

We're on a talent-spotting prowl. It's that challenging and exciting time of the year again. Research for The Times Food Guide 2012 has begun. Every year we expand and enrich all three books. Finding brand new restaurants (Times Food Guide), and Nighclubs and bars (Times Nightlife Guide) is simpler. It's sniffing out and tracking down talent that hums in home kitchens that is the toughest. I've been doing this systematically and painstakingly for more than 20 years. In fact The Times Food Guide 2011 has a special volume dedicated to home-talent (Want to be part of the 2012 book? Email at rashmiudaysingh2010@gmail.com).



Rashmi Uday Singh

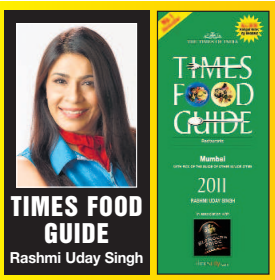
My sweet finds

The queen of trends

Working out of home kitchens, driven by passion and fuelled by talent has over the years blossomed into a unique trend that is visible from Kandivali to Colaba. And I have excitedly watched it grow right under my nose. The grand dame of cuisine, the precursor to all the talent that works out of home is 82-year-young Malu Divecha. She did her business out of home (famous for her brownies) more than 40 years ago. The first to bake her own pizza and quiche, the exuberant and inspirational Malu speaks six languages, teaches pottery and is now writing her cookbook. Getting her started on it is her gorgeous grand daughter from San Francisco. Mia Divecha, a junior at Stanford University, (majoring in Chemical Engineering) bakes brilliantly, loves chocolate, plays lacrosse, and sings beautifully. We have a fun-tasting tour of my new sweet finds.

Neeru and Shradha Mehra
'Chanel bag', 'Life after death', 'Lindt Lindor love' and many more such creative cakes, cupcakes and brownies are baked in the Kemps Corner ovens of the talented mother and daughter team of Neeru and Shradha Mehra. What started off 20 years ago, as a hobby in a perpetually dessert-hungry Punjabi household now has Neeru's hugely popular, velvety smooth Swiss

chocolate mousse cake, cheese cakes and many more in huge demand. They personalise for birth announcements, weddings etc. (Priced Rs 650 upwards, home-delivery throughout the city. Two days notice.)
Contact 9820297378 / 9819493595 / 02223867870



Gaurika Chandok

The bright young and talented Gaurika Chandok's eggless 'Brownie G' brownies have recently been sent to Belgium. They have been in demand in London and New York too. Known for her unique brownies in nine flavours and superb packing, today, she holds in her hands, an amazing combination of molten chocolate filled with a layer of brownie caramel and almond praline touched with a dark chocolate drizzle, the giant mud pie slab. It is eggless and has a room temperature shelf life of 10 days. Superb gift too.
Contact 9821089898

Country of origin

We track down a brand new lovingly-rendered, very personal expression of a foodie. It is tucked inside a furniture store and has the sweet, gentle charm of a hideaway, at Nepean Sea Road. Please take a quick look at the photograph and you'll see Mia and the owner Kiran Salasker holding two jars... these

are actually Desserts in a Jar: Cookie Dough and Red Velvet desserts. The passionate and dedicated well-travelled gourmet Kiran also has the Caramel & Cream, and Schwarzwälder Kirschtorte in a Jar (sold out today.) In this brightly-lit counter space you can find a variety of Chocolate Brownies, Traditional Cakes, Mousses and Muffins which can all be gift-wrapped into unique hampers by Mandli Salasker. Malu and I are particularly delighted by the array of Specialty Preserves, wasabi pastes, Diabetic Honey, Coffee Makers, and Pepper Mills too. After the photo-shoot, we do a systematic dessert tasting. Echoing all our feelings, Malu beams, "Great gifts, great ideas and great tastes." The grand dame has the last word. Appropriately.
Contact 2364222 between 10 am to 8 pm



Tracing roots of chicken curry in Britain

An old recipe for chicken curry has been found in a British cookbook that dates back to 1796. Chefs say the instructions make a dish that today's Tikka Masala fans will love.

Great-gran Sylvia Sibley, 73, discovered the book inside an old kitchen drawer while cleaning her late mother's home. Cook and the author of the book Hannah Glasse explained how to make curry "the Indian way". The recipe stated: "Take two small chickens, skin them and cut them as for fricassee, wash them and

stew in a quart of water." And it added that ginger, pepper and turmeric provided the curry taste.

Famed Chef Raj Sharman, tried the recipe and found it quite tasty. The book is a second edition of Glasse's book. She wrote it when George II was King and the last beheading took place at London's Tower Hill.



Indian flavours favoured in Britain since 1700s

The book, which was intended to provide an instruction manual for servants, might rake in almost 500 pounds.

Smartphones will soon detect fake wines

Canadian winemaker, Charles Pillitteri, has found a solution to beat fraudsters to copy his bottles — it's a bottle-top silver bubble seal that is impossible to copy. The seals, developed by a French firm that specialises in brand security, is among several technologies that vintners are embracing to foil fraudsters and reassure consumers that they are buying the real thing. With ProofTag, a consumer armed with an iPhone, a downloaded software application and Internet access can authenticate a wine in seconds, even while standing

at the wine-store shelves. Android and BlackBerry versions of the app are due out by year's end. "It's easy. You take your iPhone, take a shot of the datamatrix code and it takes you to the website and



Trust your phone to detect a fake wine bottle

it shows you a picture of the bubble pattern for the bottle you are looking at," Pillitteri said. "If you break the seal, all the bubbles are broken, the seal is gone and you can't copy it."

The visible sticker has a datamatrix code that can be scanned with a smartphone, which then links to an Internet site — but it also includes secret invisible indicators of tampering or fraud.

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