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80 star chefs, 1 rocking cookbook

When 80 superstars of the gastronomic world come together for an award-winning cookbook, the last thing you'd expect is "green cuisine". Veg vignettes sure, but not the entire vegetarian experience—from classic and nouvelle to regional and fusion. "It's the green evolution. Going vegetarian is no longer just a fad or lifestyle statement, it's becoming a way of life," says Rashmi Uday Singh, noted food critic whose compilation of the best the world's chefs had to offer in *Around the World in 80 Plates* bagged the 'Gourmand World Cookbook Award' recently. The book, which has won in the best vegetarian book category, has been nominated in the best of the world category, results for which will soon be announced in Kuala Lumpur.

A Times Group publication, *Around the World...* took Rashmi four years and

a culinary journey across five continents to complete.

"Though the idea was novel since no one's done vegetarian recipes with such celebrated chefs before, none of them showed the slightest hesitation," she says. "Vegetables speak to me," Alain Passard, the blue-eyed Michelin chef who looks almost as good as he cooks, told her, even obliging with a whole menu. Even the temperamental and famous Gordon Ramsay, whom she collared with great difficulty in Singapore, promptly shared the recipe for a delectable main course. The list of celeb chefs—renowned genius Tetsuya Wakuda who composes rather than cooks his food, the fourth-generation grand master from France



Food critic Rashmi Uday Singh with her award-winning book

Georges Blanc, America's Charlie Trotter to name a few—isn't the only ingredient adding star quality to this book. Supermodel Cindy Crawford, supercook and director Ismail Merchant, Maharana of Udaipur Arvind Singh Mewar as well as an edible work of art from MF Husain pepper the book with their tasted offerings. Those who've relished the recipes—from author Shobhaa De who loved Camellia Panjabi's recipe for watermelon curry to restaurateurs Jamshed and Ayesha of Goa's famed J&A's—say the

proof of the pudding is definitely in the eating. Not window dressing for the bookcase like other cookbooks—excellent though the production values are—but inspiration to head for the kitchen. **TNN**