



MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release
Friday, 14 November

Just Desserts for *Fiji Chef of the Year 2003*

Outrigger's Executive Sous Chef, Shailesh Sanjay Naidu, established a new level of cuisine excellence at the *Fiji Salon Culinaire 2003* competition in Nadi last week. The prestigious gold medal in the *Chef of the Year 2003* category gave testimony to his skill, creativity and passion for all things culinary and was a great reward for Shailesh's show of professionalism and perfection throughout the competition.

Shailesh excelled in two categories, *Live Cooking-Main & Dessert* and *Static's Dessert*, taking home gold in each, coupled with a bronze in the *Three Course Dinner (local cuisine)* category. With several years of competing experience under his Chefs' hat, Shailesh said this year's competition was particularly satisfying. "Even though each category is awarded individually, having so many of our kitchen brigade competing meant all of us really won as a team. It was such a buzz, a real team effort. I am so grateful to management for allowing so many of us to compete."

The Main Course is Shailesh's favourite dish. "If it is done to perfection, it will be remembered – it will always remain the talking point of a dining experience". The challenge of blending different culinary styles together such as Asian and International with local practices and produce is where Shailesh finds inspiration. His Executive Chef and Mentor for the competition, Adam Haywood, is credited for motivating him to break traditional culinary boundaries. "He inspired me to compete as a winner more so than just another competitor. I am so grateful to him for having the faith in me and also the rest of our team. He was a great coach."

When he is at home, Shailesh still enjoys culinary perfection. His talented wife, Christine, never fails to meet his high expectations. "I have to admit I can be fussy at times. We eat a lot of stir-fries, seafood and curries. My wife is a great cook so it's nice to rely on someone else to prepare a great dish after I've done it all day. I even sometimes learn things from her too".

Shailesh's winning dishes – Class 17 – Main Course and Dessert Live

Main- *Char-grilled Tenderloin of Beef on baked baby pommes and pumpkin with wilted rocket and field mushroom s, roasted red capsicum jam crowned with Kikorangi Blue Cheese ravioli and served with a passionfruit demi.*

Dessert – *Tempura Battered Exotic Tropical Island Fruits with homemade pineapple and ginger icecream served in a Brandy Snap Basket with berries of the forest, mint and mango coulis.*

Outrigger Reef Fiji is a luxury Resort located on the famous Coral Coast of Fiji. It boasts many different dining options with a selection of four Restaurants offering creative International cuisine featuring the best of local and international produce. Reservations can be made via email at reservations@outriggerfiji.com.fj or by telephone direct on (679) 6500 044.

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Further Information:
Outrigger Reef Fiji
Una Murray – Public Relations Manager
Ph: 679-650 0044
Email: sales@outriggerfiji.com.fj