

Saturday, 21 June 2014

Interview with Andrew Bellucci, Head Pizza Man at Mikey's Original New York Pizza, Bangsar, Malaysia

Search This Blog

Loading...

Contact The Yum List

theyumlist@gmail.com

Hidden Bars in KL



Speakeasies

Best of Phuket



10 Must Visits in KL



Head Pizza Man Andrew Bellucci - photo courtesy of Robert Gilliland

Head Pizza Man at Mikey's Original New York Pizza, Andrew Bellucci, recently spent an afternoon with The Yum List and shared some stories from behind the scenes.

What do you do and how did you get into the industry?

I am the Chef, or as we like to call it, the Head Pizza Man at Mikey's Original New York Pizza in Bangsar, KL. My first foray in the business was flipping burgers at a Church Hall where they played Bingo every Friday night. I was 15 or 16. Even back then I was always trying to improve the menu – which was very limited.

What's the best/ worst part of your job?

The best part is seeing people's eyes widen as the pizza comes out of the oven or is delivered to their table. When people get excited over your food, you know you're doing something right. The worst part is the administrative work that comes with being a chef. I love standing in front of an oven. Sitting behind a desk, however, leaves me less enthusiastic.

What's your personal favourite meal/ drink?

I've only been in KL since February and almost all of my waking hours have been devoted to the opening and now running the pizzeria, so I haven't been to enough places here to have a "favorite" yet. My personal favorite meal is rigatoni with meatballs and Italian sausage and marinara sauce at my Aunt Shirley's house in New Jersey, USA. With garlic bread on the side. And a nice glass of iced tea. That's a meal that I enjoyed almost every Sunday when my father would cook some type of macaroni – we never called it "pasta". I celebrated my 50th birthday in January and the only thing I wanted was my "macaroni and meatballs" at Aunt Shirley's. And that's what we had.

Tell us a story about one of the dishes you prepare.

My favorite is the Pizza Bianco – which means white pizza in Italian. I've always like a white pizza (with no sauce) and I execute this one simply and with great ingredients. I open a pizza dough and top it with shredded mozzarella and cheddar and put it in the oven. When the pie is $\frac{3}{4}$ done, I take it out and pipe on a floret each of Italian Ricotta and French Chevre, or goat cheese. After the pie is fully baked, I apply a nappage of garlic-infused clarified butter over the florets, add some freshly-ground black pepper, both for color and flavor, add a generous handful of grated Grana Padano cheese and then sprinkle some chopped chives as a last touch. This pie passes the visual and taste tests with flying colors and is my favorite pizza to eat.

What's one of the craziest things you've seen behind the scenes?

When I re-opened Lombardi's Pizza in 1994 we were working with an original coal-fired baker's oven. These ovens are huge – they take up an entire room – ours was actually in the backyard of the building. The problem is the oven is so deep – goes back 10 meters – that dust accumulates in the back corners and it's difficult to clean. So I developed a system where once every two weeks I would take the smallest kitchen worker on staff and literally put him in the oven with a wet rag so he could get all the coal ash that accumulated in the corners and back of the oven. We'd do it at 6 in the morning after the oven had cooled down, but the stone baking surface was still hot. He would put on gloves and three pairs of pants and scurry into the oven, clean one corner and then scurry back to the oven opening on all fours! It would take him 9-10 trips into the oven to really get it clean and when he was finished he'd be filthy dirty and exhausted. Needless to say I always gave him that day off to recover!

The perfect day off would be...

Just relaxing in a spa – which is exactly what I did on my first day off from Mikey's. Based on a recommendation from Monica at The Yum List, I booked an afternoon at [The Spa at The Club at Saujana](#) – and it was the perfect antidote to the grueling schedule required to open a restaurant. I can't wait to go back again!

A day in the life of a chef is...

long, hard and very rewarding

What do you do for fun?

I like to hit golf balls at a range. Sure, I enjoy going out on the courses as well, but I'm not a great golfer so I get more satisfaction on the driving range.

What's something you'd like guests to know about the cuisine prepared at Mikey's?

