

Culinary Arts Learning-In-Place Phase II: April 6-24, 2020 (Food Service Career Exploration)

Becoming a culinary professional requires determination and effort because the hours are long, starting pay is low, and the work is physically demanding. If you like cooking at home, have a natural curiosity about food, and enjoy cooking for others, you may be the right candidate for a career in the culinary arts.

The journey from a novice cook to a professional chef follows different routes for different people. Chefs achieve their status through work experience and often through formal training at a culinary school. Some cooks will do formal **apprenticeships** in restaurants or hotels while being tutored under a **chef-mentor**.

GETTING STARTED

Chefs agree that working in the foodservice field is necessary before considering culinary school because it provides you with a realistic view of what the working hours and conditions are like. Culinary schools are a way to jump start your career but they do not replace the practical hands-on experience that is needed to gain organizational and technical skills, and the speed and efficiency, required to make you a productive team member in a professional kitchen.

Breaking into the field of culinary arts often starts with jobs including dishwashing, kitchen cleaning, and basic food prep. What is most important when starting a job in the culinary field is your ability to adapt to a fast-paced environment and a willingness to do whatever is needed in the kitchen. Over time, as you adapt to the kitchen and learn basic food prep techniques, you will move up the career ladder to more complex tasks and responsibilities, including working a station such as the grill or pantry, developing menu items, or supervising other kitchen staff.

One way to break into the industry without any prior experience is to offer to work for free, known as a **stag** (French for **stagiare**) so that the chef can see if you have the passion desirable skills needed to work in the field. It also gives you an opportunity to decide if you like the workplace and the people that work there.

ABOUT THE INDUSTRY

The foodservice industry is the largest retail employment segment in the world. In the United States, sales of food and beverages are over \$700 billion and in excess of \$1.2 trillion when combined with retail food supermarkets. There are many different areas of foodservice that focus on the diverse needs of customers. Here is an overview of some of these segments.

STUDENT ACTIVITY: During this learning phase, you will read an overview of the different foodservice areas featured below. For the weeks of April 6 -10, 2020 you will focus on the first seven areas and for April 20-24, 2020 you will continue with the remaining seven areas. During each week, you are to read about all seven areas and then select at least three areas in order to conduct a comparison. Based on what you have read, focus on what the similarities and potential differences would be for an employee working within those specific segments of the industry. What could be considered some advantages or disadvantages? At the conclusion of the two weeks, you will then select one of the 14 featured areas in which you believe is the best area for you to work as an employee. Also, what area would you select as a future employer/business owner? Explain your reason for selecting this area. Also, if you already work in the food industry, share what it is like to work within that segment. All responses can be done on the computer or written on a separate sheet of paper.

FOOD SERVICE SEGMENTS OF THE INDUSTRY

QUICK SERVICE RESTAURANTS (QSR)

Fast food restaurants are quick service operations that provide a limited menu of convenience foods requiring minimal cooking expertise. McDonald's, Subway, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Taco Bell are some of the well-known fast food restaurants, but there are many smaller regional and independently-owned fast food restaurants too. With early to late hours, 7 days a week, work schedules are dependent on the peak times and days of the week.

FULL-SERVICE RESTAURANTS

Full-service restaurants include casual to formal restaurants that often, but not always, prepare foods from scratch. These operations offer every style of foodservice from simple home-style cooking to sophisticated multi-course meals with elaborate table service. Many aspiring chefs choose these types of operations because they are more challenging and provide an outlet for expressing creativity in the kitchen. Hours of service in full-service restaurants are early to late depending on whether they service breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Most are open 6 or 7 days a week and many are open on holidays.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Corporate and employee dining, known as *Business and Industry (B&I)*, includes different styles of service from fast food operations to sit-down restaurants with wait staff service. These facilities are established by employers to provide convenient service for employees at a reasonable price. Menus are often developed on a cyclical basis and repeated every few weeks so that there is sufficient variety for regular customers that may frequent it several times a week. Food preparation may be anything from convenience-types of foods to scratch cooking. Work schedules in these operations tend to be daytime hours Monday to Friday so if you are looking for

a job with regular hours and nights and weekends off, this may be the area of foodservice for you.

HEALTHCARE

Healthcare foodservice operations include hospitals, adult daycare, and elder care facilities such as retirement homes, that require specialized diets for a diverse group of customers. These facilities may be self-operated or run by a foodservice management company. The style of service can be in-room service in hospital settings or sit-down restaurants in retirement homes. Menus are developed according to dietetic standards using a 3-4-week cycle and then repeated to provide sufficient variety to patients, employees, and guests. Food preparation is dependent on the size and mission of the operation with some units using convenience foods while more recent trends prepare local foods from scratch. Healthcare operations serve three meals a day, 2 or even 3 shifts per day, and are operational 365 days a year. They often include employee dining options and retail outlets for patients, residents, and visitors.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

Correctional facilities serve cycle menus on a limited budget to a captive audience. These operations serve three meals and day, seven days a week. Menu planning is overseen by a registered dietician and prepared using established nutritional standards. Prison food service departments provide modified diets for special dietary needs such as kosher or vegetarian and provide therapeutic diets as prescribed by health care staff. The cooking style includes convenience foods and basic scratch cooking. Because these facilities operate year-round work hours are morning to late and include weekends and holidays.

