

SINGAPORE

Kung Fu Chef

Andrew Ng took the plunge and left his stage-manager job for F&B industry

KOH HUI THENG

FORMER stage manager Andrew Ng, 33, loved the bright lights and action.

But he traded all that in to become a culinary master.

Like a martial artist, he now gets his highs from slicing and dicing in the kitchen – where the action is.

Mr Ng spent five years booking actors for shows and looking after their welfare and felt he had come up against a dead end in his profession. Troubled by the lack of stability in his line, he searched for an alternative.

Top on his list?

A job that would provide a regular source of income and let him climb up the career ladder.

He spent 2006 rustling up modern-European fare at Tea Cosy by Eclectic Attic, his friend's bistro in Plaza Singapura.

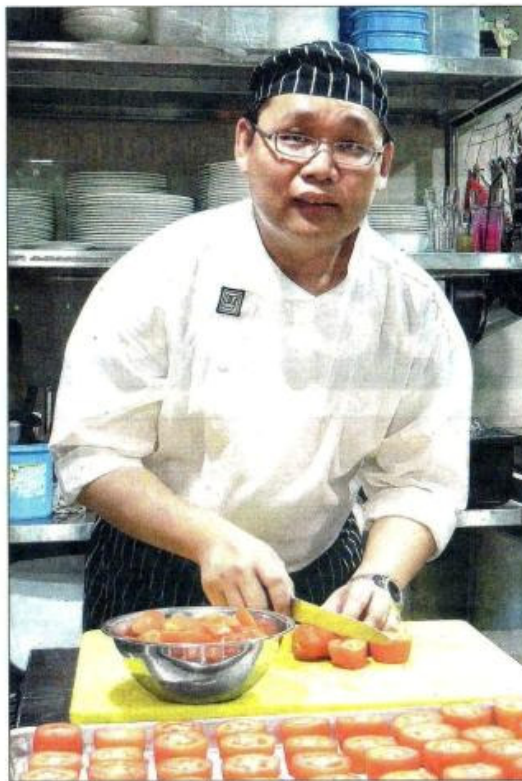
The stint convinced him that his path lay in the food-and-beverage (F&B) industry.

Mr Ng told *my paper*: "Besides theatre, my other passion is food. But I never thought of cooking professionally until I was given the chance to try it out."

The fact that he was tying the knot that year probably persuaded him to take a leap of faith.

The French-food aficionado enrolled at At-Sunrice Global-Chef Academy in November 2006.

Besides picking up food-preparation and kitchen knowledge, Mr Ng also underwent a six-month training stint at fine-dining restaurant Iggy's.



CHOP-CHOP: Mr Andrew Ng enrolled for a course in 2006 and is now a section chef at Prive Restaurant. (PHOTO: COURTESY OF ANDREW NG)

He graduated last April and now works as a section chef at Prive Restaurant, which serves Western cuisine.

The training gave him a valuable edge, he said. "Being able to

execute dinner service and taking care of the small details help. In fine dining, it's not about delivering expectations – it's about surpassing them," he added.

He said: "It's important to do what you like because that passion will take you higher and let you go far."

Mr Ng was among the latest batch of graduates who attended last night's inaugural joint graduation ceremony for graduates from the tourism and F&B sectors at VivoCity.

At the event, Minister for Trade and Industry Lim Hng Kiang said that the tourism sector's "longer-term prospects remain bright" even though this year would prove to be a challenging one.

"We have a strong pipeline of new tourism investments coming on stream over the next few years. They include the integrated resorts, the international cruise terminal and the River Safari. In addition, major events such as the Youth Olympics are expected to bring in large numbers of visitors," Mr Lim said.

"How quickly we rebound from this downturn will depend on how quickly we can respond to the changing business environment and adapt to meet new needs as they arise," he added.

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HELPPDESK 我的字典

Dead end: 无出路
wú chū lù

Food-and-beverage:
餐饮 cān yǐn

Chef: 厨师 chū shī

Edge: 优势 yōu shì