Every single ingredient we use is fresh and prepared in-house. Nothing comes in pre-cooked or pre-prepared. And the pizza is made to order. Sure, sometimes you might have to wait a few minutes for a fresh pie to come out of the oven, but I think that's better than eating something that had been sitting under a heating lamp or warmed-up in a microwave, neither of which we have at Mikey's.

How do you select your ingredients and why?

That's easy – I select everything on taste. I don't look at price, I don't look at brand or where it came from. I base everything on how it tastes in my mouth. And so far, my mouth has never lead me wrong.

What's your view on the KL restaurant/ bar scene?

The good news is there are a wide variety of options at affordable prices throughout KL. The bad news is that I find service lacking in many of these places – even some that would be considered fine-dining. That's why when I find a place that treats me well and serves good consistent food, I stick with it. And for me, that means Jalan Telawi 2 in Bangsar – what a collection of fine establishments on the same block. I love Yeast for the croissants and Antipodean for an early breakfast and La Bodega for Sangria and KGB for a great burger. I enjoy having a drink after work sometimes at Gridiron which is right next door to us and stays open late. And when I'm in the mood to mingle with KL's high society, I go to the upstairs bar at Rils which reminds me of Paris. I can count on James, the bartender, to make me a great cocktail that I didn't even know I wanted. There are many choices in KL, but for the most part I stay on my block and I'm never left wanting.

What can guests look forward to in the upcoming months?

We are going to start featuring a special pizza of the week, which will showcase my more creative/adventurous

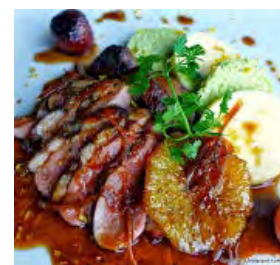
10 Expat Comforts



Best Coffee in KL



Best Italian Restaurants



side. Baked Mac and Cheese Pizza, anyone?

See The Yum List's visit to [Mikey's Original New York Pizza here](#).

Posted by The Yum List at 07:00



3 comments:



Linda 21 June 2014 10:40

Nicely done interview. I like his description of his perfect day off.

[Reply](#)



Sandy Bellucci 21 June 2014 11:29

Great Interview!! When you come back home there will be a nice macaroni and meatball dinner waiting for you :) MISS YOU!!

[Reply](#)



Joe Bellucci 23 June 2014 03:44

I will at the table waiting as well!

[Reply](#)

[Add comment](#)

Comment as:

Notify me



Like The Yum List on Facebook!

Blog Archive

- ▼ 2014 (378)
 - ▶ September (55)
 - ▶ August (59)
 - ▶ July (42)
 - ▼ June (32)
 - Hit & Mrs., Bangsar, Set Lunch, Kuala Lumpur, Mala...
 - Thai Cooking Class with Chef Ooy, SILK Restaurant,..
 - .
 - Interview with Chef Sazli Nazim, Gastro Sentral, L...
 - JW Marriott "Preserving Heritage" Ramadhan Buffet,...
 - Best of Bali, Our Latest Picks of Best Accommodat i...
 - Jom Makan at Eccucino, Prince Hotel,

Links to this post

[Create a Link](#)

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)

[Kuala Lumpur,...](#)

[Bali is My Life](#)

[NARA Medi Spa, Bukit Bandaraya, Kuala Lumpur, Mala...](#)

[Witches and Brew, Sandwich and Coffee Shop, Avenue...](#)

[Ka Jok See, Most Fun Night Out in Phuket!, Phuket ...](#)

[Interview with Andrew Bellucci, Head Pizza Man at ...](#)

[The Ganga Cafe, Healthy Vegetarian Meals, Bangsar,...](#)

[Coffee Amo, Coffee Shop, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia](#)

[Fiercer, Northern Indian Cuisine, Publika, Kuala L...](#)

