



Chef chat

Model looks, TV personality – and he can cook too. Lucky **Laura Brown** chats to chef **Paul Frangie**

How did you get into cooking?

I started cooking as soon as I was old enough to reach the stove. I think I must have been about eight years old when my parents let me fry my own eggs for breakfast on the weekends. Both my parents are good cooks. My mother, originally from the Netherlands, cooked us dinner every day, and when the weather was nice enough, my father, who is from Lebanon, would be outside barbecuing. I looked up to both of them. Professionally, my inspirations were Anthony Bourdain, Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsay. And to be honest, I still look up to those guys!

Your culinary style is very health conscious. What would you like people to know that they might not know yet about healthy cooking?

Most importantly, that healthy cooking doesn't mean tasteless boring food. I'm here to show people that they can still enjoy what they eat. Also, people need to be more aware of companies using so-called health buzzwords to sell you their products. The healthiest and least processed foods do not need any marketing to communicate how healthy they are. This also goes for 'fad' superfoods like the latest health crazes chia seeds, wheatgrass and kale. The more you educate yourself about healthy cooking the easier it gets to integrate it into your lifestyle and overcome the daily not-so-healthy obstacles. A healthy diet is key.

What is the best dish you've ever tasted?

Wow, that's a big call and a very difficult one to answer – I've tasted so many amazing dishes in my life! My guilty food pleasure would be, without a doubt, ice cream. My favourite flavours are pralines 'n cream, vanilla and black sesame. I eat it practically every day!

What defines an outstanding meal for you?

Outstanding meals are based on great ingredients and the people you spend your time with. The food should stimulate the senses; I mean that you should try to combine flavours, textures and temperatures all in harmony. You can make any dish outstanding by simply using the best possible quality ingredients and products.

What are your staple kitchen ingredients and why?

Besides choosing healthy options and fresh produce, I always use good quality eggs and butter. They are products often overlooked but important.



Banana coconut pancakes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 Eggs
- 1 ripe banana
- 2 tbsp coconut flour
- Pinch of salt
- Blueberries
- Honey
- Toasted coconut flakes
- Ghee, coconut oil or light olive oil

YOU'LL NEED:

- Kitchen processor (or large mixing bowl and fork)
- Frying pan
- Spatula

METHOD

STEP 1 Using a kitchen processor mix/blend the eggs, the ripe banana, coconut flour and salt together. If you're not using a kitchen processor, mash the banana in a bowl using a fork, then add the eggs

and beat well, add coconut flour and pinch of salt and whisk again with fork.

STEP 2 Heat frying pan on medium high and add a teaspoon of ghee or oil.

STEP 3 Each time pour a small amount of batter into the frying pan (around the size of your palm) – making around six evenly sized pancakes.

STEP 4 Fry pancake on one side – once cooked carefully flip the pancake using a spatula and fry on other side until a light brown colour.

STEP 5 Remove and stack pancakes. Garnish with toasted coconut flakes, blueberries and a drizzle of honey. Serve and enjoy!

You mention your best meals are shared with great company. Who do you like to cook for most?

I like cooking for friends, family and anyone else who appreciates my food. It also helps if they are fun to hang out with and have a good sense of humour. But that's a bonus!

You are a chef, model and TV personality – what is the best part of your work?

There are several parts of my work that I'm grateful for. I enjoy being able to share my passion for food with others and I really thrive meeting and working with many other awesome and extremely creative people.

What's next on your list?

I'm working on my first cook book, as well as opening my own food and fitness outlet in Dubai. It's very exciting. These are both big projects, which I'm planning to get off the ground by the end of 2015. 