

GoAheadQuoteMe



After nine years of hating Donald J. Trump, telling him 'lol no one likes you' was the straw.



MODEL CHRISSY TEIGEN on being blocked on Twitter by the United States President



If you really dare show your own ratings, based on real audiences, that's good. But most TV and variety shows buy ratings. This is inside knowledge.



CHINESE TALK-SHOW HOST JIN XING on TV ratings in China



I appreciate this opportunity to apologise to the members of Bafta for inflicting on them the most atrocious Cockney accent in the history of cinema.



HOLLYWOOD ACTOR DICK VAN DYKE, who was chosen by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (Bafta) to receive an award for excellence, on his fake British accent in the 1964 film Mary Poppins

Taco truck rolls into town

Californian fusion food chain
The Lime Truck will open a
permanent stationary truck here

Lian Szu-jin

Taco lovers, take note.

The Lime Truck, a popular fusion food truck chain from California, has parked one of its kitchen-on-wheels in Singapore in its first foray out of the United States.

On Aug 16, a permanent stationary truck will begin business at food hall PasarBella@Suntec City.

The Lime Truck won Season 2 of Food Network's The Great Food Truck Race in 2011 and was placed on Yahoo's Top 10 Trucks In America list for three years running from 2012.

On the Singapore menu are signature tacos such as sweet and spicy steak taco and grilled ahi taco, costing an average of \$4, as well as Singapore exclusives such as fried chicken skin with chipotle honey drizzle and cheese. The prices have not been confirmed for the new dishes.

As bright and spunky as his lime-green food truck is 28-year-old chef Daniel Shemtob, who founded the thriving Californian food truck business in 2010.

Since then, his venture has expanded from a single truck in his hometown of Orange County, California, to five trucks in other cities in California. He also has three restaurants in California - TLT Food in Westwood Village, Irvine Spectrum and Newport Beach.

This is not his first time in Singapore. In 2014, The Lime Truck had a pop-up event in Orchard Road as part of a charity initiative with Fiji Water, where more than 1,000 tacos were sold out in two hours.

In a Skype interview, chef Shemtob tells The Straits Times that he is



Chef Daniel Shemtob (above) founded The Lime Truck in 2010 and it went on to win Season 2 of Food Network's The Great Food Truck Race in 2011. PHOTOS: THE LIME TRUCK

excited about people's response to his menu.

"There's a hidden Asian element to a lot of the dishes, so it's familiar but kind of different."

He grew up in a family that took food seriously. His parents are Persian and moved to the US, where he and his brother, now aged 35, were born.

"Food is a very important part of my family and it's a cultural thing. My dad weighs like 400 pounds (180kg) and if he gets a meal he doesn't like or doesn't taste good, he won't eat it," chef Shemtob says.

He never had any formal culinary training and picked up his skills "from the streets".

"I trained myself. I started cooking when I was around six years old, learning from YouTube, cookbooks and just messing around in the kitchen. It's a lot of research and development and, if I showed you my kitchen right now, you'll see stacks of texts and tests."

He adds: "When I'm in the kitchen, I feel like I'm in my element. I get to be creative and it's an outlet for me to get to be me."

Food is his first love, but not his first career path.

When he was 19, he dropped out of college to work in a real estate firm in Los Angeles.

After he rose swiftly to become one of the youngest managers there, he left to set up his own company when he was 20. That failed within six months.

"I initially thought that work was about making money and that being passionate about and in love with what you're doing came second," he said.

"When I did real estate, it was very transactional. So when the business ended, I told myself, 'I gotta go into something I love.'"

So he moved back to Orange County and poured his entire life savings into pursuing his passion for cooking.

In 2010, two weeks before he turned 21, he started The Lime Truck with his best friend, chef Jason Quinn, 30, who is no longer part of the business.

To cut costs, they took kitchen appliances from their home kitchens and did the cooking and serving themselves.

Chef Shemtob recalls: "We had no employees till our third month of business, but we just did it. We were 20somethings who worked our a**es off and had fun."

The food truck in Singapore will not be roving the streets like in California due to regulations here, but he hopes that it can make appearances in future at events such as the Formula One races.

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• The Lime Truck will be at PasarBella @Suntec City, 01-455 North Wing, 3 Temasek Boulevard, 10am to 10pm daily, from Aug 16.