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Korean tradition meets master chocolatier

Maastricht, 16 April 2013. A traditional Korean dish served as a Dutch bonbon.

Kimchi, the Korean national dish, is made from fermented cabbage and considered one of the healthiest dishes in the world. To most Europeans the notion of fermented cabbage would not be considered very appetizing. However, Ki van de Ven (1987) and Geert-Jan Heesterbeek (1979) have developed a confectionary where Kimchi and pure chocolate are combined to form a taste sensation.

Ki is born in Korea and as a chef is fascinated by exciting taste combinations. Considering his background, it comes as no surprise that he has a special place in his heart for Korean cuisine. Ki tells us that he has long had the idea of combining Kimchi with different culinary traditions. 'With this in mind I contacted Geert-Jan from la Fève. Geert-Jan is a real wizard when it comes to chocolate and makes the best bonbons in the Netherlands'.

Geert-Jan: " Ki came to me with the idea of making a Kimchi bonbon. When he told me the dish consisted of vegetables, ginger and chili peppers I was intrigued. These ingredients work well with pure chocolate and combine nicely with our existing chocolates Asian lemongrass ginger, cucumber with wasabi and Yuzo with coconut".

Together, Geert-Jan and Ki have developed the Kimchi bonbon. Ki was responsible for the refinement of the Kimchi recipe. "The process to make Kimchi takes more than 10 hours. Traditionally hundreds of variations on Kimchi exist, I've developed my own style of this classic dish. Ki describes this delicious spicy. Geert-Jan tells us in order to get the perfect balance of flavor the Kimchi had to be processed in numerous ways. "Using our studio we converted the Kimchi into a ganache to form the filling of our bonbon".

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About Ki van de Ven (1987, lives in Klimmen)

Ki is a cook who has worked in numerous prestigious restaurants such as Beluga, Toine Hermsen, Rozemarijn (all located in Maastricht) and Jaspers (Amsterdam) during and after his education at the Arcus College and the Cas Spijkers Academy in Boxmeer. He has also gained experience in Portugal at Villa Joya and in Spain at Arzak.

About Geert-Jan Heesterbeek (1979, lives in Maastricht)

In 2010 Geert-Jan started his company la Fève chocolate & desserts in Maastricht. Geert-Jan works with his team to produce the best bonbons, desserts and cakes. At la Feve it's all about quality and innovation. With this philosophy, Geert-Jan won the award for "best bonbon in the Netherlands" in 2009. Before starting his company, Geert-Jan worked in the kitchen of numerous top-restaurants however, as of 2000 has entirely committed his attentions to the art of confectionery.

For more information and photos:

www.la-feve.nl

Geert Jan Heesterbeek:

T: 043 – 311 13 99

M: 06 – 272 517 54

E: info@la-feve.nl

Ki van de Ven:

M: 06 – 512 190 48

E: ki_vd_ven@hotmail.com