

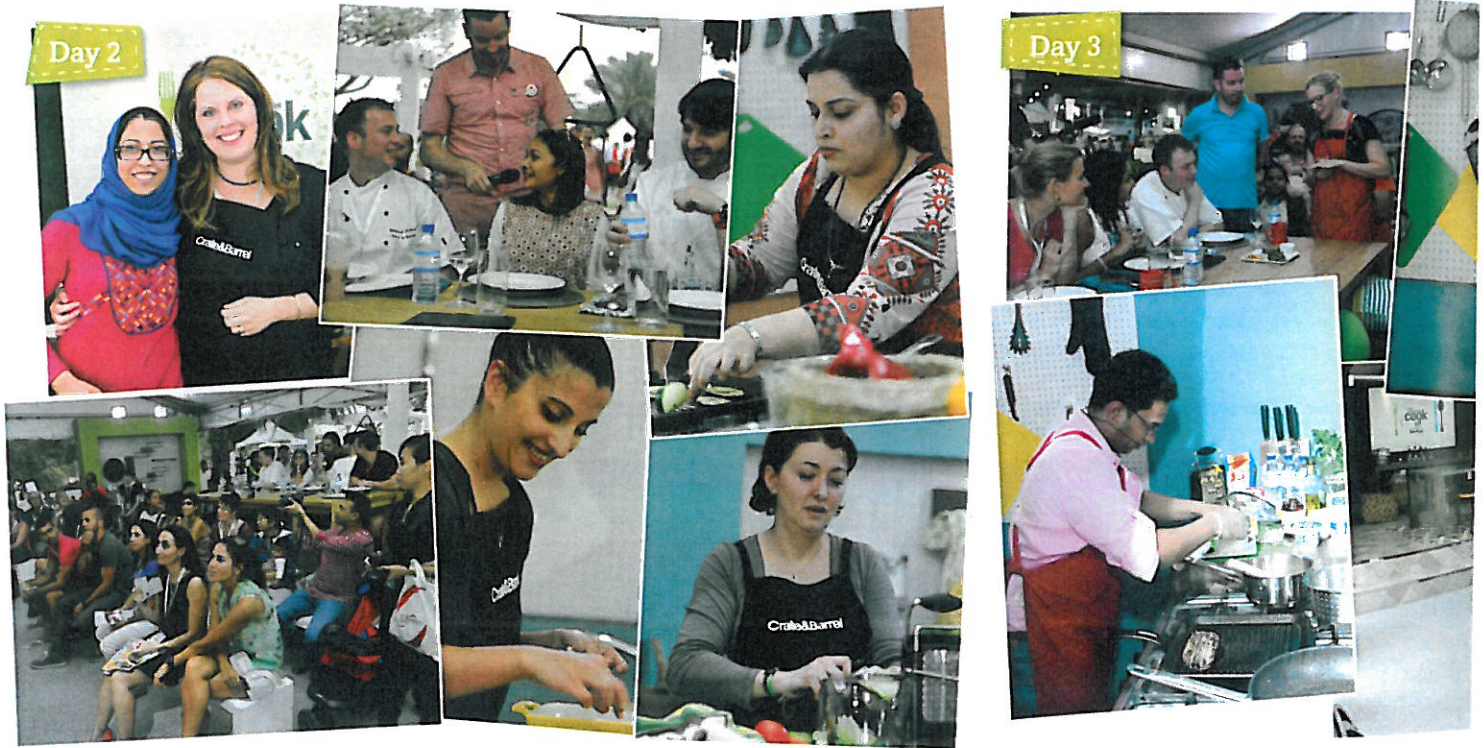
Ready in 25!

Here is a report back on the very first Crate & Barrel Cook Off in association with BBC Good Food Middle East, held at last month's Taste of Dubai, when 12 contestants had to produce a healthy, delicious dish in 25-minute cook-off sessions.



How it all went down:

Participants were invited to submit an original healthy recipe for consideration, with hundreds of avid foodies getting involved. From all the entries, the top 12 were shortlisted who then battled it out against one other contestant in Masterchef-style cook offs, using the same set of ingredients from a Mystery basket. The three winners from Days one and two respectively were then pitted against each other for the final cook offs on the third day, when the finalists were also being scored on audience interaction, alongside taste, creativity, nutritive value and presentation of their dishes. The judging panel included celebrity chef Eric Lanlard, and juicing guru Weibke Katsoudas from Essentially Juices, as well as members of the BBC Good Food ME editorial team.



The winning recipes



Edwina Stuart,
1st prize winner

Grilled beef medallion with crispy rice cake, grilled butternut and sautéed greens

SERVES 4 PREP 10 MINS COOK 15 MINS

250g rice vermicelli noodles
200ml balsamic vinegar
25g parsley, finely chopped
4 fillets of beef tenderloin (around 150-200g each)
1 garlic clove, minced
Olive oil
1 small butternut squash
1 large shallot, finely chopped
A medium bunch of swiss chard, washed, sliced into ribbons
1 medium zucchini, roughly grated
1 medium tomato, cut into quarters, deseeded and sliced into thin strips

1 Place the rice noodles in a bowl. Pour over boiling water and cover with a towel and let it sit for 2-3 mins until cooked. Drain, toss through 1 tbsp of the parsley.
2 Bring the balsamic vinegar to boil in a small saucepan, then turn to lowest heat and reduce for about 10 mins or liquid has reduced by half

and is a syrupy consistency. (If it's too tangy for your liking, a squeeze of honey will sweeten it up.)