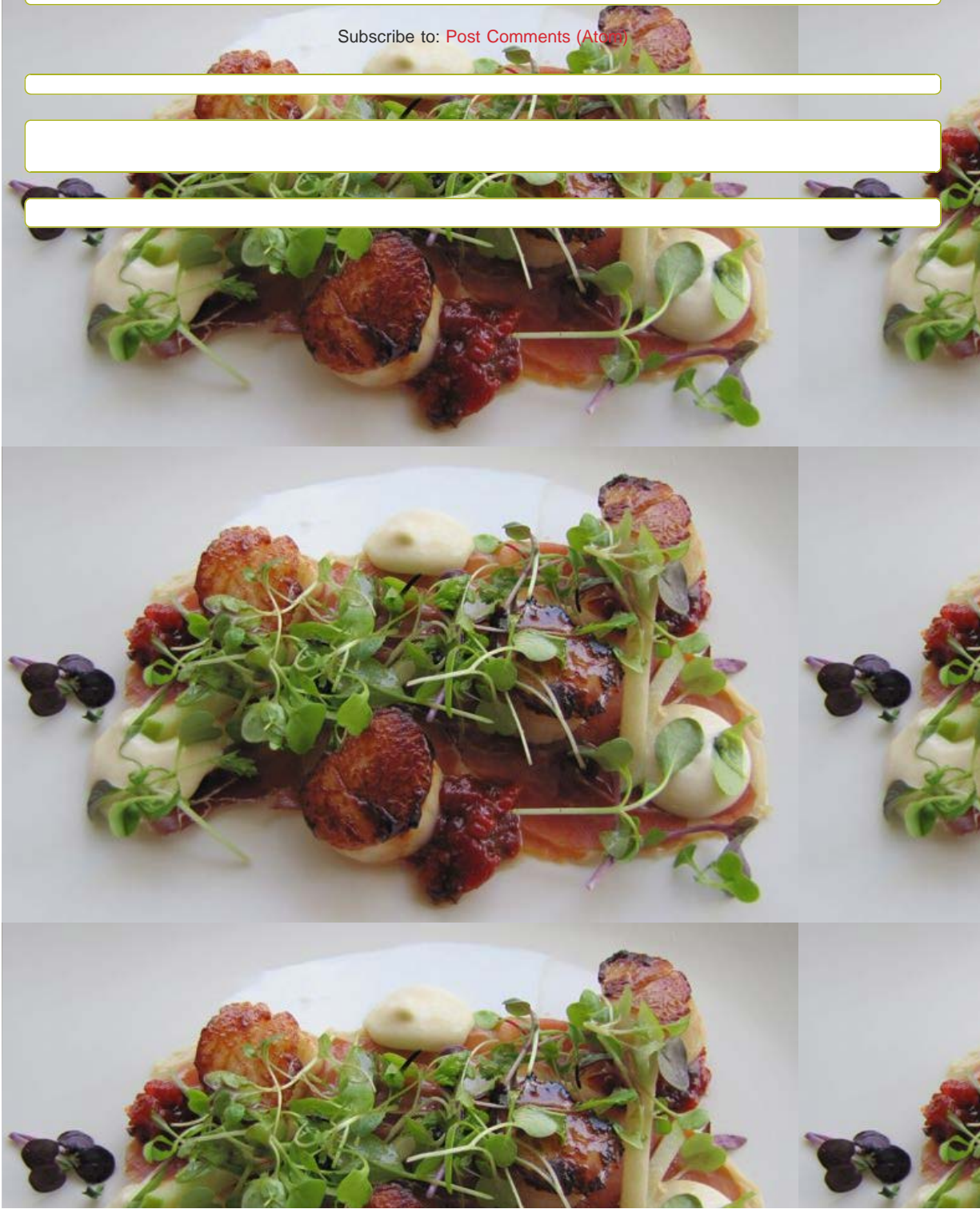
[Miss Ellie Tea House, Melawati, Kuala Lumpur, Mala...](#)

[Lacquer Couture, Bangsar Shopping Centre, Kuala Lu...](#)

[Recipe for the Cheeky Squirrel Cocktail, Courtesy ...](#)

[Interview with Bartender Shawn Chong, Omakase + Ap...](#)

[Gastro Sentral, Le Meridien, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysi...](#)





M Marini Caffè,
KLCC, Kuala
Lumpur,
Malaysia

Mediteca,
Mediterranean
Cuisine,
Kuala
Lumpur,
Mal...

