

CULINARY CONVERSATIONS: SERVING SOLUTIONS FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE WORLD

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Eitan Bernath Chef, Author, TV Personality and High-level Supporter, United Nations World Food Programme
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Introduction

Now for a special presentation, please welcome world-renowned chefs, Sanaa Abourezk, Eitan Bernath, and Lazarus Lynch.

Lazarus Lynch

Chef Sanaa, please join us. Good morning, everyone. Wow! I see familiar faces in the front row. What a wonderful opportunity and morning and to share with all of you our love and passion for food. What unites us is our love for humanity, for lifting up community, and for eating really delicious food. And we know that really good food comes from love; it comes from a good heart. And I'm surrounded today by chefs who love what they do, who love lifting up their communities and who cook with love.

So I'm going to ask some questions before we start cooking, because I'm sure that's what you all are here for, to smell something delicious and maybe even taste something – we'll get to that.

Lazarus Chef Sanaa, welcome.

Sanaa Thank you.

Lazarus You're welcome. You have a fascinating story. You built this restaurant inspired by your culture and your family. Talk to us a little bit about your story and what got you into food.

Sanaa So I was born and grew up in Damascus, Syria. My father was a farmer. So I went to agriculture engineering, so when I graduated, I went to my dad, and I started giving this lecture – big mistake. So he looked at me, and he said, "You don't know nothing." He said a bad word, but I'm not going to say it. So that's why I ended up in America supposedly to get my graduate degree in horticulture. While I'm in California, actually I met a professor. She convinced me to switch to food and nutrition, so I have a master's degree in food and nutrition.

I went back to back to DC to get a PhD and met my husband who was from South Dakota, so it was like... And then after I said, "I do," he said, "Oh, I'm moving back to South Dakota." First time I'm in the Midwest. And so I got there. You know, I was born in Damascus, six million people. I went to L.A. I don't know how many people live there. I went to DC, so here I am in the middle of nowhere.

And I was going crazy, so... marriage. My husband said, "Why don't you do something you really like?" And he knows I'm cooking all the time. So I opened my restaurant in South Dakota, in the meat and potato state, and I started cooking beans

and grain, lentils, and garbanzo beans. Everybody thought I would close in six months. That was 22 years ago.

Lazarus Wow, talk about life advice. Just get up, move somewhere you don't know and do what you love – it will never fail you. What a beautiful story and good life advice.

And Chef Eitan, you are incredible, inspiring. You leave with such love and passion in your work. You've got a really outstanding social media following. Tell us a little bit about your story, cooking, and how you use your platforms to educate your community about food security.

Eitan Yeah, I started working in food when I was 11 years old. I competed on the show... Maybe people who are not from this country don't know, but Chopped, which, kind of like Master Chef, for example, in a lot of other countries. And I competed when I was 11. I actually lost in the first round, but I turned it into something great. And from there I started creating content online and found that there were people interested in what I was cooking and what I had to share. And from there I have since then written a cookbook, *Eitan Eats the World*. I work on the Drew Barrymore show on CBS as a culinary contributor and really just share my passion of food.

And the way that I got into the food insecurity space is... You know, I work with food all day long. I am fortunate and grateful that I have a fridge full of food, a pantry full of food. And working with food, I became incredibly aware how fortunate I was, how lucky I was to have that access to food. And so I love storytelling, I love sharing my travels, what I learn from other people – I'm a lifelong learner, and so I use my platform to talk about food insecurity. I'm a high-level supporter of the World Food Programme to highlight the work they do. I work with the local organization in New York City called City Harvest. And I've done quite a bit of travel to be able to... You know, I'm not an expert. You all here are experts, but I have the ability to share the work and the stories and the knowledge of experts with my audience.

And so that's really what I focus on is I do know quite a bit about food insecurity, just from what I've learned from other experts. But rather than coming as an expert to my audience, I kind of learn along with them.

Lazarus I love that. Round of applause for our chefs, truly inspiring. Now, we're going to get to the fun stuff. We're making two different dishes using crops that most of us have in our pantries or have access to at our markets or even in our farms. So Chef Sanaa, tell us about the dish you are making and what inspired it.

Sanaa So I'm making hummus. Hummus is garbanzo beans..., actually was an Arabic name for garbanzo beans, and it's an ingenious recipe that was used a long time ago for people to not waste. So you take all the bread, and, Garbanzo beans is a very inexpensive ingredient, very healthy. You put them together, and you take, you have a complete protein, so that was an ingenious way that our great-grandmother thought about to feed her kids. And I make it in the restaurant in South Dakota, and every time I tell my mom, "People pay money to eat it," she laughs because she says, "Americans pay money to eat this?" and I say "yes." That's what I'm making for you.

Everyone say "hummus." Say it again.

