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My life in food: Amelia Rope, chocolatier

'Cooking is about trial and error – that's the way to success'

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Despite her reputation as one of Britain's best chocolatiers, Rope is self-taught. Her career as a chocolate-maker began after applying on a whim to MasterChef.

Although she left after the first round, John Torode recognised her skill and encouraged her to start her own chocolate business in 2007.

Today, her bars are on sale in Britain, the US, Dubai and Malaysia, and she has created an edible art installation for Bailey's Chocolat Luxe pop-up, Bar Chocolat, which is open until Monday in Covent Garden, London (barchocolatlondon.com).

What are your most- and least-used pieces of kitchen kit?

My most used are my knives. I bought them as a treat for myself before I went on the first show of MasterChef – and, my goodness, they get a lot of use. Least used is my colander. How could you use a colander when you're making chocolate?

If you only had £10 to spend on food, where would you spend it and on what?

I would go to Brixton market and I would buy some

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Food

Chocolate

What do you eat for comfort?

Chocolate. I eat a lot of chocolate. For comfort, I go for white chocolate. My other weakness is cheese. I like goat's or sheep's cheese the best. They couldn't really be much more different, could they, cheese and chocolate?

If you could eat only bread or potatoes for the rest of your life, which would you choose?

I really don't eat either. The only way I really eat potatoes is as chips with mayonnaise, which is a particular favourite. But I don't even have that very often. Between bread and potatoes, I would choose neither. I think I might starve, actually.

What's your desert island recipe?

It would have to be white chocolate with pistachio nut and sea salt. I live off that at the moment. It is my comfort and my nutrition all in one fix. You've got the sweetness of the white chocolate, and then you've got the salt, which cuts up the sweetness. And then you've got the nut, which adds another dimension, and the texture.

What's your favourite restaurant?

I had steak the other day from Medlar, on the King's Road, London, which was absolutely incredible. My taste buds just came alive, and I really want to go back there. So that would be my favourite place at the moment.

What's your favourite cookbook?

Exploring Taste and Flavour by Tom Kime. He opened my mind to Thai food: all the delicate flavours, the spices, the presentation. I find myself reaching for it over and over.

Who taught you to cook?

Absolutely no one. I am self-taught. I've never been trained. I just had something inside me that wanted to make chocolate. My father's mother was an incredible cook. My palate, I think, I get from her. But really, learning about food is trial and error. You do a lot wrong and take risks that other people probably wouldn't – that is the way to success. How nice, though, it would have been to have been trained.



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