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Career Training



Recipes for Success

by Gabby Hyman

If you love to cook and dream of a career in the restaurant business, a culinary school or training program can take you there. If you think you can cut it (and julienne it and dice it), whet your appetite with a cooking class, or go full boil with a comprehensive culinary degree.

The restaurant business employs hundreds of thousands of people in the United States, but the most satisfying and best-paying positions are scarce and hard to come by. Many restaurant workers enter the field as prep cooks, slicing and assembling food ingredients, but very few advance to chef and baking positions without specialized training. In such a competitive industry, a culinary education is often necessary for a rise to the top.

It's a matter of degree

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) predicts that the food service industry will add more than 1.6 million new jobs by 2012. Top hotels and restaurants are looking for experienced, well-trained staff, and they place a high premium on educated and certified personnel. Graduates of cooking courses or culinary degree programs traditionally leapfrog into cook or chef positions rather than take entry-level food prep or service jobs, according to the BLS.

Culinary Careers

Do you have a hankering for herbs? Consider a culinary career.

- [Compare top culinary programs](#)

Are you the next apprentice?

Formal training in the culinary arts is one of the most important ingredients of a successful career. Many cooking professionals earn a culinary education through an apprenticeship. According to the [American Culinary Federation](#) (ACF), in the United States some 2,000 apprentices are currently participating in more than 80 sponsored culinary apprenticeship programs around the country. The ACF offers industry certifications for specializations such as certified master chef, certified master pastry chef, certified executive chef, certified sous chef, and more.

Other educational options

Apprenticeship is not the only route. Aspiring chefs have many other options. Schools offer cooking certificates, associate degrees in occupational science, and graduate degrees in hospitality management. Some colleges even offer an MBA degree in hospitality and restaurant management. Many culinary programs provide comprehensive training across the entire hospitality field, from owner, manager, and maître d', to bartender, catering manager, and server. You can also get

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training in a broad variety of areas such as cooking methods, nutrition, product quality, and sanitation.

If you have dreams of excelling in the profession, start now. Whether you complete a short-term accelerated cooking class, work toward a 12- or 18-month diploma, or complete an Associate of Science degree, there's a culinary school that will help write the recipe for success.

About the Author

Gabby Hyman is an author of fiction, journalism, and poetry, and is a former English professor. He holds an M.F.A. degree in fiction writing from the University of Alabama.



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