

THE QUEEN OF COUTURE CAKES

SHE IS HOLLYWOOD AND BRITISH ROYALTY'S GO-TO BESPOKE CAKE DESIGNER. AND NOW MICH TURNER, MBE, IS EXCITED TO SET UP HER SIGNATURE BRAND LITTLE VENICE CAKE COMPANY'S L'ATELIER AT ATLANTIS THE ROYAL THIS SUMMER

BY JOYDEEP SEN GUPTA

Mich Turner is the undisputed diva in the baking world. She is a qualified food scientist and a former Bakery and Patisserie Buyer at Harvey Nichols, a British luxury department store chain founded in 1831 with a flagship store in Knightsbridge, London.

For three years, she also served as a creative consultant at Marks & Spencer, a major British retailer. Turner is widely recognised as the founder of Little Venice Cake Company and has been serving as the director of the firm since she started it in August 1999. She is also the author of seven international bestselling books, has been a judge on *ITV's Britain's Best Bakery*, ambassador for Scottish Bakers' Association and consultant to the baking and hospitality industry.

Little Venice Cake Company has created over 20,000 cakes for celebrities, private individuals and corporate entities since its inception. Hand-craftsmanship is the hallmark of these sweet creations. The cakes have travelled the world and graced the most luxurious high tables, such as Harrods, Fortnum and Mason, Harvey Nichols and Liberty.

Turner was named *Harper's Bazaar* and Chanel Entrepreneur of the Year 2006, and in 2010, she was awarded the coveted honour – the Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) – for her services to the catering industry.

Turner elaborates the concept of refreshing consultant, which is largely un-



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Mich Turner, MBE

Award-winning British entrepreneur and consultant to the food industry

known in the Middle East. “As an award-winning entrepreneur and industry specialist with over 30 years’ experience, I adopt a 360-degree approach to my consultancy roles. I explore a number of elements to deliver a unique concept and immersive guest experience. I aim to showcase the very best skills and em-

power the talent of the partners I work with,” she says.

Little Venice Cake Company was a step in that direction over two decades ago. “I’ve had a passion for food, especially baking, from a young age. I qualified as a food scientist and worked as a Bakery and Patisserie Buyer at Harvey Nichols before setting up Little Venice Cake Company in 1999. For me, it has always been about ensuring the brand provides the best possible customer experience, combining authenticity, prestige and heritage with excellence and professionalism. We aim to produce beautifully executed cakes that look amazing and taste incredible – with a professional, reliable and enjoyable service for every client to feel special. We very much set the industry standard for others to follow,” she says. No wonder her A-list clients are making a beeline for her bespoke sweet creations and have earned her the moniker “Queen of Couture Cakes” (see box).

Turner reflects on her illustrious career and hastens to add that “every cake is an exciting project”. However, she says “she’s particularly excited to be working on the cake to represent the nation at UK National Day on February 10 at Expo 2020 Dubai. Our cake will take centre-stage in the UK Pavilion and be enjoyed at the VIP reception that evening. It will feature eight tiers to ‘Celebrate Extraordinary’. I shall be including 70 handmade white sugar roses, a symbol of youth, love, trust and loyalty, representing the 70 years Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth-II has been on the throne.”

Turner has come a long way since creat-



Mich Turner


LITTLE VENICE
CAKE COMPANY
Couture Cakes

“Mich is the Michelangelo of cakes”

Pierce Brosnan, OBE
Irish actor and film producer

“Mich is the master of cake perfection. Learn from the best”

Kirstie Allsopp
British TV presenter

“Great cake chemistry”

Heston Blumenthal, OBE
British celebrity, TV personality and food writer



ing bespoke cakes for the most discerning clients. Over the years, she has diversified into teaching, consultancy, franchises, books, bone china and tools.

For instance, Little Venice Cake Company's collection of Afternoon Tea fine bone china is produced by Royal Crown Derby and William Edwards in England. A range of carefully blended teas, craft baking kits and bespoke silverware is being developed to accompany the range.

“Little Venice Cake Company is establishing itself as a global brand,” says Turner. “We continue to develop, diversify and expand with our creative design, unrivalled prestige and understated elegance. Our mission is to grow it internationally with multi-faceted touchpoints and experiences – whether you are enjoying our cakes, books, craft baking kits, tea, masterclasses or chinaware.”