Lazarus All right, that sounds delicious. And Chef Eitan, what are you making today?

Eitan So I'm going to be making a dish that I learned how to make on a trip to India. I was working with an organization called Project Gabriel that helps communities that have been historically not given state funding and not helped as much in India. And they

were talking about “finger millet,” which very recently has become kind of knowledge for how incredible it is, how nutrient-dense it is. And in this village they were talking about, like, we’ve known this for a while. And so I’m going to be making a millet, a finger millet flatbread with a chickpea curry that they taught me. And I’ll talk a bit more about that while we’re cooking.

Lazarus All right, so you both ready?

Eitan I’m ready.

Lazarus To step into your kitchens and start cooking?

Eitan Yeah, let’s do it.

Sanaa All right, three, two, one—let’s get cooking. All right.

Lazarus So we have two screens, and you can look at the screens if you can’t see upfront. We have screens that will have some overhead monitors. And so what’s wonderful about these two chefs is how connected their stories are to family. Part of my story is—I came to the World Food Prize when I was a high school student. I went to a school in New York City called “Food and Finance High School.” Yes, it exists. It is real. And I learned how to cook there. But I also got involved in my local 4-H program, and because of that I was introduced to the World Food Prize. Before that, I was introduced to the New York Youth Institute. And at the New York Youth Institute I learned about the World Food Prize.

And so I came here when I was a sophomore in high school. It was my first time in Iowa. I was like, “Wow! There’s so many cows, there’s so much grass!” I’m a New York City boy. And I met so many incredible leaders who later became mentors. I met friends, I met peers who became lifelong peers and mentors. And little did I know that I would be on this stage 15-plus years later, presenting and sharing my story. But I know that it could not have been possible without incredible leadership and without the World Food Prize organization and without the support of folks who believed in me as a young high school kid from South Jamaica Queens in New York City who believed that my dreams were possible, that my passion for food had a purpose, and that somehow I could make sense of it in a meaningful career.

So that’s why I’m here today. I went to China, Beijing, China, for three months to study with the World Food Prize, and then I was also working with the Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, at the USDA through the Wallace Carver Internship. Wow! Never knew that that would be part of my story. But I’m so grateful that I said yes to the World Food Prize. And that’s why I’m here today. Little bit about me.

So Chef, Sanaa, tell me a little bit about what you’re doing. What have we got going on here?

Sanaa So I’m just boiling the garbanzo beans at a parboil. And usually I put a lot of garlic in it. As you saw, I only slivered the garlic, because I have mercy on you—it’s early in the morning to have so much garlic.

Lazarus Never too early for garlic.

Sanaa I know, I do, I know, but just in case you have another meeting or you’re meeting somebody special.

Lazarus OK.

Sanaa And then the salsa is just yogurt with the tahini which is included a lot in the Eastern Mediterranean. And then all the good stuff. Cumin is good for the gas. So when we eat garbanzo beans, if you have cumin, you're OK. And basically you use all the bread, and that's the idea, so when you have to use all the bread, you don't waste it. You use it in these dishes. So it's win-win. And then we have some pumpkin seeds just for decoration—you don't have to have them—and scallion, and that's it.

Lazarus Now, tahini is actually ground up...

Sanaa It's a puree of sesame.

Lazarus Sesame seeds, right, and that's the sort of predominant ingredient outside of the garbanzo bean.

Sanaa Yes, if you're making like in America, you have peanut butter.

Lazarus Yes.

Sanaa In the East Mediterranean, tahini.

Lazarus Wow! So would it be like the tahini in jelly or...?

Sanaa Oh, yes, tahini with dates.

Lazarus Yes.

Sanaa Tahini with maple syrup, to die for. Use it for everything.

Lazarus Wow! I'm getting hungry just thinking about that, and I never thought to actually use the day-old bread in a recipe like this. I think as Americans we may think of using a day-old bread for maybe croutons or maybe, you know, holidays are coming up, maybe in a dressing or a stuffing recipe. But this is really innovative. And talk about the lack of waste in all of this.

Sanaa So that's what I'm saying. You can use old bread, so sometimes we deep fry it and we keep it in the pantry. So anytime you make a salad, you make a soup, everything is ready. So bread is the basic of every cuisine, so you never should waste any bread. So even in the restaurant we make it into croutons, and then we give them to customers to take them home and they're for their soup and their salad. No food waste.

Lazarus I must say, for day-old bread, that tastes really, really fresh. Round of applause for Chef Sanaa.

Eitan Hello.

Lazarus Hello. I see... Well, I don't see fire, but I feel heat coming from this side of the kitchen already. What are you working on right now?

