



KAVITA SIDHU AND ROBERTO GUIATI

on Love and Success

BY AGNES AUI

True blue Italian geologist turned restaurateur Roberto Guiati has a quietude about him. Always dashing dressed, the businessman has amassed a food and beverage empire together with his actress and former beauty queen wife, Kavita Sidhu, besides juggling work in an oil and gas company. In this Valentine's issue, we invited this powerful duo to dish out all about the success of Roberto's latest restaurant, Roberto's 1020 Osteria, and their love for each other.

ROBERTO, WE UNDERSTAND THAT YOU USED TO WORK IN THE OIL AND GAS SECTOR, WHAT SPARKED YOUR INTEREST TO GO INTO THE CULINARY WORLD?

R: I always liked the food and beverage business. In fact, some of my family has been in the food and beverage business since a long time and naturally, I would find myself in restaurants growing up. I was always attracted to the food and beverage business, until I decided to open my own restaurant where I could entertain my clients and friends. That single restaurant success pushed me to open more outlets till that side business became my main business and the oil and gas job became my side business.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES YOU'VE FACED EVERY TIME YOU ESTABLISH A NEW RESTAURANT?

R: The challenges I face is to make sure that my team and I's visions are one. Another challenge is training all my staff to be the best at their job and aligned with our standards on both food and service, as well as making sure that our quality of the entire dining experience is consistent.

WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF BEING IN THE CULINARY WORLD?

R: The smile on our client's face. Seeing them happy to have chosen our restaurants to celebrate any important occasion in their life. As well as lifting people up - seeing my staff growing and fulfilling their dreams, being able to afford a house, a car, children's education, and learning a job skill that would help them anywhere in the world. It's very rewarding.

YOU'VE BOTH HELMED A NUMBER OF RESTAURANTS. HOW DOES YOUR LATEST BRAINCHILD, ROBERTO'S 1020 OSTERIA STAND OUT?

R: I've always looked for restaurants that serve authentic Tuscany food but I realised that it is underrepresented here in Kuala Lumpur. I decided to create a restaurant brand that would fuse my Tuscany roots with my love for authentic Italian food and culture. At Roberto's, we share Italian hospitality by welcoming our guests like family and making every visit truly memorable. In Italy, eating together is what connects us with family members and friends. Hence, the food at Roberto's is designed for sharing, ideal for a gathering of friends and family.

HOW DID THE MENU FOR ROBERTO'S 1020 OSTERIA COME ABOUT? ANY ORIGINAL RECIPES OR RECIPES THAT CAME FROM YOUR FAMILY?

R: Pizzas will take center stage in our menu with a classic and gourmet range. Guests can witness how pizzas are prepared and cooked in the oven the traditional way in our alfresco dining area. We also will be showcasing a variety of Tuscan and Emilian culinary staples such as handmade pastas, soups, cold cut platters, as well as, contemporary dishes such as paninis and burgers. As the restaurant opens as early as 9AM, we have also created an Italian breakfast menu that stretches till brunch.

WHAT ARE THE MUST-TRY DISHES AND BEST-SELLERS AT ROBERTO'S 1020 OSTERIA?

R: The pizza for sure. We have quoted a number of options to cater all palates. The pastas are also a must-try as they're all homemade. The Italian Veal fillet as well as the fish are also very popular options.

IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS, WHERE DO YOU SEE ROBERTO'S 1020 OSTERIA?

R: PETRA Cucina is a dynamic and forward-looking developer and operator of authentic multi-themed, multi-brand high-end experiential outlets. With Roberto's, we want to show that we can establish an authentic Italian restaurant right here in Malaysia and take it abroad, within the region. In the next 5 years we want to develop an hub for the F&B industry, so that we can export our successful businesses to other cities in the region.

DO YOU HAVE ANY PLANS TO OPEN MORE RESTAURANTS THIS YEAR? IF YES, CAN YOU GIVE US AN INSIGHT TO WHAT KIND OF RESTAURANT YOU'RE PLANNING TO OPEN? IF NO, WHY NOT?

R: The Italian eateries currently in PETRA Cucina's portfolio have become popular casual and fine dining destinations in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. In Kuala Lumpur, the restaurants include Zenzero, Luce and Roberto's. We plan to open more Roberto's in Malaysia within this year and Singapore as soon as possible. We also do have plans to launch a cigar and whiskey lounge with live music and entertainment in the first quarter of 2021.



SEEING THAT THIS IS A VALENTINE'S ISSUE, WE'D LIKE TO ASK YOU THE CLICHED QUESTION

— HOW DID YOU MEET?

R: In a Tourism video shoot.

K: We both met about 10 yrs ago at a wrap party for a Tourism Malaysia shoot we did for CNN. At the time, we both weren't really looking for a relationship, however I knew it was love at first sight! He won me over immediately with his gracious demeanour and he was just the sweetest guy at the time! It was a natural flow into a meaningful relationship with no outside pressure and that worked for us.

BOTH OF YOU COME FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES, HOW DO YOU KEEP THEM ALIVE TOGETHER?

R: Our cultures are actually very similar. We both have strong family value, we both work hard, and enjoy quiet times together.

K: As Roberto has mentioned, both our families are so similar in their values. They aren't demanding on us as a couple, my parents and his parents were just delighted that we found each other and their main goal is to see us happy. Both our parents have been married for over 30 years so that steady and solid foundation is deeply entrenched in our value system as well. We hope to aspire to the example they have set for us.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR FUN?

R: I love sport and holidays. And a drink with my friends.

K: We love traveling! Before the pandemic, we would always make it a point to travel and explore the world as much as we can! Now we create our own little holidays at home. We love taking care of ourselves by working out together, swimming and being active. And Netflix has been a lifesaver. It's the best thing to come home and just be with each other in quiet solitude. That's fun for us as we constantly have to be sociable for work.

IF YOU HAD TO DESCRIBE EACH OTHER IN ONE WORD, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

R: Amazing!

K: Roberto is inspiring.

FAVOURITE CHARACTERISTICS ABOUT EACH OTHER ARE...

R: Supportive, loyal, fun, smart, creative and gorgeous of course.

K: He is humble, respectful and loving!

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU ON A DAILY BASIS?

R: Growing our business so we can lift more people up.

K: To be the best that I can be and to honour myself, my husband and my family. That motivates me everyday.