

"Word hard, play hard and don't chase the money, chase the dream!"

Introduction

I've worked at Fifteen Cornwall since the doors opened back in 2006. Fifteen Cornwall is a social enterprise, where all the profits from the restaurant go towards funding our award-winning apprentice programme. The apprentice chefs are the beating heart of the restaurant, and over 80% of our apprentices who have graduated are still working as chefs and 90% of our graduates are still in employment. The style of food is Italian inspired; it's rustic, honest food. Our food ethos centres around mindfully sourced, seasonal and locally produced ingredients from Cornwall, the South-West and Italy. The restaurant overlooks three miles of beach at Watergate Bay on the North coast of Cornwall and is open 365 days a year for breakfast, lunch and dinner.



Image: **Karl Jones**, Training and Development Chef – Jamie Oliver's Fifteen, Cornwall

How did you get started in your career?

I joined the army at age 16 and completed a formal two-year apprenticeship in catering. The training was particularly disciplined and set me up well for the industry. I continued in the army catering corps and completed nine years' service.

Can you outline a typical work day?

A typical day in my current role involves line managing up to 20 apprentices both in and out of the kitchen. It's very much a mentoring role, ensuring our professional chefs are delivering the training we promise to our apprentices, whilst having an awareness of the constant demands of a busy working restaurant. A major aspect of my role covers attendance and disciplinary issues that might arise on any given day – kitchens can reach 'boiling point' at times and it's important to create and maintain the right environment for our apprentices to learn and flourish whilst at the same time exposing them to the pressure of a professional kitchen.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I really enjoy my job role and feel privileged to be in a position to see first-hand the development, confidence and skills that our apprentices gain whilst on our training programme.

What skills are important for anyone wishing to start in your profession?

I've personally got several qualifications which are important for the sector we are working in, but for someone looking to start in this industry, experience, a good work ethic and the ability to adapt are vital.

What main personal attributes would your company look for when recruiting young people and adults?

In terms of professional chef's we look for someone with experience and people skills, and for all our chefs (including apprentices) we expect commitment and a 'can do' attitude.

What main personal attributes do you think is important for your type of job?

In terms of professional chef's, we look for someone with experience and people skills, and for all our chefs (including apprentices) we expect commitment and a 'can do' attitude.

Do you have any tips or suggestions on how young people and adults can enter your industry?

Work experience is a great way to get a feel for the industry whilst also learning on the job. Plus, you should always keep a look-out online for up and coming opportunities. An exciting opportunity to be part of our next cohort has recently opened, applications are now open until the 31st of October- check it out at www.fifteencornwall.co.uk.

What career progression opportunities are available in your business/sector?

We're blessed with so many opportunities and the chance to 'climb the ladder' – but it's also important to experiment with different food styles and get a feel for what excites you and makes you passionate about our industry.

Why is it important for your sector to attract and train young people and new entrants?

There is a desperate shortage of chefs at present as more and more restaurants open on a daily basis, so we must value young talent and be prepared to adapt to accommodate more individuals and encourage employers to invest in their staff. The food industry seems to have become the new 'rock and roll' to some extent with celebrity chefs, food TV channels and food magazines in abundance. We've learnt that if you give young people an opportunity and great training, coupled with the acceptance that they may occasionally make mistakes but learn from them, they can flourish with self-belief, self-confidence and skills for life

What trends do you predict for your industry within the next 10 years? E.g. is it a growing market requiring more young entrants

As society continues to tackle obesity I predict an increase in healthy eating restaurants and habits. We are certainly a growing market and there's never been a better time for young people to join the industry.

General words of wisdom

Work hard, play hard and don't chase the money, chase the dream!

Further contact/information

If you would like to find out more about an Apprenticeship with Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Cornwall, then please email emma@cornwallfoodfoundation.org or visit their website www.fifteencornwall.co.uk