Eitan All right, so I've already made the batter that I'm gonna make the flatbreads out of. So the village's name was called Makada, and they showed me two ways that they made the finger millet. One was in a flatbread similar to like a roti, which is usually made out of wheat flour, which is obviously like a dough that you knead and that you roll out. One that was a little more flavorful they showed me is actually a batter one, which is similar to like, more like an uttapam, which is typically made out of like lentils and rice.

Lazarus Yes.

Eitan In this case finger millet. So I made this kind of thick batter. I'm going to let it sit. It's ideal if it's fermented, but it's not going to ferment at all, because we have 24 minutes on the clock.

Lazarus We sure do.

Eitan But it'll at least develop a bit. And then over here I'm starting on the actual chickpea dish, just kind of toasting my spices, little bit of cumin and mustard seeds.

Lazarus Now, you were on a show I was also on. You were 11. I was, I was young, in my young twenties, but you were on Chopped.

Eitan Yes.

Lazarus So you know a little bit about cooking under pressure.

Eitan I'm familiar, yes.

Lazarus Yeah, so do you think it's possible to get all of this done in the 24 minutes that we have left?

Eitan Oh, yeah, easy.

Lazarus Easy, easy, wonderful. Round of applause for Chef Eitan.

Eitan Love a time constraint.

Lazarus One of the things I really love about cooking and food is how it brings us all together. And, Chef Sanaa, you talked a little bit yesterday. You told me about your grandmother who inspired you how to cook. Can you tell us a little bit about your grandmother? Who was she to you, and how did she inspire you in the kitchen?

Sanaa So like I said, I was born and grew up Damascus, but my father bought a small land, and he enlarged it in an area right in the Mediterranean. So the minute the school closed, we go back there, and my grandparents' home was about 3 kilometers from our home. So every morning... I hate to sleep at my grandparents' home, because they have an outhouse, and everyone goes to outhouse. So every morning, 6 o'clock in the morning, I wake up, and I go uphill to my grandparents' home just to watch my grandmother milking the cow, making cheese, and then she has the dough, and then she makes fresh bread with zaa'tar on it on a stone oven. And the smells stayed with me, and I think it drove my parents crazy, because, you know, I'm an engineer. I don't know, but being overseas they know you should be an engineer or a doctor. Chef is not a profession, and they freaked out, actually, when I quit my job and became a chef. But it is what it is, but I was inspired from my grandmother smelling all this fresh smell, and that's actually, was I want to do what I am doing in my restaurant... – fresh, fresh, fresh.

Lazarus Fresh, fresh, fresh. Now, is there a place for engineering in the kitchen in what you do today?

Sanaa Absolutely. The way I feel, it's all a circle, so I know that soil, I grew up with on the farm with my parents, and I know how you grow food. And then as a dietitian I know what role it should be in your body. And as a chef it's my role to introduce, like I did with South Dakotans and to lead people to the finest ingredients, you know, the beans, the grains, the stuff, the ones that can sustain our agriculture.

Lazarus Wonderful, wonderful. Well, I wish all of you could smell what I'm smelling.

- Eitan* Can you guys smell it in maybe the first row. No? Try. Can you? No? You get some garlic. You get the... Hopefully – it's a big room – hopefully soon there'll be some smells wafting there.
- Lazarus* You know, one of the wonderful things about being here today and sharing your gifts for food and cooking is the role that you all play every single day in ending hunger. And it is a very practical role. It is a very hard grind of the working world. But you all do it with such grace. So, Eitan, tell us a little bit about what it means to you when you actually put a dish in front of someone and they're able to taste your creation. And what does that mean that you're actually feeding people in real time?
- Eitan* Yeah, I mean I think my favorite thing and I'm gonna... People can see me through the smoke. I like everything, and I think if you speak to a lot of cooks and chefs is, about food, is the people it brings together and the eating together, breaking bread together. Now that I live on my own, I am 22, in case anyone couldn't tell. And a few years ago I moved out. I grew up in New Jersey. I now live in New York City, and my favorite thing to do is to host a dinner party. And there's just something so gratifying, so exciting about serving food that you cooked to someone. And I think that that joy and what brings us together through all my travels is, you know, food really is the uniter, and I think food tells so much about history, about culture, and, you know, I think the world's..., you know, how we eat is fascinating.
- Lazarus* Oh, so fascinating.
- Eitan* I mean one of the most fascinating like eating rituals that I can remember from my travels is – I was in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. And they eat traditionally as a family, so they have their giant platter with the injera and all the different stews. And that really stuck with me. Thinking of living in New York City, half the time you're eating, you're like running through to the subway, or you're not very mindful of what you're doing. And it was such, like a central time of eating together that really just kind of resonated with me and it felt like such a beautiful tradition.
- Lazarus* Well, that's why I love to travel and cook and eat while I travel. I remember when I was interning with the World Food Prize in Beijing, China, studying at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences. We had two different kitchens. We had one kitchen where there was no pork allowed, and then we had the other kitchen where there was pork allowed. So I would usually cook in the kitchen where pork was allowed. And I remember gathering my students' friends who were... At the time they were all earning their PhDs in food science. And I said, "I want to make for you a traditional American meal." Now, my father was a chef from Alabama. He was from the South, so I grew up learning how to make soul food. My mother was from Guyana in South America, so I also knew how to make Guyanese food. And I went and I hunted for collard greens in the supermarkets in Beijing.
- Eitan* Very easy to find.
- Lazarus* Very easy to find, if only. It was so hard to find, so I just, I decided I was going to use Bok choy, and I used bok choy. And I did the same technique as I would for collard greens. And I made stewed Bok choy. I made some barbecued chicken, and I think I made mashed potatoes. And it was a beautiful exchange of culture. I was able to share my culture with them, and they were able to share with me very traditional Chinese food. So that's part of why I like to travel. Now, I'm smelling something like ghee or butter.
- Eitan* Ghee.

