

I asked the guys a few questions about Polo House and what they had planned for the business and this is what they said:-

Where did the idea for your new Restaurant “Polo House” come from?

Ram: Polo House was James’s idea. He has played Polo House for a number of years and the brand seemed to fit well with the location of our restaurant in Marbella and our target audience. James had been working on the idea for a while before we came together. We both feel that we can expand the Polo House brand to other countries in the future.

What tastes and flavours do you have on the menu?

James: We have around 10-12 main courses and we offer a range of international food. Polo House is becoming well known for our quality fillet and rib eye steaks. The menu has been carefully considered towards our target market and we have a good selection of fish, beef, lamb and pork as well as a classic Lobster Thermidor. The Polo House desserts include everything from our Apple Tart Tatin to one of my favourites – “The Polo House Mess” which consists of Raspberries, Devon clotted cream with crushed Italian Meringue.

Ram you are a successful restaurateur, which restaurants are your favourites?

Ram: Bradley as you know, I have opened many restaurants in my time and I have such affectionate memories of the places that I have been and the people that I have met. Pier 31 in Cheyne Walk, London was a great venue but it was ten years ahead of its time. Opening Regines and The Roof Gardens, which I later sold to Sir Richard Branson was also one of my favourites. I can recall Lady Rothermere known as “Bubbles”, who was a frequent visitor to Regines commented, “Kensington was not in London for the purposes of a club”. How right she was. The Roof Garden was a sensational failure for me and Sir Richard Branson picked it up for a song. I have previously opened a number of Chinese restaurants and many Indian restaurants including The Mumtaz in Baker Street, London. It was during those days that I opened The Mumtaz Indian restaurant in Puerto Banus, which is still doing very well.

James how do you feel about running your first business venture with Ram?

James: It is a great challenge and we both want it to succeed. I feel lucky to be working with Ram who is a great business mentor. Everyone in the restaurant has clearly defined roles and we all work really well together. Our busiest days are Thursday, Friday and Saturdays.

It is great when front of house and back of house work so well that everything runs smoothly. The team here at Polo House are excellent.

Ram: We relate to each other really well, besides, James is a great dancer and much more sociable than I am. As such, he is well suited to a front of house position, but we always make joint decisions where it matters.

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- James Hewitt

James: I was in the process of securing investment for the restaurant, which, due to extenuating circumstances did not materialise. Ram was in the process of selling a business, so we got together and Ram put the funds in place for the business to start up, and here we are.

Ram: We have plans to open a Polo House in Dubai, New York and we are very much looking forward to bringing it to London. We have a full time DJ and you cannot fail to leave Polo House without it making a good impression on you. We offer value for money and most importantly for me the customers must not feel cheated. They will always remember how they feel when they go to a restaurant.

Did you both get together at the right time?

James: I wish that I had started work with Ram from day one but having the ability to work with Ram now is a positive for me. A negative would be that I did not seek professional advice sooner, if I did, I would have made fewer mistakes.

Ram: I believe James should great vision and courage to open the restaurant and I share his ambitious plans for the future. If I had been involved from the start of the business, I could have saved us around 30% on startup costs.

Ram what does it take to become successful in business?

Common sense plays a major part in business success. As an entrepreneur, you have to recognise your shortcomings. Being level headed in business is key and if you are then you can very often see where any problems lie.

James would you class yourself as a successful businessperson now?

I do not consider myself successful yet. I have a desire and passion to succeed and keep going. One of my biggest motivators is when people say you can’t! I believe that if you hold onto your beliefs tightly and keep your passion at a high level, success will come.

Ram if you could invite a few people to dinner who were dead or alive who would you choose?

I would invite Sammy Davis Junior, Peter Langham, James Caan and Marylyn Monroe and I think that would make a great mix for a dinner party.

James and Ram I wish to thank you both for your time and for energy on the phone during our interview. James we are very much looking forward to your first Raw Business Magazine column for edition 14. May I take this opportunity to wish you both every success with Polo House, your planned expansion and working together. Please feel free to email me your latest news and it will be our pleasure to publish it for you.

For James – Everything is Possible!

**Best Wishes Bradley Chapman
Editor – Raw Business Magazine**