Father's Day
Pork Ribs
Special,
Chicago Rib
House,...

Artistry, Café
and Art
Space,
Kampong
Glam,
Singapore...

Loysel's Toy,
Coffee and
Brunch,
Singapore

Recipe for
Metropolitan
Cocktail,
Courtesy of
the ...

Interview with
Rafael
Nardo, Salt
Tapas and
Bar, P...

Eight Ounce
Coffee Co.,
KLCC, Kuala
Lumpur,
Malays...

SOTHYS,
Bangsar
Village II,
Kuala
Lumpur,
Malaysia...

The Fullerton
Hotel
Singapore

Art Afternoon
Tea, Ritz-
Carlton
Kuala
Lumpur,
Mala...

Pisco Bar,
New Chef,
New Menu,
Changkat
Bukit Bint...

Recipe for
Chicken
Szechuan
Style
Courtesy of
the ...

▶ May (33)

▶ April (49)

▶ March (36)



- ▶ **February** (36)
- ▶ **January** (36)
- ▶ **2013** (465)
- ▶ **2012** (409)
- ▶ **2011** (168)
- ▶ **2010** (66)

Best of Bali

Where to Eat in Bangsar Shopping Centre

Best Steaks in Kuala Lumpur

Best Street Food in KL

Best Afternoon Teas in KL



Best of Penang



Highly Recommended - Pub Crawl Route

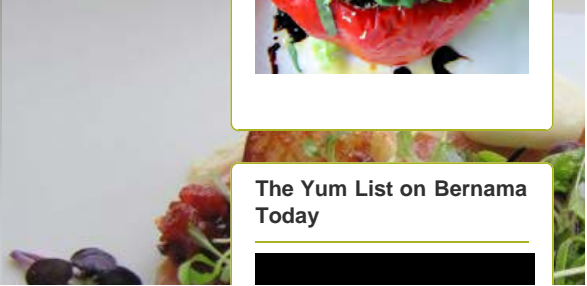
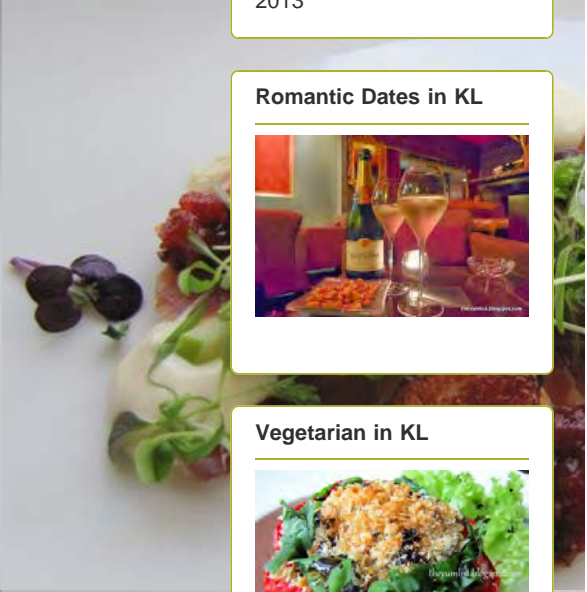
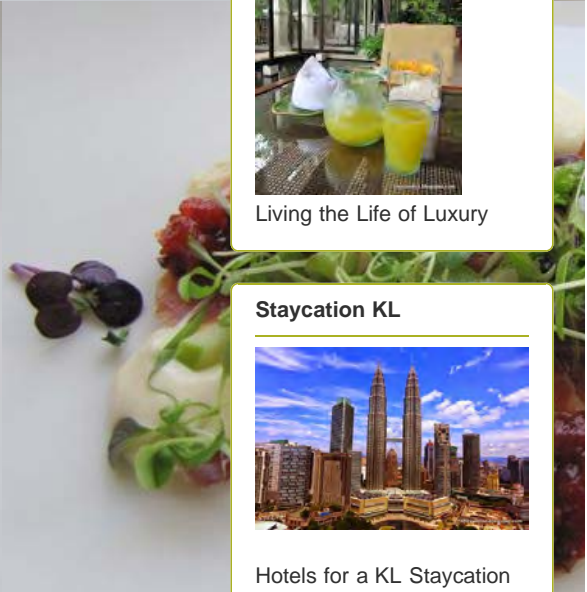
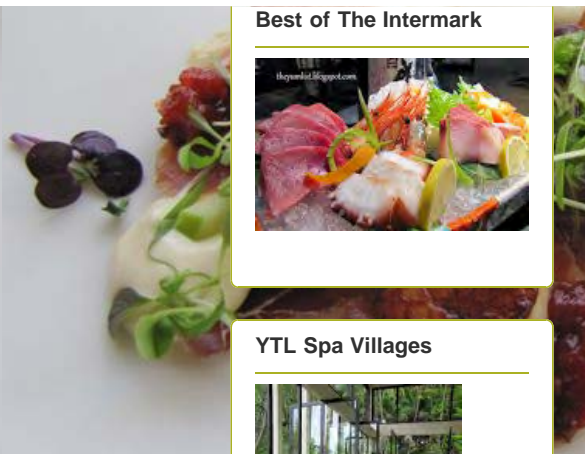