Lazarus Ghee.

Eitan Could I come over here? I'm... This smells great

Lazarus Chef, well, you have to stay in your station.

Eitan Oh, OK. I'll watch on the screen.

Lazarus OK, so..., I'm only kidding. What's in this pie? It smells so good.

Sanaa It's ghee, and actually ghee, it's also another ingenious way that our ancestors told us about. If you clarify the butter, you can keep it in a jar for about one year. It doesn't go rancid, because they didn't have refrigeration. So actually my mother had that. What she did, she would just sauté ground beef in a huge jar. It's all ghee and beef, and put them in the pantry, no refrigeration. Whenever you want to make soup, you just take a spoon from that with the vegetables and the broth, and you have this meat.

Lazarus I love a dietitian that loves working with ghee; that's pretty unusual, I must say, in my experience.

Sanaa Yeah, but you see, everything in moderation.

Lazarus Everything in moderation...

Sanaa Yes.

Lazarus ... including moderation.

Sanaa No degradation. Everything in moderation.

Lazarus So where is that going now, chef. Write a list.

Sanaa So ideally I would have pine nuts with the ghee. That's because we don't want to make sure that nobody has a nut allergy so there are no pine nuts. Because the idea also to have texture. If you don't want everything to be soft, so when you have textures, you enjoy the meal more. Now, as a dietitian, you chew more, so you take time so you don't overeat. You get full.

Lazarus Really smart. So is there also butter in that or garlic? I'm smelling something like garlic.

Sanaa Oh, garlic's in this.

Lazarus Oh, this is where the garlic's at, OK. It will burn, so I don't smell anything burning. Are you burning something, chef?

Eitan Oh, no, no.

Lazarus Oh, OK, OK.

Eitan It's called browning.

Lazarus Browning.

Eitan Yes.

Lazarus Yes, of course. We had a little conversation yesterday. So we've all had, you know, stories where things did not come out exactly as we expected. Some may call it a "kitchen nightmare," but what we've all learned is that it's not really how you start, it's how you finish. And so whatever you decide to put on the plate or however things come out, it's important to name the dish that you cook, not the dish you intended to cook.

Eitan Yup, it's important for a dinner party.

Lazarus Exactly, so important for a dinner party. People don't know exactly what you started or intended to do.

Sanaa And when you are a chef, they trust you, they believe you. Just say, "Oh, yeah, I know. This is an American dish."

Lazarus Chef Sanaa, you told a really funny story yesterday about a dish that was a whoops that you named. Can you tell us about that story?

Sanaa It's like I said, I'm an American, everything, so I went back home for my sister's graduation and everybody's cooking. And because I'm the chef, anyway, they just gave me one assignment. Tabboleh. Tabboleh, if anybody doesn't know it, is just finely chopped parsley, bulgar wheat, You may throw a sweet onion lemon juice, olive oil. So the function of Tabboleh is to take all the liquid... And in the Mediterranean, everything, all the parties are outdoors. So it's August, it's hot and I have 40 bunches of parsley chopped fine. We put them on the table, the people, guests came. Nobody touched it. Tabboleh is usually a very popular salad. Nobody touched it. and I'm looking, and there's something... and something going on. It's just becoming like green, ugly green soup. And then everybody asked my sister, what is this? And my sister, "I don't know, ask Sanaa." So I looked, and I realized what happened, so I think I forgot the bulgar so the liquid from the parsley kept coming out with the heat just like a swamp, basically. So I said, "Oh, it's an American soup they make in the South."

Lazarus Isn't that a great story?

Sanaa They believed me.

Lazarus And then it was all gone.

Sanaa No, nobody touched it. Nobody...

