

# Jeremy's World: Back to Basics

By **Jeremy Clark** on July, 9 2018 | Jeremy's World



The sun will never set on the desire for simplicity and authenticity, in the air or on the ground

Last month, Mrs. C and I were honored guests at a new restaurant in Bangkok, operated by the company that runs [Bangkok Air Catering](#), Gourmet Primo and other enterprises under the careful guidance of my good friend and colleague Linus Knobel.

What impressed me about this place is that the young Swedish chef has taken the best of good French cooking – and did absolutely nothing to change it. The perfect *Coc-au-vinor* poached pear is as good as it gets, so why mess around with it?

By contrast, last week in Sydney I saw an ad for a new “French – Indian (con)Fusion” bistro. The idea of a Confit-Vindaloo or Tandoori Bourguignon sends me into a froth. In our world of feeding the flying public, avoiding fusion at all costs (as tempting as it may be) is a lesson I learned many years ago.

One experience sums up what I mean: I was on an early morning flight to London from Helsinki on

British Airways. Next to me sat a Finnish businessman on his way to London – a trip he makes every six weeks or so. Out comes the breakfast, which on this occasion was a “Fusion Frittata” – or basically all the ingredients of an English breakfast chopped up into some eggy quiche thing.

My neighbor looked distraught. “What’s this? What happened to my breakfast?”

Obviously the folks at catering felt they needed to justify their existence by instigating change where none was necessary. “The only reason I choose this flight,” he explained, “is that I look forward to the full English breakfast – something we never see in Finland.”

Now, I fully appreciate the attraction that creamy scrambled eggs, back bacon, grilled tomato and inevitable sausage has on someone normally faced first thing every morning with rotting canned fish and a crispbread more akin to a piece of cardboard. So my message to the catering people is: If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.

The other message – one I have stood by since my earliest days designing inflight food – is keep it simple. People do not fly for the culinary experience; they fly to get somewhere other than where they are.

Chefs, this is not your opportunity to foist your crazy creations upon a captive audience. It is your opportunity to demonstrate your basic, good cooking skills and pleasure guests with something that is edible, wholesome and tasty – something is easy-to-serve- and not easy to be destroyed by the crew. An inflight meal should be correct for the time of day, recognizable as something a passenger can actually eat and, most vitally, not dribble down an adult’s shirtfront as though they are eating with a fork meant for the under-five set.

Follow this back-to-basics mantra and trust me – you’ll have an easier life and happier passengers. And if you are stuck for ideas, drop by [Brasserie 9](#) in BKK.