

Meet the Best FIJIAN CHEFS

BY ROXANNE WILLIAMS

The Fiji food scene is continually evolving for the better. While there is plenty of star power amongst international chefs at the helm of award winning restaurants, there are also many talented local chefs and cooks carving their way up to the top. Meet just a few of them here and read about their professional life, personal insights and take a few cooking tips from our brief Q & A list below.

LOSAVATI SEWALE

Executive Chef at Raymond's Restaurant at the Fiji Orchid Resort, Lautoka.

Raymond's Restaurant at the Fiji Orchid is famous for its delicious contemporary Fijian cooking style. Executive Chef Sewale professionally trained at the Le Cordon Bleu cooking school and has long mastered the art of seamlessly merging international and Pacific Rim cuisine. Sewale has created a wonderful menu that features a majority of traditional South Pacific recipes which use Fiji's fresh local produce and both traditional and exotic herbs and spices.

Sewale's Signature Dish: *Toa Vakasoso - Chicken Breast Filled with Pawpaw Rolled in Coconut & Served with Mango Sauce.*

Q. What are the best local Fijian ingredients?

A. It has to be coconut and all of our fresh seafood.

Q. Your favourite meal as a child?

A. Fish in Lolo (coconut cream) served with Rourou (dalo Leaves)

Q. What are your hobbies outside of the kitchen:

A. Dancing and socialising.

Q. Name a Chef that inspires you?

A. Robert Oliver- Ambassador for Le Cordon Bleu, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands. Author of *Me'a Kai; The Food and Flavours of the South Pacific.*

Q. Favourite International cuisine:

A. I adore all French Cuisine, particularly a dish of Chicken with Mushroom and Tarragon Sauce.

Q. Best advice for aspiring chefs?

A. Whatever you do, do with determination and courage and be passionate about your work.



Losaviti Sewale



Shaleish's signature dish



Shaleish's signature dish

Warrens signature dish

SHAILESH NAIDU

Executive Chef at Ivi Restaurant, Fiji Outrigger Resort, Coral Coast.

Ivi Restaurant is a premium fine dining venue located at the Fiji Outrigger Resort in the spectacular Coral Coast region. Executive Chef Shailesh Naidu is one of Fiji's most decorated. The award winning restaurant is open to both in-house guests and visitors for dinner, bookings recommended. Formal yet friendly, Ivi continually produces a broad selection of amazing full flavoured dishes. Enjoying a memorable meal here is a certainty.

Shailesh's Signature Dish: *South Indian Lamb Curry – with a special selection of grandma's authentic spices and flavours.*

- Q. Name the best local Fijian ingredients:
- A. *Chili, garlic & coriander.*
- Q. Your Favourite meal as a child?
- A. *A fragrant crab curry with rice & also a juicy roast chicken meal shared with family.*
- Q. What are your hobbies outside of the kitchen:
- A. *Socialising among my soccer mates; lazing and sleeping while watching movies; relaxing with partner.*
- Q. Name a Chef that inspires you?
- A. *Chef (Dr) Rick Stephens – former Coach/ Manager Australian Culinary Team and the World Chefs Director of Asia.*
- Q. Favourite International cuisine:
- A. *I'm a big fan of Chinese and Malaysian recipes.*
- Q. Your best advice for aspiring chefs?
- A. *1) Keep your head down and learn the trade from your seniors. 2) Real Chefs don't worry about their 8 hours as its always more than that. 3) Don't rush; fame and pay will come automatically once you have done the hard yards.*



Chef Shailesh Naidu



Vishal Nand



Warren Mave

WARREN MAVE

Pastry Chef at the Sheraton Resort, Denarau.

Bio: Fijian born and raised Pastry Chef Warren Mave has a 16 year passion for desserts. His decorative flair and admirable artisan skills work together to create delectable flavours. Warren's famed desert dishes have effectively made him a household name in Fiji. His decadent sweet treats will entice even the non-dessert takers.

Warren's Signature Dish: *"Celebration of Fijian Kamikamica"*

Vudi Vakasoso / Qalu Vakalolo / Sugarcane sticks / Tropical Fruit salsa/ Coconut water jelly / Coffee Bamboo reduction.

VISHAL NAND

Sous Chef at Navo Restaurant, The InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa.

Studied Certificates level 3 & 4 in Cookery at Training Productive Authority of Fiji. Vishal has trained with fine executive chefs from Likuliku Lagoon Resort-chef lhaka Peri and at IHG property in Fiji chef David Bell & chef Leon Hatton Jones.

Vishal's Signature Dish: *Lobster bisque, lobster medallion, confit potato, rouille sauce*

Best local Fijian ingredients:
Moca, taro leaves, dalo, cassava, kumala, yams, coconut, green papaya, cane sugar, mint, honey, lemongrass & pineapple

- Q. Favourite meal as a child?
- A. *Spicy Fish curry*
- Q. Hobbies (outside of the kitchen):
- A. *Socialising, volleyball*
- Q. Name a Chef that inspires you?
- A. *Chef David Bell*
- Q. Favourite International cuisine:
- A. *Sushi & Shashimi*
- Q. Best advice for aspiring chefs?
- A. *Don't be afraid of making mistakes, learn from it and move a step further everytime towards your goals and vision.*