

“My mother, who always loved house linen, came up with the idea of helping talented Lebanese women who needed to work during the war,” explained

Younna Jureidini. In

1986 her mother, Josette

Dahdah, began designing

home accessories such

as tablecloths and had

them embroidered

by local women she

commissioned who

were in need of the

added income. The

creative enterprise

was named Filigrane,

after a fabric used in

FILIGRANE

embroidery.

“The original thing about Filigrane is the combination of a social-development project and business,” elaborated Jureidini, now a part of the team.

As renowned design houses such as Dior, Ricci and Porthault began collaborating with the burgeoning business, it took off. Today it is still going strong and Filigrane designs are currently stocked at the Dubai branches of prestigious international department stores Harvey Nichols and Bloomingdales, as well as the ABC in Jordan.

The core of the concept is, however, in the Achrafieh district of Beirut, where the Filigrane boutique recently opened on

Monot Street. Here the trademark embroidered house linens, place mats, tablecloths and baby blankets are showcased.

Creative and cultural workshops debuted at Filigrane in February. Several times a month the Monot outlet is turned over to daytime handicraft workshops, where participants design and paint home accessories such as wooden trays or ceramic coffee cups.

Dining etiquette classes are offered three evenings per week and as Filigrane continues to grow with the times, several other workshops are planned, such as mosaics, silk painting, and floral arrangement.

gou

Four years ago Gou premiered as a trendy fine food outlet in a corner of the ABC shopping mall in Achrafieh. Today the concept has been tweaked, refined, and reopened as a full-fledged gourmet eatery and destination boutique at a new location.

Its current address on St. Nicholas in the same chic area was carefully selected by founder Patricia Kibbe, set on a space that stayed true to the brand's concept, offering customers a charming backdrop to enjoy the refined range of culinary offerings.

A seamless combination of a restaurant, patisserie and a 'Salon de

Thé' emphasis on tea, the concept behind Gou is to offer a novel experience of taste discovery and elegant indulgence through a menu that is based on premium ingredients.

"I have always been fascinated by the enchanting world of food, by the alchemy of its ingredients...This ongoing fascination lured me into taking cooking classes across Europe to enrich my food knowledge and satisfy my curiosity," explained Kibbe.

Working under several renowned chefs that used only the finest quality of food ingredients, she was inspired to create a concept that used this same superior culinary palette. Born out of this dedication, the concept and mandate soon followed; "We travel the world to bring you innovative specialty food products. Collections to conjure gourmet discoveries, culinary excursions and sensory revelations, tempting menus and patisserie creations to delight you. Gou is a voyage to the source of inspiration, it is an escape to the heart of indulgence."



HUSSEIN HADID



Hussein Hadid's Kitchen in the Mousseitbeh area of Beirut, is his headquarters. It is here that he

creates his menus, tests out new culinary concepts, and gives the occasional cooking lesson. The Kitchen is also where many dinners catered by Hadid are hosted.

The innovative chef has garnered quite a following within the circles of haute-living Lebanese. While this is partly to do with the quality of his offerings, having re-defined the concept of private catering in the country certainly plays a significant role.

Hadid melds the role of a private chef with the professionalism of a caterer, serving private parties either in the Kitchen or in the comfort of his clientele's own homes. However, more traditional catering services are also provided and so clients interested in hosting larger events

at pre-booked venues do not have to forgo serving a customized menu by Hadid.

Although Hadid enjoys cooking diverse styles from Turkish to Thai, his self-professed areas of expertise are French and Italian. The former was learned at French Culinary Institute in New York, while the latter was acquired by working at the San Domenico restaurant in the same city.

Following this 20-year excursion to North America, Hadid returned to Lebanon in 1998 and decided on creating his present day culinary institution, in lieu of returning to work at a restaurant.

"Here in my own business I can express myself. I am in total control," he explained, and this is a formula that has certainly been successful.