

START SOMETHING SPECTACULAR!

CAREERS IN HOSPITALITY – CHEF

Chefs may work in restaurants, cafes, hotels, motels, clubs, cafes, function centres, catering firms, flight catering centres and ships. Chefs (Heads of kitchens) are in charge of the kitchen and the staff working there as well as responsible for designing the menu and selecting and ordering the food. They are often responsible for planning and organising of the food for a special event such as a wedding, dinner or conference.

Chefs and cooks, particularly those working in larger establishments, often specialise in a particular cuisine or the preparation of a particular food. These range from Asian to African cuisines, to sauces (chef saucier) and to salads. And with confidence, creativity and experience, the possibilities are endless for creating new styles of cooking or combining different ingredients.

Duties and tasks

Chefs can take on any of a wide range of tasks or specialities depending upon their skills and where they work. They are responsible for managing kitchens, purchasing foodstuffs, preparing and cooking food and presenting it. They are also responsible for keeping kitchens clean and hygienic. They are supported by people working as kitchen hands and fast food cooks.

Chefs perform the following tasks:

- Plan menus and estimate food requirements
- Prepare and cook different kinds of foods
- Portion, present and serve food
- Monitor food quality at all stages
- Store food safely and hygienically
- Prepare food to meet different requirements such as dietary or cultural needs
- Discuss food preparation issues with managers, dieticians and other staff
- Demonstrate techniques and advise on cooking procedures
- Plan staff rosters and supervise the activities of cooks and assistants
- Work out food and labour costs together with the head chef
- Discuss food preparation issues with managers, dieticians and other staff members
- Order food, kitchen supplies and equipment
- Explain and enforce hygiene regulations
- Select and train staff
- Freeze and preserve foods.



The particular duties will depend upon the specific role and the type of kitchen. There are four main levels of chef:

Commis chef is a qualified cook, who works under the direct supervision of other chefs in the kitchen. Commis chefs have often just completed their qualification. Commis chefs are generally the least experienced chefs in the kitchen.

Chef de partie controls a particular section of the kitchen. Chefs de partie can include chefs specialising as larder cooks, butchers, pastry cooks, sauce cooks, roast cooks, relief cooks, side-dish cooks, breakfast cooks, canteen cooks or fish cooks.

Sous chef (also known as second chef) is the second-in-charge in the kitchen.

Chef de cuisine (also known as head chef or executive chef) is in charge of the kitchen. They plan menus, oversee all staff, and supervise the overall operation of the kitchen. In larger establishments, the chef de cuisine or head chef generally does more supervision than cooking. Senior chefs have to attend staff meetings, where they discuss problems related to their areas and receive or issue instructions to other managerial staff. In small restaurants, the head chef may prepare food, assisted by other cooks or apprentices. As well as expert cooking knowledge, chefs involved in supervision need a general knowledge of the skills and activities of all their workers.

Work Conditions

Commercial kitchens can be very hot and noisy, and working conditions may be uncomfortable.

Chefs are required to do shift work, including weekends and public holidays. The work can be tiring, and involve long hours, and it may be stressful, particularly at peak hours of the day.

Chefs work with sharp knives and around hot appliances. Cuts and burns are the most common occupational dangers.

High standards of personal hygiene are a must, as a lack of attention to health and hygiene can spread disease and put clients at risk. It is challenging work as you have to work long hours and nights and weekends, however it is extremely rewarding and offers great career options and job satisfaction.

Personal Requirements

- a high level of personal cleanliness
- enjoy cooking
- able to organise efficient work schedules
- good communication skills
- punctuality
- flexibility to perform shift work on a 24-hour rotating roster as required
- able to work under pressure and stay calm in difficult situations

Training and Education

A commis chef: Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery) is the standard level trade qualification required to become a qualified cook Certificate III in Hospitality (Asian Cookery) is the trade qualification for those specialising in Asian cookery Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Catering) will enable you to work as a caterer in a catering firm.

A chef de partie or sous chef: Certificate IV in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery) is designed for qualified cooks who want to develop their skills in kitchen supervision Certificate IV in Hospitality (Asian Cookery) is designed for qualified cooks who want to develop their skills in kitchen supervision in an Asian kitchen Certificate IV in Hospitality (Patisserie) is designed to give you high level patisserie skills as well as supervisory skills required for running a café or cake shop Certificate IV in Hospitality (Catering Operations) will enable you to develop more catering skills such as managing functions or catering for hospitals, as well as supervisory skills

A chef de cuisine (head chef or executive chef): The Diploma of Hospitality Management or Advanced Diploma of Hospitality Management are the qualifications for chefs who wish to acquire skills in management to manage a kitchen or their own restaurant.

For more information

Career Gateway www.careergateway.serviceskills.com.au	Career Gateway helps parents and career advisors, employers and students with career information
Australian Job Outlook www.jobsearch.gov.au	Australian government website that provides information on job prospects, weekly earnings, type of work and other useful occupational information.
Wagenet www.wagenet.gov.au	The aim of this site is to help you find information about wages and conditions of employment.
Year 12 What Next? www.year12whatnext.gov.au	Australian government website designed to help Year 12 students plan their post school education and training
My Future www.myfuture.edu.au	Australian government website containing comprehensive career information.
My Hospitality www.myhospitality.com.au	Free Australian hospitality industry and trade directory, employment provider and information source

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