Lazarus OK, we'll have to redeem ourselves one day, make that soup. So, chef, tell me a little bit about what's going on in this pie. I see now you've added garbanzo beans as well.

Eitan Yes, and here I sauteed down our onions, garlic, then added some tomatoes, you want to cook them until kind of the oil releases.

Lazarus Ah, it smells so good.

Eitan It's hard to do quickly on stage, but I almost got there, added the garbanzo beans in, tons of spices, chili powder, turmeric, cumin, coriander, a little bit of macella, and been cooking that down with the chickpeas. Added a little bit of spinach just for a little extra nutrients.

Lazarus Yes.

Eitan And, yeah, can anyone now smell it maybe?

Audience Yeah!

Lazarus Yeah, yeah. It's smells so good, and it looks so wonderful, and the color that is in this pan is so beautiful. So, chef, do you have a worst cooking story or any disasters have happened?

Eitan Yes.

Lazarus Yes, OK.

Eitan So I had a very big sweet tooth as a kid, and I loved making candy. And so one time I set out to try to make homemade soft caramels. And I wasn't as, you know... I didn't think it through enough, and I was like, oh, I'm not just gonna make some salted caramels, I'm gonna make a lot of salted caramels. And so I took a pot that was probably triple the size of this, and I like quadrupled the recipe. It was filled before it started boiling, like about most of the way up. I was probably 13 at the time, to be clear. And, you know, if anyone here has ever boiled sugar, it goes up. Let's just say there was molten caramel sugar all over my parents' kitchen. Yeah, so that was not the best or smartest move, but..., and that was before I learned to clean. Now, now I clean. Now that I live on my own...

Lazarus You have to clean.

Eitan If I don't wash the dishes, no one will.

Lazarus I know. Yesterday my phone went off. I was saying something to Chef Sanaa, and then my phone said something to me. And actually, no, it wasn't you, it was someone else, but I thought it was you. And my phone went off, and they said, "What is that?" and I said, "Oh, it's my phone talking to me," and they said, "Wow! I didn't know that your phone can speak to you." And I said, "Yes, I actually can tell it to clean my house, and it will clean my house."

Sanaa Lucky you.

Lazarus One day...

Eitan The Rhumba.

Lazarus The Rhumba. OK, so, chefs, we've got about 12 minutes now on the clock. It looks like you're almost done. I speak too fast and I cook too fast, like the food is good.

Lazarus The food is good? Can I get an early taste? Can we both have a taste?

Eitan Yeah, while mine's finishing, can we...?

Sanaa Yes, absolutely.

Lazarus What's the best way to eat this. Can you all see this?

Sanaa The eyes eat before the mouth.

Lazarus A round of applause for Chef Sanaa.

Eitan Beautiful.

Lazarus I mean... outdid yourself. OK, so just a spoon works?

Sanaa Please, and make sure you have some bread, some sauce, the garbanzo beans, the whole thing.

Lazarus OK, you know what? With all due respect to everyone watching, I'm gonna use my hands. There you go. Umm.

Eitan Oh, wow. Ooh.

Sanaa And there's no garlic. You can imagine with garlic, ten times better, in my opinion.

Lazarus But you know what?

Eitan The ghee.

Sanaa Yeah, of course, yeah.

Lazarus The way this is all working, it's like layered. It's so deeply layered. It's so complex for being so simple.

Sanaa And you have different textures, you have the bread, you have the garbanzo beans, you have the sauce, you have the...

Eitan Yay. Wow, that's delicious.

Lazarus I was trying to take this offstage.

Eitan Oh, no, no. ... was a gift for me.

Lazarus Chef Sanaa, I mean you have outdone yourself. Round of applause for that.

Sanaa Thank you.

Lazarus What's wonderful about this is it comes from a place in your community and culture that has history. This is a refined presentation of something that is so ancient, right?

Sanaa Yup.

Lazarus And it allows for folks like myself who have less connection to your cultural experience, to be able to experience this and say – Wow! I feel like I know where you come from, like I know your story just through this dish. What do you love about this dish?

Sanaa First, like I said, it's a dish that is made from Damascus. So I mean now they make it all over Syria, but generally it started in Damascus, so they call it Fattah. Fattah, basically any dish is with bread, sauce and there's protein. And if you have like a very important guest... Usually in Syria there would be lamb shank in it. And actually I started to like... My grandfather loved meat, but my mom was making this dish, and she was making for us. So he was digging and digging and digging, and he said, "What's this? There's no meat." But this is a popular dish, and you have now restaurants – they open four o'clock in the morning, and you're going to work, and that's what you eat. And again it's a very inexpensive ingredient. It's a good ingredient from the soil and it's good for the body. And as you see, it's good for the eyes, for everyone.

Lazarus Very good for the eyes. Well, you're done early. I'm gonna take this food.

