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The legendary tennis player Martina Navratilova won her 100th tournament in 1985



Digest the UAE culture

Unusual play in Dubai promises to be a treat

The old adage about Dubai being a cultural melting pot is stronger today than it has ever been. Well tonight, at the Sheikh Mohammed Centre for Cultural Understanding, the pot is about to positively boil over with the premiere of *EAT Dubai*.

From *Angry Birds*, the production company that created the hit West End show *EAT in London*, the theatre's performance is an unusual and localized take on theatre. As guests are invited to be actors in the comedy's impressive meals, they become part of the show, which promises to not only

but bring a deep, intriguing, olive-blossom-infused Arabian twist to the whole way of life, the way to wear the niqab and the shayla. And over the table traditions include the way of serving coffee (they pour it, I realised this the other day - you are only supposed to drink coffee, not eat it), how to eat (it's all the way up, it is like saying drink up and get out), they are beautiful traditions that I have to learn about."

The *EAT* team co-creator of *EAT Dubai*, Nina Hill, says that while the audience will be entertained by cultural misunderstandings and mishaps in the play, it will also be a first in personal messages to share to take away - as well as a stomach full of delicious and funny (see food). "It is also an learning about yourself," Nina said. "Happening tonight is not only a different theatre experience, but also a chance to see and



COMIC CLASH: Forewarned for *EAT Dubai*

THE OTHER CAST MEMBER

As integral to *EAT Dubai* as the plot, the comedy and the clash of cultures, is the food. When *EAT*'S met with the director and show host, they were on the way for a feast that would decide what the audience guests would eat on the night.

Actress Emma Haylin Hill reports back: "I learned a lot also at the tiny little cultural accommodations that they have and I am already addicted to Arabic coffee. It is gorgeous. It has cardamom and cinnamon in it. It is served before the meal to aid digestion."

"They had a fish antenna, which was fresh fish with seaweed vegetables, almost like a stew which they serve with salad rice. And there's harem, which looks like harem but is actually beef and wheat and spices all blended together. And then for dessert we had *lujaima*, which is like donut balls and they had a date syrup."

as a theatrical experience, but also educate on traditional Emirati culture and food as well as showcasing contemporary.

The dinner, which is dinner - is hosted by *Theresa Square*, played by actress Emma Haylin Hill. Emma (the director) is a lovely but overbearing kind of it.

"She is like the London, well she is a comedian," says Emma Haylin Hill. "She is that. She is come here and she is surrounded by Western culture and culture in the face of the urban and culture and wants to share this people."

Her big act is her long suffering husband Dave, which struggles to be supportive, and Kim - an outspoken Lebanese woman who "wants a husband with a beard". There's also Ali (played behind, played by Hussein Al Seidani), an aspiring (but not stand-up comic), and Ahmed, the happy Filipino waiter who wants to promote his own culture in an all-the-way and blame was Emma admits that the format is very intense, particularly as audience participation is encouraged.

"You really have to have your back every straight," she says. "They can interact with you, anything can happen!" Emma looks that, but she can relate to her character. "I am actually a pretty little bit by myself, coming here, I've been in Dubai only six months. I've



Dinner is served at *EAT Dubai* until next Thursday. Visit angrybirds.com