

THE PENINSULA

HONG KONG

THE PENINSULA HONG KONG HERALDS THE NEW TEAM AT GADDI'S HEADED BY GADDI'S CHEF RÉMI VAN PETEGHEM

The inauguration of Gaddi's Chef Rémi Van Peteghem brings Hong Kong's original and first French restaurant back to its roots. With his French heritage, a wealth of experience at prestigious gastronomic restaurants and his culinary dexterity, Chef Van Peteghem's cuisine pays homage to Gaddi's traditions with a contemporary twist.

The Peninsula Hong Kong marks his debut outside Paris. Hailing from the City of Light, arguably one of the world's gastronomic capitals, Chef Van Peteghem views Hong Kong as an international stage for world-class chefs. With its array of restaurants notable to food connoisseurs, he is proud to be adding his own flavour to Hong Kong's exciting gastronomic scene, which is currently experiencing its own renaissance of sorts.

Chef Van Peteghem's career started at the age of 16 and his prowess in French culinary traditions was manifested by his contribution at some of the most sought-after restaurants in Paris. He began by apprenticing at the Carré des Feuillants and Montparnasse 25 restaurant at Le Méridien Montparnasse in Paris.

After excelling in the rudiments of French cuisine in his early years, he progressed to Commis de Cuisine at Il Cortile restaurant, becoming Chef de Partie at the Le Grand Véfour Restaurant and L'Arpège, expanding his creativity and mastery of dishes and nurturing his skills in modern culinary techniques such as vacuum cooking. In 2001, Chef Van Peteghem became a Sous Chef at Restaurant Lasserre, taking a career step further in a management role overseeing a team of 15 in the kitchen. Prior to joining The Peninsula Hong Kong, he completed a five-year tenure as Chef de Cuisine at the lauded Le Sensing restaurant, gaining a prestigious Michelin star at this Parisian temple of haute cuisine in 2011.

"I like envisioning an idea and transforming a thought into an aesthetic gastronomic delight. The highest form of flattery for me is when a guest has revelation after sampling my take on a dish and becomes a fan of an ingredient they may never have previously enjoyed", notes Chef Van Peteghem, describing his culinary passions.

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Culminating in a rich lexicon of experience in the field, Chef Van Peteghem has developed a unique culinary philosophy. Both respecting and inspired by traditional recipes, he recognises the importance of healthy eating by skilfully adopting modern techniques to reduce the fat content of dishes and retain the flavour of ingredients.

“It is very important to use good quality seasonal ingredients, and it is also critical to know how to bring the best out of the ingredients using minimal spices. Guests should be able to relish the natural flavour of an ingredient, as Mother Nature intended it”, says Chef Van Peteghem. The same rule applies to the presentation of his dishes, which are approached with simplicity and élan.

Having lived in many different parts of France during his childhood, Chef Van Peteghem remains open-minded about how he adapts and combines recipes from all regions, including Normandy and Brittany, as well as in sourcing indigenous produce from the South of France.

Chef Van Peteghem's talent has made him one of the few chefs to be selected twice by the *Gault Millau* Guide as “Bright Talented Young Chef” in 2008 when he was just 30 years old, and then again in 2011, the year of his Michelin star win. He has also engaged in professional shows in Paris and Barcelona, exchanging views with seasoned and aspiring chefs from around the globe.

Chef Van Peteghem lets off steam outside the kitchen by playing squash and enjoying a variety of water sports, which he finds Hong Kong to be the perfect setting for.

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DHEERAJ BHATIA, CHIEF SOMMELIER, GADDI'S

Dheeraj Bhatia joined The Peninsula Hong Kong as Chief Sommelier in 2012 after gathering an extensive background and knowledge of wines from around the world.

Born and educated in Bombay, India, Bhatia began his career at a top business hotel in New Delhi as a mixologist in 2004, where he discovered his passion for wines. He then decided to embark on a journey to discover the wines of different countries, including Dubai, South Africa and Singapore, learning the many facets of wine appreciation along the way. This global exposure brought his career and wine expertise to new heights. Prior to joining The Peninsula Hong Kong, Bhatia displayed his talents and skills during stints at the Raffles Praslin Seychelles and the Raffles Beijing Hotel, where he established the hotel's wine programmes and spearheaded a series of landmark wine dinners with Michelin-starred Spanish molecular chefs Ferran Adrià and Dani Garcia. Bhatia's last tenure was at Raffles Hotel Singapore, where he was Head Sommelier.