PRIVATE CLUBS

Private clubs including country clubs and city clubs offer sit-down full-service restaurants to a built-in membership base of customers. They usually feature casual and formal dining facilities, and host special functions including holiday buffets and weddings. Clubs may offer early morning breakfasts for golfers, simple grill cooking poolside, catered lunch meetings, evening dining hours. The hours are early to late, six or seven days a week. Some country clubs in cold climates close during the winter months.

FOOD TRUCKS

Food trucks are mobile food venues that have the flexibility to travel to different locations based on customer demand. The food may be convenience items including hot dogs and fries, or more diverse ethnic cuisines including Asian, Mexican, or American Barbecue prepared from scratch. Food is usually prepped in a separate kitchen and brought onto the truck to be finished on site. The hours vary depending

on the type of food being offered whether it is breakfast, lunch, dinner, or late night snacks.

CATERING

Caterers businesses include onsite banquet facilities or off-premise providers of foodservice for special functions including weddings, bar mitzvahs, or corporate events. Caterers offer a diverse range of services from drop off deliveries to full-service events that include not only the food and drinks, but the decorations, tables, chairs, music, and lighting. Catering hours vary depending on the event but often include nights and weekends.

BAKERIES AND PATISSERIES

Bakeries and patisseries are small single store operations to large wholesale production facilities that serve supermarkets and other retail operations. Bakers hours vary but often are e third shift starting at midnight, or early morning starting at 4 or 5 am. Bakers work duties usually focus on yeast-leavened breads and more basic cakes, cookies, pies, and quick breads, while pastry chefs produce a variety of pastries, tortes, and specialty items. Pastry chefs are employed in restaurants, hotels, and catering operations, as well as pastry shops.

EDUCATION

Schools, colleges, universities provide diverse dining options for students, employees, and visiting guests. They include fast food, cafeteria-style food lines, meal plan options served buffet style, or full-service dining. Educational institutions also have catering divisions that service a wide variety of special events.

MILITARY

Military foodservices include military bases, combat foodservices, officer's clubs, and cafeterias. Menus are planned and prepared to ensure nutritional variety. Some operations have a variety of dining venues from branded fast food operations that are contracted to foodservice management companies. Dining facilities offer four meals per day: breakfast, lunch, supper, and a midnight meal and some are open 24 hours per day.

TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

This segment encompasses a broad range of foodservice including hotels and resorts, amusement parks and casinos, cruise ships and air travel. It is estimated that over 70 million people a year in the United States seek out culinary experiences when they travel. The lodging industry includes luxury properties, all-inclusive resorts, economy hotels and motels, and bed and breakfasts that provide a variety of culinary services from simple self-serve breakfast buffets to elaborate themed restaurants. Some cater to food tourism by providing culinary demonstrations, cooking classes, and food and wine tastings. Hotel convention and meeting facilities are available to business and

trade groups that require specialized catering and event planning. Theme parks offer a full array of food choices that often are paired with the entertainment features of the venue. National Park Service, operated by the U.S. Department of the Interior offer high-quality accommodations, ranging from campgrounds to hotels, as well as a wide variety of restaurants. Cruise ships can vary in size from a few hundred to thousands of passengers with multiple dining facilities incorporating global cuisines. Foodservice on a cruise ships represent unique job opportunities for individuals interested in travel. Typical employment involves a 3-month commitment, 10-12 hours per day, and 7 days a week. Airline travel includes airport dining with a variety of venues from fast food to sit-down that serves foods 7 days per week and in-flight food for airlines prepared off-premise in commissary kitchens.

ENTERTAINMENT VENUES

Sports venues, stadiums, arenas, concert halls provide service to customers at large events. Because foodservice is of secondary importance to the attendees, most venues are quick service although some will have full-service restaurants too. The hours of these operations are dependent on the schedule of sporting events or concerts but often fall on nights and weekends.

RETAIL FOODSERVICE

Retail foodservice includes supermarkets, delicatessens, and small independent operations that sell takeaway foods. These places are increasingly serving more prepared foods from soups and sandwiches to sushi and pizza. Many supermarkets like Whole Foods provide dining areas that also sell beer, wine, fresh juices, pastries, and specialty coffee drinks. The work hours vary from early morning to evening and because most are open 7 days a week including weekends and holidays.

Content source: Adapted from www.theculinarypro.com