



LAGNIAPPE



Switzerland-born Stefan Trepp has worked for sophisticated culinary operations around the world and has helmed F&B operations at Mandarin Oriental, Bangkok since 2012. Nevertheless, Trepp says he loves all food, from Michelin-star fine dining to the noodle bar on the street corner, and finds plenty of inspiration throughout Bangkok's simple yet exotic culinary scene.

What is something most people don't know about you?

The intense energy that I get from learning something new, both in my professional and private life, is what drives me.

What is your favorite item to bring along when you travel?

A Nikon camera and lenses.

What is the best idea you have ever stolen?

Food photography is one of my passions, and I am very fortunate to regularly work with professional food photographers and stylists. The best trick I've learned from them is using a jeweler's torch to brown the edges of a steak or melt chocolate chips in a cookie — for photography purposes only, of course.

What is your pet peeve when you're working in the kitchen?

When everything is not done with the utmost precision. Everything has to be perfect in my kitchen. I am Swiss, after all.

What is on your nightstand?

The final book of "The Hunger Games" series, "Mockingjay."

What is on your iPod right now?

Now and forever, "Mad World" by Gary Jules and "Yellow Ledbetter" by Pearl Jam.

What celebrity would you most like to meet?

[Tennis star] Roger Federer. I do not only celebrate his success in his game — I also admire his passion, talent and hard work.

Why are you a hotel chef?

I thrive in a workplace that is busy — even better if it is hectic and has many varied outlets, from intimate fine dining to a banquet for 1,000 guests and outside catering for another 500 guests thrown in for good measure. This is what being a hotel chef allows me to do, and this is where I can live out my ambition.

If you weren't a chef, what would you be?

Probably jobless. I really have no idea, as I obsessed about becoming a chef from a young age.

Who do you admire most in your life?

My mom. I consider myself an all-rounder, and she instilled that in me. Raising three hyperactive boys could not have been an easy task, but she did so with love and care all while working full time, and she was always there for us. I am who I am because of her.

What would you want for your last supper?

A good ol' Swiss cheese fondue with a nice glass of white wine.