

Rohini Dey, Ph.D.

Founder Vermilion & Let's Talk Womxn

A leading restaurateur, proponent of Indian cuisine with her unique global twists at Vermilion, and zealous champion of women – former World Bank economist and McKinsey & Co. management consultant – Rohini Dey straddles the worlds of business and women's championship across the US and India.

Rohini's career spans several phases:

- She taught in *Academia*, has a Master's degree in Economics from the Delhi School of Economics and a Doctorate in Management Science from the University of Texas.
- She worked at the *World Bank* in Washington, D.C. leading development projects on foreign direct investment and coauthored a book on infrastructure privatization.
- At *McKinsey & Co.*, she led management consulting projects for Fortune 100 firms alongside knowledge development.
- As an *Entrepreneur*, Dey combines her business credentials with her passion for food by establishing Vermilion restaurants in Chicago since 2003 and in Manhattan, NYC for a decade (2008-2017).
- As a *Writer* and *Speaker*, Dey has written 30+ policy and business opinions for CNN, Miami Herald, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun Times, Huffington Post, Thrive Global and Crain's Business (#1 op-ed 2016). She has spoken and keynoted at Politico Women Rule, The Global Economic Summit (US State Dept.), TEDx and NATO Summit for Chicago and globally for Sysco, Mondelez and others.
- As a *Women's Activist*, Rohini founded Let's Talk Womxn in 2020 and leads this action movement of 900+ women restaurateurs to build scale together. She has grown this movement across 15 cities in the US and Canada. In 2012, to redress the "gastro-ceiling," she cofounded the James Beard Foundation Women's Leadership Program (WLP). She led and chaired WLP for a decade launching WCL, WEL and Owning It. Rohini is a staunch supporter of women in business and education of girls globally.

Rohini is an active and proud member of The Chicago Network (TCN), International Women's Forum (IWF), and the Women's Forum of New York (WFNY). As an active Chicago ambassador, Rohini is on the Advisory Council of the Illinois Restaurant Association. She is on the board of the PSA World Squash Championships hosted by Chicago. She was a James Beard Foundation trustee for a decade and helped bring the JBF Awards to Chicago. She stays connected to academia by engaging with the entrepreneurial departments of business schools (University of Chicago Booth, Kellogg, Columbia University).

Rohini went entrepreneurial in 2003 driven by her conviction that Indian cuisine in the United States was confined to stereotypes, fine dining is excessively Eurocentric, and most global cuisines are marginalized to an "ethnic" fringe. At inception, Vermilion was acclaimed "Best Restaurants" for its Indian-Latin melding by *Chicago magazine, Travel & Leisure, Town & Country, USA Today, Bon Appetit, Wine Enthusiast, 3 stars Chicago Tribune, Esquire, 4 Stars NY Daily News*. For its 20th year metamorphosis, Vermilion also introduced Indian-Chinese cuisine to Chicago, India's most beloved comfort food, earning *3 stars Chicago Tribune* again. Chefs launched by Vermilion have competed and judge on Chopped, Iron Chef, Top Chef, and opened restaurants of their own. Rohini frequently judges Food Network shows.

Rohini is profiled for entrepreneurship by CNBC in their Consumed docuseries, the Financial Times, Time, NYT, WSJ, O magazine and more. She has been lauded in the NRN Top 50 Power List in Food, NRN Top 25 Women of Influence, NAWBO Advocate of the Year, TimeOut Women of the Year, ATHENA International Leadership Award, Chicago Top 10 Power Women Better, Top 50 Power Players Chicago Social, AAPI Unsung Hero Award, Innovator of the Year MenuMasters. Rohini has also been awarded Woman of Distinction by



THE CHICAGO NETWORK

Children's Hope, Philanthropy Award by American India Foundation, Entrepreneur of the year – India by the City of Chicago, WCO Women's Leadership Award by JP Morgan Chase, and the WE Women Empowerment Award. She is featured nationally on the TODAY Show, Good Morning America, Squawk Box, Food Network, WGN NewsNation, NBC News Daily and others. Rohini is known in the lifestyle space: Women of Influence – *Michigan Avenue*, 50 most beautiful Chicagoans – *Chicago Magazine*, Beautiful Homes – *Chicago Social*, Entertaining with Flair – *Chicago Magazine*.

On a personal level, Rohini has two college daughters, is an avid reader, loves dark movies, is a policy wonk, still loves to dine out, thrives on travel, runs daily (Chicago Marathon, Half Ironman), is an amateur chess and squash enthusiast, and has accomplished a personal dream - climbing Mount Kilimanjaro.