



when I decided I wanted to be a chef and all my friends laughed at me.

What attracted me to being a chef was the creativity of it all. I could create things simple whether it was a sandwich or salad. It 's a vocational rather than an academic career which also appealed to me. I had always set my sights high from the start. I might have started pot washing at the Red Lion at East Haddon but I always knew I wanted to be a success and work hard.

I always had my sights set on working in London and travelling with my work. I was around 16 or 17 when I had this plan mapped out to be a success. Once I fell into it I decided to go for it. It takes focus and there were times when I questioned what I was doing but it comes around from hard work.

My philosophy is that you work hard for your success, very few people who

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have become successful, like Richard Branson have it handed to them on a plate, they have to work hard for it.

Who does the cooking at home and what kind of dishes do you enjoy the most?

Amber and I split the cooking at home, she is a good cook and asks me for advice on how to cook things and she tries hard. We try to have a barbecue at least once a week, weather permitting, and we enjoy cooking and eating simple pasta dishes and classic Sunday roasts.

What do you love the most about the job and what is the most challenging aspect?

I love it because it is about the customer being content when you have cooked for them. To see them happy because they have enjoyed fantastic food and service is great. I'm a cook that makes people happy through food.

Teaching young chefs the ways of the kitchen is kind of challenging but also rewarding once they realise how to do things.

You teach them good cooking and ways of being organised. When some of them arrive they can be overconfident and full of themselves but when you see them develop and become more confident and rounded as a person, that's rewarding.

How did you get involved in the Hell's Kitchen series and what was it like in that environment and seeing yourself on TV?

I was asked to do Hell's Kitchen in 2005 by Gary and I jumped at the chance.



It was a mentally and physically demanding time as we had five non-chefs who were constantly asking me questions. As I was Gary's assistant it was always me they were coming to and asking about how to do things. It was exceedingly demanding but I was glad I did it. Amber recorded the series and when I sat down to watch it it was a bit strange because you

think you know what you look and sound like and what your different mannerisms are but that can be quite different when you actually see yourself on television.

But TV work is something I would jump at the chance of doing again.

How do you relax when you are not working?

I don't really relax as such but I do swim quite a lot and I enjoy clay pigeon shooting with Sywell Gun Club when I am back in Northamptonshire.

I always like to maintain our garden at our home in southwest London.

After being cramped up in a small kitchen for 18 hours a day it is great for me to be outside.

I also like to relax by going out for dinner with my wife.



We try to go out together every Saturday as it gives us a chance to catch up on what's been going on in our lives.

What are your plans for the future?

My main plans for the most immediate future is to maintain our very high Michelin starred standards at Rhodes Twenty Four.

So we ensure that we are able to retain our star rating.

■ Adam Gray is head chef of Rhodes Twenty Four restaurant at Tower 42, 25 Old Broad, Street, London which is open Monday to Friday, lunch 12noon - 2.30pm and dinner 6pm - 9pm. For reservations telephone 0207 8777703 or go to www.rhodes24.co.uk or www.adamgraychef.co.uk for more information about Adam Gray and recipe ideas.