

# SPOTTED@PICOTIN



**Kacey Whitiri-Roberts**, Chef de Cuisine

## **Tell us something interesting about yourself:**

I enjoy modifying small dingy boats with V8 car motors and driving about 120km in 4 feet of water.

## **What's the most daring thing you have done?**

New Zealanders are famed for their dare-devil streak, but the most daring thing I have ever done was part of a family outing which went from routine to adventure in just a few minutes. My family and I had just finished an early morning fishing trip with the car boot filled to the brim with our catch of the day. We had driven my dad's brand new four-wheel drive all the way into the river, making use of the low tide to facilitate the loading of our catch – yet somehow, we managed to miscalculate our timing and were caught out by a rising tide.

In a crazed moment, we realized we had only 2 choices: sit there and drown or simply drive like maniacs to avoid the currents and rising tide. Of course, we chose the latter and decided to drive. As it happens all too often with rising tides we had misjudged the situation. The currents were so strong that the entire car was being pushed out to sea.

But a leader always emerges in these situations and my dad took control. He kicked me out of the car and ordered me to swim to shore with 2 bags of fish, I was anything but calm. Struggling to shore, I spotted a digger “conveniently parked” on the beach, and in my best impression of an action movie hero, jumped on the digger with the full intention of hot wiring it! As luck would have it, the keys were in the ignition; I started the digger and followed my family's car which was by now floating down stream. I managed to hook my dad's car (did I mention it was brand new) crushing the motor in the process but in doing so saved my family!!

## **What are you passionate about and why?**

I am very passionate about my job. I am driven by my love for cooking and feeding people memorable meals. My favourite time of day is after a great meal, whether it is bolognaise and a beer or champagne and oysters, is to start planning my next meal! No matter where I have been in the world, great food and good company keeps me passionate about what I do.

## **What do your friends NOT know about you?**

My dirty secret is that I suffer from Ophidiophobia, in plain terms, a deep seeded fear of snakes, which I think is rather understandable!! Most of my friends also probably don't know that used to make pocket money selling candies at a cinema.

## **What do you like about Picotin? When do you visit?**

What's there not to like! I like Picotin because it is a place for families, parents can relax and children can play without feeling uncomfortable, there is no shortage of space for them to run around after a good pizza.

## **What is your favourite dish at Picotin and why?**

This is impossible to answer as I am now the Chef at Picotin. I love all the dishes our kitchen prepares... and look out for more favourites on our specials board.

## **If you had the chance to date a Hollywood star, who would it be, what would you want to say to them and what would you do?**

As my life is driven by food and good living, I would choose to go on a dinner date with Robert de Niro. De Niro is himself a renowned restaurateur and a passionate foodie. I am sure I would enjoy his conversation and sharing his experiences. De Niro once said his lamb shanks and mashed potatoes are the best in the world; I would have to take up the challenge and cook for him my famed lamb shanks and minted peas.

