



# Meet the blogger

Helping you connect to the UAE'S foodie community, one blog post at a time.

The 47-year old culinary enthusiast and founder of **Cookingwithshy**, **SHAILAJA DESAI**, has been living in Dubai for seven years. The blogger is originally from Mumbai, but moved here from Toronto with her husband and teenage son. Shailaja lives in The Lakes, and often finds herself either gardening, baking or doing yoga and pilates when she has spare time on hand.

## Worth reading

*The Heart of Home* (Random House Australia) by Julia Goodwin. The cookbook was a gift and has a lovely selection of everyday recipes, from salads and grills to a delicious pea risotto. It's the kind of book you want to cook from!



## \*About the blog

I've been cooking and baking ever since I was 12, but developed an interest in food photography just a few years ago. That's when, in 2007, **Cookingwithshy** was born! Along with a collection of recipes, I also post all my culinary adventures and reviews of gourmet stores I visit. The blog has everything from Lebanese to Indian food, and the cake recipes are definitely worth trying!



## Guilty pleasure

**Häagen Dazs caramel biscuit and cream flavoured ice cream with speculoos (spiced biscuits).**

## All-time favourite movie

**Julia and Julia!** I feel like I'm in the same spot as Julie in the movie, as I am constantly trying out something new and exciting to blog about.

## My next culinary adventure

Hopefully Tuscany! I would love to roam the countryside, visit olive groves, try the food and wine, and learn how to perfect pasta and bread making.

## Culinary icons

I'm in awe of Yotam Ottolengi (chef, restaurateur, and cookbook writer). His cooking style is a mix of Middle Eastern and Western techniques, and all his recipes have an incredible blend of textures and exotic ingredients. I recently adapted his roast chicken with zaatar and sumac and it turned out great!

“ I love crème brulee! Its rich creamy custard base and hard caramelised top layer hits the spot every time! ”

## IN TEN MINUTES, I CAN COOK

**Spaghetti with pesto sauce, mushrooms, dried oregano and basil (from my garden). I always have a jar of homemade pesto in my pantry.**

## Favourite food memory

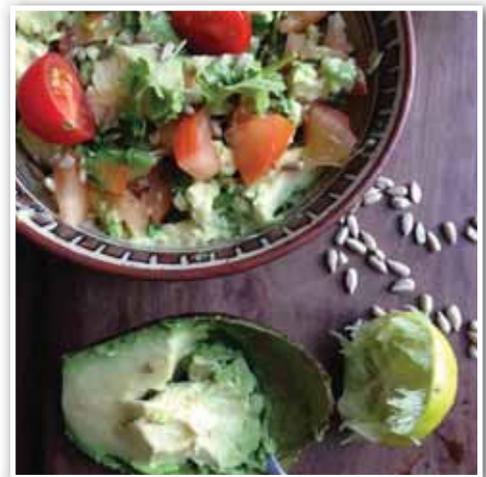
I lived in Toronto for a few years and every summer we stayed in the countryside of Hamilton, Ontario. I loved going there to pick strawberries to make jam.

## If I dined out every day, it would be at...

La Petite Maison! This restaurant offers a sublime blend of French-Mediterranean cuisine. The salad of endives, gorgonzola and caramelised walnuts, pan fried Dover sole for mains, and French toast with spiced ice cream will want you going back for more.

## A dish I'd love to tackle

Black cod with miso from Nobu Matsuhisa. I adore Japanese cuisine and this dish has the simple flavours of mirin and miso.



## I live and eat sustainably by:

**Buying local, organic produce whenever I can. I also grow basil, rosemary, coriander and rocket leaves in my garden.**