

Woodbine Entertainment Group Chef de Cuisine Michael Mortensen was born into cooking.

"My first vivid memory is watching my super talented mom, in the kitchen. She was flipping something with a spatula. I tried to copy her and ended up grilling my right thumb! I was three or four," he recalls.

That early memory only buoyed his love of food and food preparation.

Born in the small town of Holbaek, Denmark, Chef Mortensen started as an apprentice cook at the age of 16, in the big city, at the fashionable Hotel Imperial in Copenhagen.

His career flourished and he was hired as the Sous Chef at the Copenhagen Corner Restaurant.

Over time, a craving for food & travel exploration consumed him and he crossed the Atlantic to Canada and became the Executive Chef for the Danish Food Centre & Copenhagen Room in Toronto.

It wasn't long after he was offered the job as Executive Chef for the Toronto Maple Leafs at the storied Maple Leaf Gardens. He suddenly found himself on one of the biggest sports and entertainment stages in not only the city, but the country. Delicious, high quality food was demanded and noticed.

Several years later, an opportunity came to join Woodbine Entertainment Group, as Chef de Cuisine.

Chef Mortensen, who has 30 years of experience in the food industry, He was enthused about the professionalism and modern surroundings that welcomed him at the city's famed Woodbine Racetrack, the country's finest horse racing venue and among the most respected in North America.

"Woodbine is one great destination with exciting horse racing & casino action. The food is amazing and the times are fun," Chef Mortensen said. "It is essential, in this fast-paced environment, to be surrounded by a professional, dedicated team. I am fortunate here to be surrounded by people who share a genuine love of the kitchen."

His culinary philosophy maintains that cooking should be based on the finest and freshest seasonal ingredients that are produced sustainably and locally.

Bristol Bay King Crab Cake & Citrus Cured Wild Salmon are one of Chef Mortensen's signature recipes.

His creativity and organizational skills have brought him international recognition. He has thrilled the palates of royals & famous personalities from around the world.

In his spare time he enjoys cooking, especially with his two daughters Maya & Daniya.