



AROY DEE!

Mr. Benedict Ong - Nakhon Thai Kitchen

Perpetual excellence - these two words perfectly encapsulate the reasons behind the success of Nakhon Thai Kitchen and its ability to clinch the SME of the Year Award two years in a row. In 2014, the Thai cuisine restaurant won the hearts of the masses through the proffering of authentic Thai food that left patrons craving for more, at affordable prices with amicable service, which eventually led Nakhon Thai Kitchen to secure the SME of the Year award of 2014. Nevertheless, this achievement did not prompt the business to be complacent. Rather, the team at Nakhon Thai Kitchen was determined to work even harder for 2015, and its hard work has certainly paid off.

We are proud to present the 2015 SME of Year award to Nakhon Thai Kitchen, a consecutive second for the business. A year has passed and Nakhon Thai Kitchen has emerged stronger than before, as Mr Ong reflected: "Our team has toiled really hard in the past year. We have expanded our business by opening up 4 more additional outlets, bringing the total to 7, while ensuring that the quality of our food and service is not compromised."

Apart from its significant expansion, which allowed the business to gain a wider outreach to new customers, the menus of Nakhon Thai Kitchen has seen some new additions, dishes which Mr Ong and his top chefs have spent copious amount of effort and time in developing.

Despite so, Mr Ong and his team has never found it laborious when coming up with new dishes for the patrons, stating: "Before we add in the new food items into the menus, our top chefs will create a sample, and all of us would gather around to taste the food, giving our feedback and figuring out room for improvements."

This clearly showcases the strong bonds in which the team at Nakhon Thai Kitchen has, where all employees are motivated to do their best, and it is also one of the key reasons behind the remarkable customer service the establishment is able to offer.

While Nakhon Thai Kitchen managed to improve in the aspects of strength, size, dishes and service, Mr Ong feels strongly that the growth of Nakhon Thai Kitchen is likely to be hindered by rising operating costs, namely in food and rental.

Yet, Mr Ong is assured that he and his team is capable in sorting out these issues without necessitating the patrons of Nakhon Thai Restaurant to bear the brunt. Also, Mr Ong and his team do not see competitors as threats, perceiving them as learning points that could help enhance the business. Mr Ong remarked: "Different industries face different challenges and difficulties. Keeping a positive mindset is very important, whether it becomes harder or easier to succeed depends on how you see them when issues arise.", displaying his optimism.

With Nakhon Thai Kitchen having such a massive following, it is not surprising when Mr Ong revealed that he has been approached by foreign entrepreneurs from all over Southeast Asia, seeking to bring the Nakhon Thai Kitchen brand overseas.

However, Mr Ong has repeatedly turned them down, reasoning that it is vital that the business takes one step at a time, and the optimal conditions for an overseas expansion has not yet been met. Mr Ong also proceeded to advise that it is of crucial importance for entrepreneurs to understand the regulations, conditions and context of the foreign country they are venturing into, while urging the need to seek for a trustworthy partner in that particular overseas country.

When asked about his definition of entrepreneurship, Mr Ong replied: "Entrepreneurship is having the passion to excel in what you do, being responsible to customers as well as employees, lots of effort, perseverance and determination to succeed."

Mr Ong then proceeded to espouse his impetus in bettering Nakhon Thai Kitchen over the years: "It all stems from my passion for food, the support of my of the customers, and the loyalty of my hardworking employees that have stuck through thick and thin of the business, I just felt obliged to build upon the success of Nakhon Thai Restaurant." Judging from the dedication and passion that Mr Ong and his team possess in bringing Nakhon Thai Kitchen towards greater heights, we would not be surprised to witness Nakhon Thai Kitchen in being one of the awardees of the SME of the Year award in the upcoming year.



NAKHON KITCHEN
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