Soon, Turner's baking delights will tickle connoisseurs' palates in Dubai. “We're excited to be opening our L'Atelier at Atlantis The Royal later this summer. The first in the region, L'Atelier will feature a glass show kitchen for guests to view our skilled cake decorators creating the theatre and magic. We have an exclusive 'By Appointment Only' Royal Consultation Room offering a discreet cake design consultation and tasting. Guests will be able to purchase cakes fresh every day, order from our personalised collection or commission a completely bespoke design,” she adds.

Turner feels there are cake lovers in

TURNER'S A-LIST PATRONS

From Downton Abbey to Buckingham Palace, Little Venice Cake Company has created cakes for celebrities and international royalty, including Her Majesty The Queen Elizabeth II, Pierce Brosnan, Sir Paul McCartney, Dame Emma Thompson, Sharon and Ozzy Osbourne, Gordon Ramsay, Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) and David Beckham (OBE).

every corner of the globe. “I've travelled internationally, teaching, demonstrating, presenting, tasting and exploring cakes. I've found there is an international appreciation and passion for cakes,” she says.

The UAE, she feels, takes the cake. “The country is all about the experience – exquisite presentation, indulgent taste and impeccable service – the expectations and aspirations are higher. For me, that means ‘opportunity’, and I'm excited for this opportunity,” she adds.

But Dubai is not the only pit stop for the intrepid food entrepreneur, who is forever innovating and looking to expand her business footprints. “Our plan is very much to expand Little Venice Cake Company into other countries in the Middle East and beyond,” she adds. **W**

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A feast of all things British at Expo 2020 Dubai

Expo 2020 Dubai is preparing for a full-site takeover for UK National Day to celebrate extraordinary talents across the island nation – from established musicians to emerging artists.

On February 10, 2022, the Expo site will become an extension of the UK, with new and diverse music, theatre, arts, poetry, comedy, film, food and innovation that speaks to all ages and backgrounds, inviting the world to see things differently.

A marching band will herald the start of UK National Day in style, opening the Expo gates, which were constructed by UK architect Asif Khan, before leading the way to the UK Pavilion to start the opening ceremony at Al Wasl Dome, the beating heart of the showstopper event. This will be followed by the UK National Day flag-raising ceremony under the Al Wasl Dome.

Music will be central to the UK's takeover of Expo 2020 Dubai, with a UK music festival featuring a diverse line-up encapsulating a multitude of



genres, including acoustic, rock, indie, grime, rhythm and blues (RnB), soul and afro beats.

The Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra will challenge traditional perceptions with a selection of modern scores and intriguing collaborations within Al Wasl Dome, while other highlights include a DJ Jamz Supernova set and an array of world-class Scottish folk musicians from the Association of Exiled Scots. The UK Pavilion will host a national soundtrack, juxtaposing classic tracks from world renowned British artists with the very best of our new and emerging talent.

UK National Day pushes performance even further, providing a platform for artists of the spoken word, with BeatFreaks bringing a fresh perspective, hosting an open mic poetry experience. The winners of Debate Mate's eXpo Factor competition take part in once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to debate the global challenges of our time in

Dubai and emerging artists will perform as part of the celebrations through the 'Take the Stage' competition run by Lowden Guitars, whose customers include UK icons Ed Sheeran and Eric Clapton.

Scotland's Spelfie has also partnered with UK National Day enabling those attending to take an aerial picture of themselves at the Expo site from space, an image they'll have access to via the Spelfie mobile application – the embodiment of a new perspective and a real opportunity to see things differently.

UK National Day will also celebrate British sport, with open spaces such as the Al Forsan Park set to be used for sports activities and entertainment.

This will focus on the next stage of UK Sport, with an emphasis on the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, the Rugby League World Cup 2021

and the cutting-edge tech of the gamechanging British Cycling, with diverse, influential athletes and sports celebrities set to be in attendance.

The UK National Day experience will be complemented by a taste of British food and drink, with innovative Michelin Star chef Vineet Bhatia co-curating a UK produce-focused menu from the UK Pavilion's 1851 Restaurant.

UK food scientist, entrepreneur and founder of Little Venice Cake Company, Mich Turner, MBE, will also create a bespoke UK National Day cake, taking centre stage in an 'Extraordinary Showcase' at the UK Pavilion.

Laura Faulkner, OBE, UK Commissioner General for Expo 2020 Dubai, says: "UK National Day will be the highlight of our participation in the event, offering visitors from 191 countries the opportunity to see things differently and to celebrate our extraordinary talent from the UK and how we innovate all over the world.

"From science and sport to film, music and food, UK National Day will provide a taste of the very best that the UK has to offer. With just a month to go until the celebrations kick off, I'm excited for visitors to enjoy the outstanding performances, acts and events we have in store."

