



COOK LIKE A PRO

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I'm all thumbs in the kitchen – and all of them are left thumbs at that! The stories I could tell... To be honest, I've given up hope and since my mother persists in feeding my family, I've had little reason to want to put myself through further ego bashing.

But maybe the heavens had other ideas because I ended up in Rohani Jelani's kitchen one day to learn how to cook chicken. For someone who can muck up soup, chicken is like the Holy Grail.

If you've never been for one of Rohani's hands-on cooking classes at Bayan Indah, here's how it works. You're split into teams of two and each team tackles three of the six recipes. Everything is provided, nicely chopped, minced, sliced, measured, weighed and so on but you still need to get your hands dirty.

Like a cooking fairy godmother, Rohani flits around the kitchen dispensing instructions to different teams, intermittently calling us all over to one cooking station for little tips and keeping an eye that we don't mess up the food. It gets a little chaotic as we all try to get our part of the menu right and not get in each other's way or somehow burn down the house. But the atmosphere is positively buzzing with excitement and energy.

Two hours or so pass in a blink and we are each presiding over our pride and joy for the day. Next is the feast! Don't you just love the whole concept? You slave, you cook and then you sit down to enjoy the spoils of your labour. Ok, for some of you that's a daily affair but still there is a certain magic about cooking in the hidden haven that is Bayan Indah, surrounded by nature.

For my troubles, I learned how to make a stuffed chicken apricot rice roll, a chicken curry and a spicy chicken soup. I'm still not much of a cook but that couple of hours at the feet of the guru did show me that cooking can be, well, fun.

For more information about Bayan Indah's cooking classes, log on to www.bayanindah.com