

Maja Mačković, BigMamma – biography

Before saying anything else about herself, Maja Mačković, known as BigMamma will first describe herself as „Multipotentialite“ (for explanation, visit: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multipotentiality>)

She doesn't like titles, definitions and being boxed inside the frame, same as she doesn't like to choose between her jobs, interests and hobbies. Maja is a chef, mentor and nutritionist, president of the Women Chefs League association, photographer and artist, and she also works in marketing, project management, and social networks.

Maja is the daughter of the first Croatian culinary judge and World Master Chef Ivan Buzolić so her life and career choices were logical. Although life directed her to photography and art, culinary genes prevailed so she started her culinary story under the supervision of her father. Following him through all the restaurants and facilities where he crafted his knowledge, Maja gained all of her skills and experience; by being an assistant, waiter, manager, head manager, to the position of an executive chef and kitchen manager where she is today.

Parallel with managing the Golden Shell kitchen, she has participated in numerous international competitions where she achieved remarkable results. She will always note her first gold medal for modern kitchen as her favorite, because it was the first gold culinary medal won for Croatia by a woman.

Along with numerous medals and awards, she is a proud member of the women in the WACS, and project manager in Croatian Master Chefs Association. In the same association, since 2014., she is a mentor of junior culinary team. Since 2015, she participates in international culinary competitions as part of the judging team.

She will always highlight that her biggest hunger isn't the food, but knowledge, so she uses every „free moment“ to learn something new, and enrich her previous knowledge. When it comes to food, Mediterranean cuisine which is in her blood (due to her birth island), healthy meals and desserts suited for those with allergies are her biggest passion and the most relevant career experience. She calls herself „Mediterranean cuisine ambassador“, specially when attending conferences and seminars about cuisines where she is using all her skills and knowledge to fight for the authenticity and tradition of Mediterranean cuisine and diet. Her life goal is to brand Croatian cuisine.

A great start for that dream was bringing Croatian food to London, where she was exclusively brought to set up and run a kitchen of the pop up restaurant Venturin in 2016.

She is a freelance art photographer, as well as food stylist and food photographer. She combines her knowledge of the cuisine, community management and marketing in the columns she is writing for web portals: „T-portal“ and "New energy". Since gastronomy is after all a men's world (and swimming in those waters isn't even remotely easy), she founded an Women chefs league association - a networking platform for helping women in this field through education and fighting for gender equality. In her spare time she is experimenting with molecular cuisine, designs and crafts jewelry, paints, writes poetry and explores everything that has to do with creativity.

Education:

- Elementary school Hvar
- High school of tourism, Jelsa – Hvar
- 2y college of tourism, Split

- Independent jewelry design course, Zagreb
- 2y Private school of photography, Zagreb
- Social media marketing, CRM, IT for business - HP life, Zagreb
- Molecular cuisine seminar, Belgrade
- Nutricionism - institution for lifetime learning „Magistra“, Zagreb
- Project management - Alison courses
- HarvardX - Science & Cooking: From Haute Cuisine to Soft Matter Science
- NewcastleX - The Science of Weight Loss: Dispelling Diet Myths

Working experience:

- School practice in hotels „Slavija“ and „Adriatic“, Hvar as a waiter, chambermaid, housekeeping, receptionist and a head receptionist
- Waiter in „Kiva“ bar, Hvar
- Waiter in restaurant „Kiva“, Hvar
- Waiter and service manager in restaurant „Robinson“, Hvar
- Head and event manager of „Forya“ bar, Hvar
- Service manager, head manager, pr and marketing director, chef, and executive chef in slow food restaurant „Golden shell“, Hvar (with particular emphasis on the design and implementation of healthy menus customized for allergies)
- Owner and editor in chief of web portal and forum „Mama-mami“
- Gastronomy columnist for web portal „Volim meso“
- Gastronomy columnist for magazine „Mama i beba“ (with the emphasis on healthy recipes suitable for children)
- Marketing columnist for web portal „T-portal“
- Columnist for web portal „Nova energija“
- Project manager for Croatian Master Chefs Association
- Junior team mentor/coach for Croatian Master Chefs Association
- Personal assistant for World Master Chef Ivan Buzolić
- President of Women chefs league association

AWARDS and RECOGNITIONS:

2013 Istanbul gastronomy festival:

- Modern dish – gold
- Lamb dish – silver
- Team grand prix – silver

2013 Thessaloniki culinary competition

- Fish dish – gold
- Modern dish – bronze
- Team grand prix – merit

2014 Istanbul gastronomy festival

- Fish dish – bronze
- Modern dish – merit

- Lamb dish – merit
- Team grand prix – silver (no gold awarded)

2014 Bucharest congress of culinary traditions

- Team grand prix – second place

2014 4th Golden ladle competition – Alanya

- Dessert – bronze

2015 Slatka nit, Bjelovar

- Dessert exhibits – gold
- Total category score – gold

2015 – Recognition: „The knight of Trogir gastronomy“

2015 - judge on international culinary competition „Balkan culinary cup“, Bulgaria

2015 - judge on international culinary competition „Golden ladle“, Alanya Turkey

2017 - judge on international culinary competition „Chocolate fair“, Kragujevac, Serbia