“My first interest was food, but I didn't have the natural skills to become a good chef. However, with food always comes wine, and this precious liquid always fascinated me and so I wanted to learn more and more about it”, says Bhatia. “This was my driver in pursuing a career in the wine industry”.

Bhatia's past achievements have received a series of accolades, including *2011 World Gourmet Summit Winner for Apprenticeship in Wine Making in Sicily, Italy* and *Best Sommelier of 2011 in Singapore at the World Gourmet Summit*. Alongside his demanding work schedule, Bhatia has continued to excel in his field by enrolling in various certified wine courses, allowing him to further expand his knowledge.

“Exploring each wine's uniqueness in different vineyards with hands-on practice was truly an inspiring lesson and a once-in-a-lifetime experience”, says Bhatia. “You must know how to differentiate and appreciate the characteristics of each wine before you can recommend one to a guest. It's a journey that never stops”.

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Bhatia has strong convictions on the philosophy of wine. “There is no definition of a “good wine” regardless of the label, price or vintage. To me, any wine that you can sip comfortably is a good wine”, he explains jovially, “what’s more important with regards to a good wine is finding the right balance, just like everything in life”.

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DOMINIQUE R. LEMERCIER – GADDI'S MANAGER

“Every night at Gaddi’s is like a theatre performance”, says Dominique Lemerrier, Gaddi’s Manager, “and we are all on stage as a team”. Lemerrier joined The Peninsula Hong Kong as Gaddi’s Manager in 2012, with a vision to redefine the luxury standards at Gaddi’s and to bring the calibre of service to new heights.

Born and raised by a family of chefs and bakers, Lemerrier began working in this industry at the age of 13. Now with over 30 years of experience, he believes that starting in a position where he could learn the basics from the best was the right strategy. He worked as Commis de Salle for two Michelin-starred restaurants in France, including the Château De La Chèvre D’Or and La Tour D’Argent.

Within a short time period, Lemerrier moved upward in his career path, working closely with Michelin-starred chefs of that time, including Roger Vergé – three-star Michelin chef and owner of Le Moulin de Mougins.

After travelling to Brazil, Singapore and the United States to follow the then burgeoning global movement of Michelin-starred chefs, Lemerrier was inspired to open his own French restaurant called “Dominique” in Germany in 1987. Prior to joining The Peninsula Hong Kong, he was selected by celebrity chef, Shannon Bennett, to be Director of Restaurant Operations at Vue at the Al Bustan Palace, Muscat.

“I was lucky to be a member of a family of chefs and I could not dream of a better job”, explains Lemerrier. “For me, I reach a point of satisfaction when I feel like my team is pulling comfortably together and we are creating a glamorous experience for our guests.”

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ABOUT GADDI'S

Since its opening in 1953, Gaddi's has maintained a reputation as a renowned social setting and a legendary French restaurant. Its vintage chandeliers and blue-and-gold tone interiors create a stunning backdrop for the exemplary service, gourmet French cuisine and the magnificent wine list, while the Gaddi's private dining room provides an excellent venue for special occasions. In addition to its longstanding reputation for serving "the finest French cuisine East of Suez", the restaurant's own Gaddi's Band plays live music for dinner and dancing every evening from Monday to Saturday for guests to enjoy a truly elegant experience.

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About The Hongkong and Shanghai Hotels, Limited (HSH)

Incorporated in 1866 and listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (00045), HSH is a holding company whose subsidiaries, associates and jointly controlled entity are engaged in the ownership and management of prestigious hotel, commercial and residential properties in key destinations in Asia, the USA and Europe, as well as the provision of transport, club management and services. The hotel portfolio of the Group comprises the Peninsula Hotels in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, New York, Chicago, Beverly Hills, Tokyo, Bangkok, Manila and Paris (opening in 2013). The property portfolio of the Group includes The Repulse Bay Complex, The Peak Tower and The Peak Tramways, St. John's Building, The Landmark in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and the Thai Country Club in Bangkok, Thailand.

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