Where to Eat in Avenue K



Best Cocktails in KL





Best of The Intermark




<http://theyumlist.blogspot.com>

YTL Spa Villages



Living the Life of Luxury

Staycation KL



Hotels for a KL Staycation 2013

Romantic Dates in KL




Vegetarian in KL



The Yum List on Bernama Today



**The Yum List on BFM
Radio 89.9**



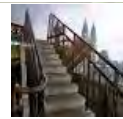
- Countries on The Yum List**
- [Argentina](#)
 - [Australia](#)
 - [Belgium](#)
 - [Brazil](#)
 - [Chile](#)
 - [Denmark](#)
 - [France](#)
 - [Hong Kong](#)
 - [Indonesia](#)
 - [Macau](#)
 - [Malaysia](#)
 - [Myanmar](#)
 - [Netherlands](#)
 - [Peru](#)
 - [Singapore](#)
 - [Switzerland](#)
 - [Taiwan](#)
 - [Thailand](#)
 - [USA](#)
 - [Vietnam](#)

Popular Posts



[Best Restaurants in Kuala Lumpur, The Yum List Food Awards 2013, Malaysia](#)

[Heli Lounge Bar, Kuala Lumpur,](#)



Malaysia



Afternoon Tea
Around Kuala
Lumpur,
Malaysia



Best Italian
Restaurants in
Kuala Lumpur
2014,
Malaysia



Top Five Most
Romantic
Dates in Kuala
Lumpur,
Malaysia

Total Pageviews

3,651,132

Bloggers Abound

Little Lady

Great Way to Have Fun
While Working on Social
Skills

1 hour ago

Foodeverywhere

SOULed OUT @
Bangsar South

2 hours ago

Eat Drink KL

Chef's Table Dinners @
Topshelf, TTDI

8 hours ago

Linda's Lair

Monday's Post

9 hours ago

Angie's Recipes

Freekeh Pumpkin
Streusel Cake

9 hours ago

Kremb de la Kremb

Jakarta Blogger Roundup

11 hours ago

Senior Adventures

Weekend Reflections
and Wednesday Wit and
Wisdom #4 Challenge

11 hours ago

KYspeaks

KY eats – Ah Fook Chee
Cheong Fun at Imbi



Market
11 hours ago

Reflection of a Travel & Food Addict
Candy Crushfit
13 hours ago

London Calling ...
Johore Zoo / /
Zoo Johor /

14 hours ago

Show All

Follow me on *Pinterest*

Followers

Foodie Blog Roll

Subscribe To

FOODIEBLOGROLL

Total Blogs: 17476

Earn Revenue:

- [Join The Publisher Program](#)

Promote Each Other Winner

- [Nomss - Vancouver Food Blog](#)





JOIN THE FOODIE BLOGROLL PUBLISHER PROGRAM

- Earn Revenue
- Up To \$8 CPM
- Welcome Packages
- Monetize US and Non-US impressions

JOIN NOW

Add Your Blog

 Posts

 Comments

Awesome Inc. template. Powered by [Blogger](#).