Sanaa No.... Slower. My daughter said, "Mom speak slowly and cook slower, but..."

Lazarus You're wonderful. You're just so lovely. Isn't she lovely? She's lovely.

Sanaa Thank you.

Lazarus Chefs, I've got a question for you.

Eitan Yes.

Lazarus What's one ingredient you feel you just cannot live without in your kitchen.

Sanaa Olive oil.

Lazarus Garlic?

Sanaa Olive oil.

Lazarus Oh, olive oil, olive oil.

Eitan Pepper. My mom actually is allergic to pepper, and so until I was like 17, we never used pepper in the house.

Lazarus Like black pepper.

Eitan Like black pepper. And then the first... I remember the first time I like... I mean I probably had it at restaurants. The first time I knowingly ate it – Oh, my God, this is good. And it was like this whole world opened up, and so, yeah, black pepper. I put black pepper on everything.

Lazarus Black pepper. OK, is there a kitchen gadget that you feel you cannot live without?

Sanaa Sharp knife.

Lazarus Sharp knife.

Eitan Yes, that's important.

Lazarus Nice, yes. Now, most people who don't cook often, they don't know the impact of having a sharp knife. In fact, they make it's really dangerous to have a sharp knife, but why is it important to have a sharp knife?

Sanaa I mean you can't... Honestly, I don't think you can cook without sharp knives. I mean that's how you get the vegetables, you get the other... I mean for me it's like water.

Lazarus Yes, it's essential.

Sanaa In our restaurant, because we chop everything fresh, every three months we get a new set of knives. And we have a guy who sharpens our knives. And then our neighbors in the restaurant and in my neighborhood, I take the old knife and I give it to them. And so we spread the love.

Lazarus Yes, the gift that keeps on giving. I love that. What about you, chef?

Eitan Important equipment?

Lazarus Equipment, gadget.

Eitan Sorry, I was deep in my...

Lazarus Oh, I know. I see what's happening here. It looks like a pancake is happening.

Eitan Yeah, on my first one my pan wasn't hot enough. I know the induction stovetop world... We can have the close up, just in case.

Lazarus It looks really good.

Eitan ... operating room. Oh, we're just gonna stay on it.

Lazarus Oh, thank you. Here we are.

Eitan I don't know, let me make my.... Your first pancake is always the worst.

Lazarus Exactly. That's what I was gonna say. That's true.

Eitan Yeah, OK, no more closeup to that. And my favorite piece of equipment in the kitchen... I mean, I'll give a different answer than knives to be interesting, but it's a chef's knife is super important. I have a weird answer. I think music.

Lazarus Oh.

Eitan I love it. It's honestly something with my job when I film cooking videos that I... The only part I really don't like is that, when I'm filming, I can't play music – because of copyright law – in the video. But when I cook on my own, music is, I think, one of the most important. You've got to have a good vibe in the kitchen.

Lazarus Absolutely.

Sanaa I agree. I agree. If anybody has seen my Instagram posts? They call me the crazy woman, the crazy chef, because it started with COVID, that same thing. I'd blast the music loud, and that's actually why we keep our restaurant going, when, you know, you couldn't open, but we did special meals you just, Really, there were vegetables on my face, on my hands, and I did the crazy dance, and people came to my restaurant, and that's... You know, so every time you go slow, if you see a dancing video, it's me being slow.

Eitan What about you? What is your go-to kitchen equipment?

Lazarus First of all, I love both of your answers – sharp knife for sure and music for sure. I think what I go to a lot these days, especially in the fall, is a good vegetable peeler.

Eitan Ooh, essential.

Lazarus And I love having that, because it does more than just cut the vegetables. If I want to shave some radishes, if I want to, you know, cut something that's really thin, I love having that, or a wooden spoon. You can't live without a good wooden spoon. Well, chefs, I hear that you both love music, and I do sing a little bit, so...

Eitan Oh, really?

Lazarus Maybe I'll gift all of you a little bit.

Sanaa We can, we can dance.

Lazarus OK, quick, so, *We're making chickpeas at the World Food Prize, making chickpeas at the World Food Prize, we're making chickpeas at the World Food Prize with Chef Eitan and Chef Sanaa.*

Eitan Wow. Did you come up with that on the spot, or was that a...?

Lazarus Yeah, I came up with that on the spot. Are you cooking on the spot?

Eitan Yes. Actually, I have not made this since I was in India about a year ago, so...

Lazarus Not that I can tell. I can't.

Eitan Oh, yeah, no.

Lazarus I cannot tell. OK, I do want to taste it.

Eitan Yeah, let's try.

Lazarus I don't know if you have any extra Chef Sanaa over there, but I could use a little. Got it. It's good, wonderful.

