

CRAVE

ISSUE 01 / PREMIERE ISSUE 2012

PLUS

DEFINING GOOD TASTE

PREMIERE ISSUE: SPRING/SUMMER 2012

ACT II WITH MS B

Born into a fashion dynasty, style doyenne Bonnie Gokson seemed destined for a career in the luxurious world of couture, but today she's better known for her culinary exploits at SEVVA and Ms B's. She speaks to Debbie Soo about her seemingly effortless transition from clothing to cakes.



Hong Kong's reigning queen of cakes, Bonnie Gokson, grew up immersed in the world of fashion. Her sister Joyce Ma started the high-end retail boutique Joyce, and her grandfather founded Wing On department stores. Gokson spent years working at Chanel and masterminding the delicacies at tai-tai favourite Joyce Café, but left the fashion business in order to launch her own culinary empire. With the popularity of SEVVA and her series of Ms B's cake shops, Gokson is enjoying the sweet taste of success. In our first Crave Plus interview, we sit down with the socialite and savvy business woman to discuss the two leading ladies in her life: food and fashion.

How do you think food and fashion are related?

From arts to fashion to food, it's all related. Have you seen Sofia Coppola's movie *Marie-Antoinette*? How fabulous are the colours in each scene? They are styled so well with fashionable period costumes in a palette of water-colours and the cakes are matched so beautifully with the clothes. Fashion and food are both seasonal, and they both require quality ingredients.

Colour descriptions are often related to food, like pistachio green, cherry red or peach. Fashion and food are intertwined. They are both savvy and stylish, and people have always combined their love for the delicious and fashionable.

How has your career in fashion affected the way you approach the food business?

I was nurtured and groomed by the best of the best in the fashion business. From a very young age I was involved in Joyce. It was

a close-knit relationship sharing views with designers from some of the very best labels in the world. Before my food business, I was the regional chief of image and communications at Chanel for close to five years. I was trained as a buyer and visual creative merchandiser and was responsible for more than 45 fashion boutiques on top of being the right hand to my famous sister, Joyce.

I approach my business today very much through my own vision and intuition. I have seen so much of everything – balance, colour combinations and keeping the integrity of it all.

How would you compare your love for fashion and food?

Both in fashion and food, there is a yearning for the scrumptious and beautifully delicious. Both involve the whole "I want it and I want it NOW" mentality. I would never say one outweighs the other. At the end of a season when you are waiting for next season's collections to arrive, one can look

into what's been purchased and learn to play and mix and match to create a fresh new look. The same goes for food – we have ingredients handy and can be creative and combine them to make another dish out of what we have available.

What do you think is the most successful collaboration between a fashion brand and a restaurant?

Plenty of designer brands have their own restaurants. One thing people must understand, though, is that fashion is fashion and running a cafe or restaurant is entirely different. It takes more than passion to drive a well-run establishment. Have you heard of people dying to return to a fashion cafe because of its yummy food? People go for hipness, namesakes or to be seen with the fashion crowd... not really for the food. For Joyce Café, however, everybody loved the style, the experience and the food – a sign of a successful collaboration. "