

Watch THIS FACE

Ahlan! profiles the who's who of the Middle East

She's got poise, she's got sass and she has a huge personality, Saba Wahid is no doubt a familiar face to you, and in case you're wondering where you've seen her before the answer is Dubai One's *Studio One* as the beautiful TV host who is just as comfortable reporting on current affairs as she is rustling up some fabulous edible concoctions in the on-set kitchen – and lest we forget, she's also the woman that can kick her co-presenter, the charming Tom Urquhart, into shape.

An American with Pakistani ethnic origin, Saba was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts. She's had a myriad of influences in her life revolving around higher education, Pakistani customs, Islamic traditions, and strong family values which have made her the colourful, and strong person she is today.

Growing up, Saba developed many different hobbies but the one she felt most connected with was cooking. Her passion for the culinary arts has developed incredibly as she's grown older, and has now become some what of an obsession!

"I'm from a family of foodies. Cuisine has always been a big part of growing up. My family used to host a lot of functions and parties," she explains. "So I guess you could say my life has been deep rooted by food."

However, while fanatical about the world of gastronomy, Saba admits she didn't initially consider it as a career option and instead achieved a BA degree in Sociology and Film Studies at the University of Massachusetts. Yet, maybe call it destiny, her life path



SABA WAHID

Your next celebrity chef...

eventually did lead her back to food when continuing onto Hospitality Management at the French Culinary Institute in New York City.

"I started working for a prestigious catering company in Manhattan and organising private events," she reminisces. "I worked closely with some of the best chefs the city had to offer." The experience gave Saba the inspiration to launch private catering events by using her own creative cooking style fused with South Asian and Middle Eastern cuisine, and presented in a more contemporary manner.

Saba's strong ties to the culinary arts ultimately brought about her passion to be able to communicate this in the realm of television. She made the move to Dubai in September 2010 and started work on *Studio One*, a daily lifestyle programme created for the residents in the Middle East and North Africa.

In addition to presenting the show, Saba also has a weekly cooking segment on Thursday's show, known as *Saba's Quick Foodie Fix!*.

"I found Dubai to be a fascinating city," she says of her decision to move to the Emirate. "I wanted to reconnect with my roots in this part of the world, bridging any gaps."

"Working on *Studio One* was a wonderful opportunity to share my gastronomy ideas with the public, especially in a city like Dubai where so much variety of food is available," she continues. "In addition to the fantastic foodie segments on the show, there are a variety of other topics that are useful to the residents of Dubai ranging from health and nutrition to fashion and beauty!"



While Saba seems excited in her new position she spills her plans for the future, "I'd love to publish my own cook book. I've already started collecting my recipes along the way. All the recipes I cook on the TV show are my own or at least adaptations of traditional recipes from destinations I have just

explored. I would also eventually like to have my own restaurant."

Season One of *Studio One* ends in June. Season Two starts in September. The programme runs live every Sunday to Thursday from 7:30pm to 8:30pm! Episodes are also available online at dmi.ae/dubaione.

SABA'S WORLD

Saba has great rapport with her *Studio One* cost host, Tom. Above they pose for their new advert campaign and below cooking in the kitchen while Tom looks on.

TOP 5 PLACES

1. Al Bastakiya

It's one of the oldest areas of Dubai, It's named after Bastak a region of Iran where many of the residents emigrated from. It has an Old World charm and a relaxing atmosphere. The area consists of narrow lanes, wind towers, a beautiful mosque as well as the Fahidi Fort. It's quite the contrast to the modern structures of the city.

2. Satwa

It's a developing area of Dubai, but it's great if you're looking for a bargain. From florists to tailors and great South Asian cuisine, like Ravi's.

3. Baker and Spice

One of the best restaurant-cum-café's in Dubai! The menu consists of organic goodies that are all made from scratch by the culinary enthusiast behind the operation. They also organise Farmers market on the promenade at Souk Al-Bahar.

4. The Creek

You really can't beat an Abra taking you up and down the creek. These little boats can either take you for a quick ride across the creek or can be hired on an hourly basis for a more leisurely experience.

5. The Fountain at the Burj Khalifa

This is one place I really enjoy simply because it's a feast for the eyes. The architectural marvel that is the Burj Khalifa is a true beauty!

