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## CHEF OF THE MONTH

### Amanda Loader

**Q: How did you start out in the industry?**

**A:** When I was 15, I did work experience and I was lucky enough to get a place in one of London's top restaurants in the West End, Mezzo's. After the two weeks, they invited me back to do formal training during the school holidays and my passion for cheffing started then.

**Q: Your claim to fame as a chef?**

**A:** When I was 16, I won the first two rounds and runner up on the third and final round of the "Future Chef" competition.

I worked in a Chinese restaurant in the south of Taiwan for a short while which attracted a lot of media attention; it was such a great experience to learn Asian cuisine in an Asian environment.

Most recently I have done cooking demonstrations at the Herald Sun Home & Garden Expo in August 2009.

**Q: Your worst day in the kitchen?**

**A:** I cannot say that I have ever had a worst day. Each day is a challenging day, which you grow and learn from to make the next day even better.

**Q: Which restaurants do you go to, and what do you order?**

**A:** I like to try all different cuisines and new interesting ideas so I do not limit myself to a set dish on the menu. I believe every place is different in their own special ways and as a chef, I can learn so much from the variations and techniques of others.

**Q: What's your favourite use of a chicken? How is it special?**

**A:** Chicken is one of those fantastic products that one can make a million dishes out of and get very creative with. I do not believe there is one country that has not got a specialty chicken dish.

My favourite use of chicken would be the carcass for stock. Nothing can beat a good chicken stock. It is special because it can be used to complete so many dishes, such as soups, sauces, risottos, stews and braises.

**Q: Which Ingham's/ Chickadee products do you use now?**

**A:** Got to love the Ingham's whole chicken (and my little niece loves the chickadee chicken burgers).

**Q: If you could create any value-added poultry product, what would it be and why?**

**A:** I would suggest a range of healthy, ready to eat chicken-based soups, as soup is a simple, easy product which everyone enjoys; a classic, traditional coq au vin with thigh and leg pieces that would be full of flavour and still amazingly tender; and finally, poached chicken breasts with Asian spices for use in an Asian salad.

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