!

#### Is there a secret handshake? Or any other kind of shake?

No shakes of any kind, although I do remember one dinner where a mini vanilla shake was served with the chocolate desert!

#### What does it take to get kicked out of the Confrérie?

I don't know of anyone who has been "kicked out". Maybe you could try disrespecting other members, or wearing inappropriate clothing! The Chaîne in Bali is more casual in nature than some of the other countries, partly because Bali encourages a more casual style. We only wear formal dress at the annual dinner; the rest of the dinners are more casual. The concept of "good food and friendship" around the table means that we are fairly easy going.

#### Are there any induction ceremonies?

Yes of course. No self-respecting organisation with such a long history would be without a ceremony. To join the Chaîne, you must be recommended by two exist-

ing members. Then you are "knighted" and pledge allegiance to the Chaîne.

### Sandra Macarthur

#### What is your profession and job title?

Design Consultant.

#### Why did you join the Chaîne?

The beautiful Tina Shazell insisted I would love it...and she was so correct. Love the tradition, the glamour of the occasion...looking at these gorgeous women all frocked up. And I do love a man in a dinner suit and the detailed planning that goes with the selection of the food and wines. How lucky we are in Bali to have so many seriously beautiful venues and chefs that can produce for us this amazing experience.

#### Honest opinion on the no-salt, no water, no smoking rule at Chaîne dinners?

My opinion? I agree.

#### Do you stick to it?

Inside and at the table...yes. They do allow cigars etc at the end of the evening, and a few of us – not mentioning any names – have been looked at with raised eyebrows from the big boys when we try and slip outside, just for a minute.

#### Tell me your experience or opinion of the slightly out-of-the-box Chaîne dinner at Gourmet Garage last March?

That was amazing. Again, a perfect example of the detail that goes in. You cannot imagine what it must have been like behind the scenes, but then they pulled off this amaz-



ing night that ebbed and flowed around Gourmet Garage, as if it was normal for all these beautiful people to be sitting in the isles looking at different types of cereals... thinking, shall I go for this or that? Then into the cold room with the biggest container of caviar and shots of vodka. There were all these world-class chefs doing their thing. What can I say? It was a night to remember.

### Heinz von Holzen

#### What is your profession and job title?

I am a cook by training. I started to cook in 1975.

#### Why did you join the Chaîne?

For the interesting and exciting dinners. Great settings, great food and drinks, and foremost, great people.

#### Have you ever slaughtered an animal?

Many thousands. We actually own a poultry processing plant where we process about 3,000 chickens daily in a most humane way.

#### Do you think that meat eaters should slaughter at least one animal in their lifetimes?

No need to do so. Better leave it to the professionals.

#### The first animal you ever roasted?

I guess a chicken, or possibly some sort of large worm, which we thought were snakes as children! Whenever we trapped one, we roasted it over an open fire.

### Michael Burchett

#### Hello. Firstly, what is your profession and job title?

I am General Manager, Conrad Bali. And Vice Conseiller Gastronomique de Bali – Chaîne des Rôtisseurs – Bali.

#### Why did you join the Chaîne?

I have been a member since 1989 when I was General Manager of Mayfair Regent Chicago. The membership in Chicago was a broad mix of professional and non-professionals, and the focus on unique and exceptional dining experiences was a primary interest, along with the opportunity to socialise with a very interesting group of people. When I moved to Bali in 1992 to open the Four Seasons, the Chaîne was active, and then when I moved to Jakarta in 1994 to open The Regent (now Four Seasons), the Chaîne was re-establishing itself with an active committee, which I was invited to join, headed by Firdaus Siddik, currently *Bailli Delegate* for Indonesia. During the three years I was in Jakarta we had some exceptional events and estab-

lished the Chaîne as a premier dining organisation. Upon returning to Bali in 2003 to open the Conrad, I became active once again at a committee level, and our F&B Team at The Conrad took on the challenge of hosting several Chaîne events. As a professional member and a host for events, I see the Chaîne as an opportunity to challenge our culinary and service teams, and to establish Conrad as an establishment that focuses attention on quality.

#### Why do think that women are allowed to be members, considering that it is a confrérie (brotherhood)?

Membership is open to all; the only qualifying factor is an interest in dining. Happily, Chaîne Bali have many women members; thank goodness, otherwise it would be very boring sitting with a bunch of guys dressed up with no socialising other than discussions about golf and football.

#### Does the Chaîne boast any famous members, or is it a hush-hush society?

All our members are 'infamous', I mean 'famous!' There is nothing hush-hush about being a member of the Chaîne. It is an international organisation that also allows members from Bali to enjoy some wonderful international events while travelling. Certainly, overseas there are many

royal and senior government members, along with a number of high profile individuals; one of the benefits of the Chaîne is the camaraderie that exists in our own club, and the links internationally with other clubs.

### Yanie Mason

#### Yanie, what is your profession and job title?

I've been involved in the tourism industry for the last 30 years. My title now is President Director at Bali Adventure Tours.

#### Why did you join the Chaîne?

I joined because of Tina Shazell, who explained to me what it's all about. It seemed a great idea, since I enjoy the fine dining and meeting people with the same interests.

#### Which sort of events do you prefer – casual or black tie and why?

To be honest, as we live in Bali, I prefer casual because of the atmosphere as an Island resort. Of course, every now and then it is good to get dressed up for a black tie event.

#### Of all the events you have been to in the last year, which one stands out as a highlight?

Gourmet Garage. It was fantastic. ✓