Eitan Should be. Hopefully, a little more time will add more flavor, but we're working with what we have.

Lazarus I actually... One of my professional doctors had informed me that to cook with a little less salt.

Eitan No. I did that for you.

Lazarus You did that for me.

Eitan Yeah.

Lazarus Because that is perfect for me.

Eitan OK, I was thinking of you.

Lazarus That was perfect for me. Thank you. That was perfect for me. So, you know, we've got three minutes on the clock and...

Eitan Can we start plating? I feel like...

Lazarus I think we can start plating. I've got a little treat in store for four people today who will come up on the stage and taste these delicious meals. Now, I can't see if I have any sauce on my face, but if I do, please let me know. Really good. I actually think we have some... We're gonna do it at random, and I think we have names that are gonna come up. So don't blame me.

Is Karan in the house, Karan. Welcome. Please make your way up on the stage. OK, let's see who's next. Pick me, pick me. Alena. Alena here? Where's Alena? Oh, hi, Alena. Lovely. Please come and join me here. Nice to be here. Thank you. All right, while Alena makes her way, let's do another name. Alexander. I see you making your way to the stage. All right, we've got room for one more, room for one more. Let's see. Who's it gonna be? Sarah. Is Sarah here? Ooh, wow. Lovely. Can we get a mic on the stage, a handheld mic, please? Hello, hello. Please make your way to the stage. Fantastic, perfect. I'll give that to you. All rightie, round of applause. OK, so let's all move in close, close so we're all on the screens, a little closer. We're gonna all be friends today. All right, can you all see us? No? Do we need to move over? OK, are we all there? Perfect.

OK, now I don't know about all of you, but these folks look a little young to me, don't they? And I've got to say it means the world to see all of you standing up here. I want to get to know you. I want to hear it from you, but just the fact that you're here and the fact that you are using your life and your youth to learn and to give, it means so much—so you should be proud of yourselves. So tell us a little bit about who you are, just a name, where you're from and what brought you to the World Food Prize.

Karan So I'm Karan Konoker and I'm coming all the way from Washington State. And one reason why I've come to the World Food Prize is because I want to learn more about food sciences, and specifically how that intersects with agriculture. I think our food systems are an incredible part of like how we give food to people, so I hope that food science can revolutionize that further.

Lazarus And it will, and you will do that work.

Karan Thank you.

Alena Hi, my name is Alena Sinche, and I came here from New York.

Lazarus My hometown.

Alena And my reason to come here for the World Food Prize was about my research paper on India and the lack of sanitation and water shortage, which is something that I'm prioritizing and to have more abilities and knowledge about other countries being unstable and the risk of other challenges.

Lazarus Wonderful, wow!

Alex Hello, everyone. My name is Alex Hutchinson. I am from Massachusetts. I'm also very interested in food science, particularly food science for early development and different processing techniques that can be used to improve the consumer experience of different underutilized food crops. I'm here with the Global Youth Institute as a group leader for Group 18, so it's been a wonderful week so far.

Lazarus Your group's in the house.

Sarah Hi, I'm Sarah Lewis, and I'm from Florida. I'm planning on majoring in food science next year in college. Like they were saying, I'm really, really interested in food science and product development. And I came to the Global Youth Institute to learn more about that and to learn more about how different cultures relate to different foods.

Lazarus Wonderful. Aren't they impressive? That is lovely. Well, you know why you're up here on this stage – not just to tell your amazing stories, which they are amazing, but to also taste some amazing food. Are you ready?

— Yeah.

Lazarus OK, so let's go to the back of the tables, just go to the back. You can, yup, make our way. Don't be shy. And I'll get back here too so you all can see. You each have a plate. Now, it is a tasting, so no pressure to finish it.

Sanaa I left some for you. That's why I wasn't so generous.

Eitan Yeah, I'm gonna take some...

Lazarus OK, so whenever you're ready, you can just give it a try.

Sanaa Don't be afraid.

Lazarus Chef Sanaa, what's going through your mind right now. Isn't it true that no often you cook a dish or how often you cook at all, it's just every time it feels like the first time.

Sanaa Oh, yeah, you're always watching the people. If they like the dish, then you're...

Lazarus Yes. A quiet dining room is a good sign, or..., not always.

Sanaa No, actually a busy one. That's what makes me happy.

Lazarus That's right, that's right.

Sanaa Yeah, my restaurant is very noisy, and I like it that way.

Lazarus There you go. What do you love?

Sarah The pomegranate

Lazarus What do you love about it?

Sarah It's sweet.

Lazarus Yes, it is sweet. OK, what's..., how are you experiencing this?

Alex I love all of the variety. It's like a little bit of sweetness, a little bit of sourness, a little bit of nuttiness, like the different textures. It's wonderful.

