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Cooking Up A Brilliant Hen Do

Y&YW's Senior Writer Julia Scirrotto Tests Out Hen-Party-Perfect London Cookery School L'atelier Des Chefs



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Forget L plates: activity-based hen parties are absolutely huge this year, with cool culinary adventures topping the wish lists of brides-to-be with a taste for the finer things in life. So when London cookery school L'atelier des Chefs invited us to pop by for a French cooking lesson, we simply had to give it try.

I show up at the school - located on stylish Wigmore Street in the West End - for a lunch-hour class called French Flavours to learn how to make classic grilled pork chops with new potatoes and glazed chicory and a delectable tarte tatin. The space is cosy and inviting, with warm wooden floors and a rainbow of Le Creuset cookware lining the shelves. Even before we begin, delicious smells are wafting through the air (muffins baked by an earlier group) as my classmates and I take our places in front of our cooking stations.

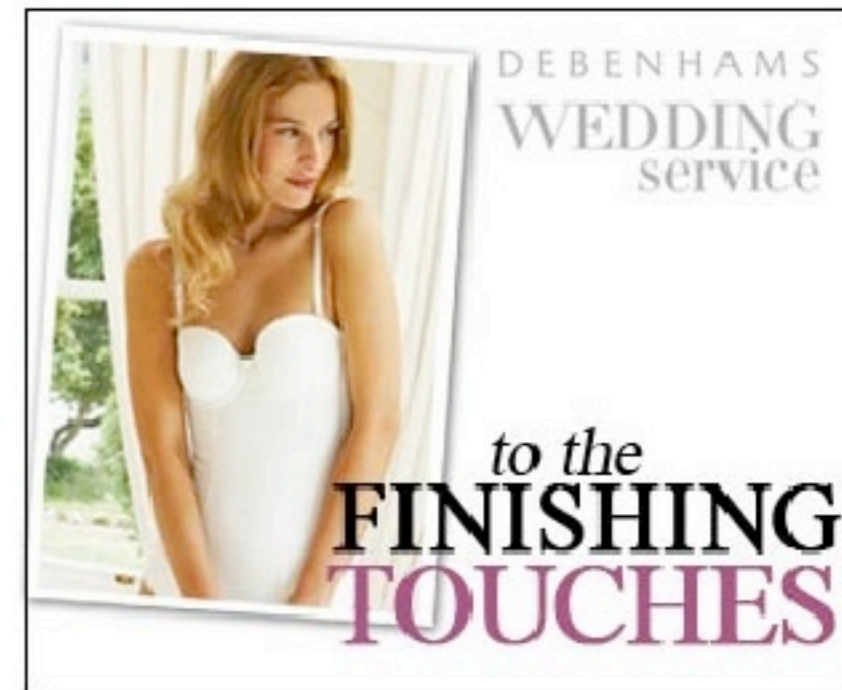
We're each given a chopping board, chef's knife and paring knife to work with, and the ingredients we'll need are neatly displayed in containers on the steel countertops. Our instructor Fabricio (henceforth known simply as 'Chef') begins with a

lesson in chopping and imparts a few gems of pro wisdom (for parsley, roll the leaves together then slice into fine slivers; for shallots and garlic, score the item you're cutting before chopping to create neat and uniform cubes) before leaving us to it. Soon, we've prepped all the ingredients and are ready to start playing with fire (er, I mean cooking on the gas range).

In just an hour, we learn to turn sugar into caramel in a frying pan, grill pork chops to perfection (first, brown in olive oil, then finish in the oven for 10 minutes), flip an apple tart onto a serving platter, and top it with decadent cream (handmade, of course, with just a touch of apple liqueur).

The best bit? Our final duty is to eat the fruits of our labour! We take our seats in the cool dining area and clink glasses for a job well done.

To book your own lesson or hen party, visit atelierdeschefs.co.uk.



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