

We've been waiting impatiently for Junior Master Chef ever since the first promo aired during the Master Chef grand finale - and now, it's finally ready to plate up! So how will the grown-up version morph into a kid-friendly competition? Judges Gary Mehigan, Matt Preston, George Calombaris and newbie Anna Gare explain...

Where did they find kids who can cook like chefs?

It seems too good to be true - eight to 12-year-old children who can turn out restaurant-quality meals! But we've been assured that no kids were headhunted for the making of this series!

"You know, there are lots of child stars - whether they're athletes or violinists - and the same passion overflows into the kitchen," Gary explains. "We have these little prodigies, these little child cooking stars, and they're incredible!"

"That's the great thing about a beast of a show like MasterChef", Matt adds. "All you have to do is put something on the website and we get 5500 applications".

How has the kitchen changed?

It's the same iconic kitchen, of course, but on a smaller, safer scale.

"There's a certain safety element that needs to be taken into consideration, because they are young kids", George says. "So they're working on induction stoves and there's a lot of guardianship over what they do. They have raised platforms [to stand on] and everything's a little bit smaller - but since I'm pretty much their height, it feels normal to me".

Are the rules any different?

Because the contestants are so young, the competition process needed to be tweaked to make it a little less cutthroat.

"When the kids go home, they never go home on their own," Gary says. "And it's not about elimination - they just don't get through, so it's softening the idea of losing. We nurture the idea that it's about participation and the experience of being in the MasterChef kitchen".

Over the next three weeks, we'll see the top 50 gradually whittled down to just 12, and then the game will work on a leaderboard scoring process.

What are the challenges like?

The judges reckon viewers will be in awe of what these young chefs can pull off.

"In one challenge, they cooked for 100 kids. I thought, "that's ridiculous! You can't put kids under that much pressure." Gary reveals. "But they did it, and all we had to do was keep them clean and give them the odd hint. It was absolutely stunning".

"There are no pancake and pikelet challenges", George adds. "Its real food and the guest judges are two-hat and three-hat restaurant chefs".

Can we expect tears and tantrums?

Yes-but not from the children!

"If you ask the crew who's had more tantrums they'd say we haven't had any from the kids but we have had a few from the judges!" Matt laughs. "We're far more prone to tantrums and acting like small children than the kids are!"

"They've gone through moments" George admits. "But we've just stepped in there and reassured them".

Article from TV Week

Interview continues in tomorrow's edition

MasterChef's mini makeover



THE GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF NSW, THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY AND THE MODERN GREEK DEPARTMENT INVITE YOU TO CELEBRATE THE

2500TH ANNIVERSARY OF

THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

HISTORY & LEGEND

PRESENTED BY DR ALASTAIR BLANSHARD AND DR VRASIDAS KARALIS
INCLUDES A DVD SCREENING OF THE BATTLE OF MARATHON



DATE: SUNDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2010

VENUE: EASTERN AVENUE AUDITORIUM, SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

TIME: 4PM

REFRESHMENTS SERVED



LECTURE PRESENTED IN ENGLISH

*SAME CONTENT TO BE PRESENTED IN GREEK AT THE GREEK ORTHODOX COMMUNITY CLUB LAKEMBA ON 10TH OCTOBER 2010 AT 6PM