Lazarus Wow! Aren't they such great paid actors? I'm kidding. What do you think about it?

Alena I think about like how there's a lot the chickpeas are like really complementing the flavor, and it's like very flavorful with other like different, various ingredients.

Lazarus Another good actor. How about that? OK, what do you think about it?

Alex I think the day-old bread is actually carrying this dish, and this is a good use of your day-old bread, so better get that bread out of your pantry and start using it, because it's so good.

Lazarus There you go. You've heard it here first, folks. Round of applause for Chef Sanaa. OK, you may place your dishes down here. Don't worry. No one will clear them. They will be here for you when we are done.

Eitan I like the pomegranates too.

Lazarus So you remember the order.

Eitan Great, I'm on thirds.

Lazarus OK, so you remember the order there, and then you there, and then you there. OK, perfect. Now we're gonna transition to Chef Eitan's dish.

Eitan Hello... So now it's time.

Lazarus Make your way, make your way.

Eitan And your spoon. You can use the bread as like kind of, to scoop it.

Lazarus I have to say, for you not making this bread in over a year, it looks perfect.

Eitan Thank you.

Lazarus Do you all have a spoon? OK.

Eitan So, well, sorry. I'm the worst host, OK. Sorry.

Lazarus Here you go.

Eitan Sorry, I apologize.

Lazarus Ok.

Eitan I did not see them, for the record, so...

Karan I like it.

Lazarus You like it?

Karan Yeah.

Lazarus I think that that "Mm" said a lot.

Karan Yeah.

Lazarus Tell us – what's going through your mind right now.

Karan So when I was in the audience, I was smelling all these aromatics, and I was like, oh, my gosh, and this is actually insane. This is so good, like whatever you were smelling, it's like ten times better than that.

Lazarus Wow! That's a statement. OK, what do you think?

Alena Well, I think like this dish is more in depth about the flavors, and there is like different ingredients and that there is in the chickpeas.

Lazarus Lovely, lovely. OK, Alexander.

Alex Oh, it is delicious. I love... Like the sauce is like it's a little bit creamy. It's just really nice what the chickpeas and the spices. Coriander, I've been experimenting with a lot recently, is that wonderful.

Eitan The opportunity to try a finger millet is really special.

Alex Yeah, I've never had it before, and I've always wanted to, so thank you.

Eitan You're welcome.

Lazarus That was so lovely. OK, what are you thinking about this?

Sarah I think it has a really good flavor complex, and I was kinda scared watching you make the little pancake things on the screen, but they taste really good.

Eitan Thank you. You were scared I'd messed it up or...?

Sarah Yeah.

Eitan Oh, OK, thank you. I like honesty.

Lazarus Wow! Well, look, we have two amazing chefs who lead with bravery, with courage, with passion, with joy in the work that they both do. Chef Eitan, follow Chef Eitan. Chef Sanaa, check out her restaurant. Thank you to our lovely taste testers, and thank all of you for being here today.

Lazarus Before we go, I would love to hear from our chefs. One thing that you would encourage our audience here today to do, something practical, to continue the work in ending hunger, or anything that you want to share with our audience, any last thoughts.

Sanaa Well, for me, you know, like I said, I'm from the East, and I came to South Dakota, and all my friends, everybody, they said, "That pepper is too spicy for South Dakotans," and, "Are you out of your mind?" But, you know, give the people a chance. Don't be afraid to try new ingredients to introduce in your ingredients, and then let them surprise you. Like I said, we do this food, lentils, things, and we survive 22 years, and actually we survived and did better during Covid. So don't be afraid to introduce new ingredients and try new ingredients wherever you are.

Lazarus Great advice, great advice. I love that. And Chef Eitan. Yes, round of applause.

Eitan Sorry. Just a mouth full of chickpeas. I think the only thing that I try to at least stick to myself whenever I'm doing anything in the food space or specifically the food insecurity space is to remember, other than just getting people food and helping people have more nutrition, dignity is so important. It's the thing that I think has inspired me most with the organizations that I work with, whether it's City Harvest or the World Food Programme. You know, getting the people the food in a dignified way is so important. And even as a storyteller when I try to, you know, when I go and travel somewhere, making sure that I am able to allow the person to tell their story in a dignified way. I come in as someone just eager to learn. I think that that's so important, and it's the thing I remind myself of. Because just like, you know, we're dignified when we go to a nice restaurant and eat a meal. Someone who's getting food assistance should feel just as dignified when they're eating their food.

Lazarus Absolutely. Round of applause, round of applause. Chefs, meet me on the front of the stage. You all are welcome to stay or take your plates. We have had such a lovely time with all of you. Thank you for being here. Thank you for the incredible work that you all do every single day to change the world. I'm Lazarus Lynch, and have a great rest of the day. Bye.