Focus On...  

Quick Facts: Skills

Aspiring restaurant cooks should be able to multitask and flourish in a high-pressure work environment. In this profession, outstanding, overworking individuals who love food and thrive on feedback do well in this career.

Education and Training

Scholarship

Technical College offers an associate degree in culinary arts, as well as options for a baking and pastry career path and a sports and health nutrition path. The college offers six certificate programs (Hospitality and Tourism, Culinary Arts, Culinary Management, Restaurant Cooking, Sports and Health Nutrition) and two advanced certificates (Advancing Baking and Pastry and Advanced Chocolate and Cake). The Restaurant Cooking certificate requires 18 credit hours, including courses such as international cuisines and the cuisines of the Americas.

Financial Aid

Grants, merit scholarships, and work-study programs are available for college students. South Carolina lottery-funded tuition assistance, which can pay more than 50 percent of tuition costs, is available to both full-time and part-time students. For more information, contact the Technical College’s Financial Aid office.

Opportunity

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for cooks is projected to grow 10 percent from 2011 to 2022. Employment for restaurant cooks is projected to grow by 15 percent in that same period.

Employment Outlook

For information about Career Center, contact

Mail: North Charleston 29405 803/748-0280
Cell: 843/452-4121
mrb@chrie.org

For more information about the Career Cluster, contact

Chef Instructor

What is a restaurant cook and what does a restaurant cook do?

A restaurant cook is responsible for preparing and serving food, both hot and cold. Some of the typical tasks a cook does include receiving food from purveyors, storing food items properly, cutting and peeling fruits and vegetables; cooking starches such as rice, pasta and potatoes; baking breads, cookies, cakes and various pastries; receiving food from purveyors; receiving food from purveyors; and preparing food from scratch.

The job market for cooks is quite competitive. A high school diploma or equivalent is required. Baking and pastry programs may be useful for those interested in the field. A motivated cook can have a lifelong career path of growth and an opportunity to benefit financially. Most employers feed their staff or give significant discounts for meals. A percentage of tips may be added to the salaries of cooks who work in restaurants that allow for it. This is not the kind of industry that you can just sit and do nothing. Aspiring restaurant cooks should be able to multitask and flourish in a high-pressure work environment.

What is the employment outlook for a restaurant cook?

There is a large range of the types and styles of restaurants that employ cooks. Some jobs require simple reheating of pre-made food, while others require a good deal of technical skills gained from four years of experience or on-the-job training. Some examples of these jobs include bakery and sandwich shops, fast-food restaurants, cafeterias and commissaries. Fast-paced, dynamic, exciting environments are characteristic of the job. In Coastal South Carolina, there is a continuous growth of new and expanding operations looking for staff. There are plenty of jobs to be had in the restaurant industry. In Charleston, there is a major responsibility.

What do most restaurant cooks work?

Most restaurant cooks work in the food service industry, as an educator and program director, Carmel estimated it takes three to six months for a student to gain the feel for a restaurant and reach the point where they’re ready to work the hot line. Students who are passionate about working with people and are outgoing will do well in this field. Carmel said students who handle pressure and multitask tend to excel. It’s a great career for people who hunger for quick results and feel comfortable with turnover.

How do you get started in a career as a restaurant cook?

Many people enter a restaurant career after completing a two-year associate degree program in culinary arts and baking and pastry arts at the Culinary Institute of Charleston. The school allows all the cooks to gain experience and knowledge working with a variety of foods and ingredients and possibly gain hands-on experience in a kitchen before graduating the program. Many with no previous restaurant degrees can land a professional chef position after graduating the program. For those who need to feel fulfilled in life, this is a great career to go into. They will hopefully start working and receive responsible duties and positions as they travel and work your way up the ladder. The culinary institute offers a wide range of courses to prepare students for professional culinary careers.

What is a good restaurant cook and what does a good restaurant cook do?

A good restaurant cook is creative, has a precise eye for detail, and a strong sense of responsibility. A good restaurant cook will demonstrate the ability to multitask and maintain a high level of attention. He or she should have an ability to adapt to new situations while working directly with the chef’s orders. A motivated cook can have a lifelong career path of growth and an opportunity to benefit financially. Most employers feed their staff or give significant discounts for meals. A percentage of tips may be added to the salaries of cooks who work in restaurants that allow for it. This is not the kind of industry that you can just sit and do nothing. Aspiring restaurant cooks should be able to multitask and flourish in a high-pressure work environment.

What is the minimum exposure to this field?

There are many different types of restaurants that employ cooks. Some jobs require simple reheating of pre-made food, while others require a good deal of technical skills gained from four years of experience or on-the-job training. Some examples of these jobs include bakery and sandwich shops, fast-food restaurants, cafeterias and commissaries. Fast-paced, dynamic, exciting environments are characteristic of the job.

What is the working environment for a restaurant cook?

The working environment for a restaurant cook is fast-paced, dynamic, exciting and involves teamwork with kitchen and front of house staff. Aspiring restaurant cooks should be able to multitask and flourish in a high-pressure work environment. A motivated cook can have a lifelong career path of growth and an opportunity to benefit financially. Most employers feed their staff or give significant discounts for meals. A percentage of tips may be added to the salaries of cooks who work in restaurants that allow for it. This is not the kind of industry that you can just sit and do nothing. Aspiring restaurant cooks should be able to multitask and flourish in a high-pressure work environment.

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Want more info?

Online

Culinary Institute of Charleston, www.chrie.org

American Institute of Baking, www.alionline.org

Hilton Head Island, www.hiltonheadisland.org

Culinary Institute of Charleston, www.culinaryinstitute.org

National Restaurant Association, www.restaurant.org

Jobs in this field:

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<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Wages by Area*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chefs and Head Cooks</td>
<td>U.S. $25,000-$50,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Line Supervisors of Food Prep and Service Workers</td>
<td>U.S. $17,000-$30,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooks, Institutional and Cafeteria</td>
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