3 Rub the beef with garlic and a little olive oil.
4 Peel the butternut and slice in 5mm rounds, then in half. Steam or bake covered in foil for 10 mins until almost tender.
5 Grill the beef on a hot BBQ or grill and cook for 3 mins on each side or until done to your liking. Once cooked, set aside covered with foil to rest.
6 Drizzle the partially cooked butternut with olive oil, salt and pepper and place on grill for 1 min each side.
7 In a pan, sauté the shallots in 1 tbsp olive oil for 4 mins or until translucent. Then add the Swiss chard, grated zucchini and sauté for 2 more mins. Finish off by adding the tomato and remaining parsley.
8 Heat 1-2 tbsp oil. Place a handful of rice noodles in the pan and flatten slightly so it resembles a pancake. Fry on each side for 2 mins or until slightly golden and crispy.
9 Place the rice cake on the plate and the beef fillet on top. Arrange the grilled butternut, and sautéed greens on the side, and serve with the balsamic reduction. >>





Beef tenderloin with mashed pumpkin

SERVES 4 PREP 20 MINS COOK 8 MINS

- 4 tenderloin fillets
- 100ml extra virgin olive oil
- 20g English mustard
- 2 tsp each salt and black pepper powder
- 250g pumpkins
- 10g cumin seeds
- 400g rice noodles
- 200g collard greens
- 100g unsalted butter

- 1 Marinate the beef in a mixture of olive oil, English mustard, salt and pepper and keep aside for a few mins.
- 2 Cook the beef on a non-stick griddled pan on medium heat for about 4 mins, until nice grill marks appear. Turn and cook on the other side for a few more mins until it reaches your preferred doneness.
- 3 Grate the pumpkin and sauté with the olive oil and cumin seeds, keep aside.
- 4 Bring a pot of water to the boil and cook the rice noodles in it for 2 mins.
- 5 Take the resting juices from the beef tenderloin, add salt and pepper and reduce until it becomes a thick sauce.
- 6 Sauté the collard greens in the butter.
- 7 Place beef on the greens, and serve with the pumpkin mash, pepper sauce and rice noodles.



Yanendra Pratap,
2nd prize winner

Ginger soy chicken with Mediterranean eggplant, couscous and sweet potato fritters

SERVES 4 PREP 5 MINS COOK 20 MINS

- 1 small piece of fresh ginger
- 4 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 cloves of crushed garlic
- 15 tbsp olive oil
- 4 chicken breasts
- 2 large eggplants
- Sea salt and pepper to taste
- Pinch of ground cumin
- Pinch of paprika
- 300ml water
- 1 chicken stock cube
- ½ lemon, zest and the juice
- Handful of fresh mint leaves, julienned
- 300g couscous
- 2 sweet potatoes
- 1 red onion, chopped into small cubes
- 4 tbsp white flour
- 1 can of chopped tomatoes
- Handful of fresh basil leaves, julienned
- 100g goat's cheese

- 1 Finely grate the fresh ginger into a large bowl. Add the soy sauce, 4 tbsp of olive oil along with 2 cloves of crushed garlic. Pour the mixture onto the chicken breasts and marinate for around 15 mins.
- 2 Heat a large pan over high heat with 2 tbsp of olive oil. Cut the eggplants into round medium sized slices and arrange them in a pan. Lower the heat to medium. Drizzle 1 tbsp of olive oil more

onto the eggplants and sprinkle them with sea salt, ground cumin and paprika. Let the eggplants cook for 15-20 mins turning them every 5 mins or so, to get them to cook evenly.

3 Bring the water to a boil in a large pot, add the stock cube to the. Add the lemon zest, lemon juice and mint leaves into the broth. When the broth boils, add the couscous, stir well, cover and take the pot off the heat. Let stand for 5 mins, fluff with a fork.

4 Peel the sweet potatoes and grate them into a medium size bowl. Add the chopped red onion, flour, sea salt and pepper to taste into the grated sweet potatoes. Add 2 tbsp of olive oil and mix well. Make palm sized fritters out of the mixture. Heat a large pan with 3 tbsp of olive oil over high heat. Arrange the sweet potato fritters into the pan and brown them for 3-5 mins on one side. Turn them over, reduce heat to medium to cook for another 5 mins.

5 Heat a grill pan over high heat using 2 tbsp of olive oil. Once the pan is hot, place the chicken breasts on it, and let them cook for 5 mins. Turn over and let them cook for another 5 mins. Remove from the grill, and let it rest for 5 mins before serving.

6 Remove the eggplants from the pan, transfer them onto a serving platter. In the same pan, add the chopped tomatoes and fresh basil leaves with 1 tbsp of olive oil. Add a pinch of sea salt and pepper. Stir well, bring to boil and reduce for 5 mins to make a thick sauce. Once the sauce is ready, top the eggplant slices with the tomato sauce and goat cheese, and serve with the chicken and sweet potato fritters. ☑



Seda Solmaz,
3rd prize winner

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANASCHERUR, JAY CONNA