

Zayden Strickland

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SUMMARY

Dedicated culinary professional with over six years in fast-paced kitchens, adept at leading teams and managing operations to deliver exceptional dining experiences. Committed to enhancing food safety and sanitation standards while driving guest satisfaction through innovative creations. Skilled in mentoring staff and optimizing workflows for operational efficiency. Proven ability to manage day-to-day kitchen functions while guiding diverse culinary teams. Advocates for collaboration by fostering trust, respect, and cooperation among team members, celebrating successes that strengthen morale. Enthusiastic about the prospect of further elevating culinary dynamics for guests and teams.

EXPERIENCE

Senior Sous Chef June 2024 - Present
Gourmet Kitchen Co. Tempe, AZ

Accountable for overseeing all kitchen operations, ensuring high-quality food preparation while collaborating closely with a diverse culinary staff. Leads daily shifts, personally executing food preparations and refining service excellence standards across the board.

- Enhanced team productivity by promoting an inclusive environment where each member felt valued and encouraged.
- Developed innovative seasonally inspired menus that drastically improved customer feedback and loyalty.
- Established performance measures that successfully aligned kitchen practices with financial goals.
- Led training initiatives focused on food safety, resulting in commendations during health inspections.
- Collaborated cross-functionally with front-of-house to optimize guest experience and increase service speed.
- Consistently evaluated product quality, ensuring dishes were delivered at their best.

Sous Chef January 2021 - May 2024
Culinary Innovations Group Scottsdale, AZ

Focused on sustaining kitchen functionality while leading culinary projects and specials aimed at enhancing dining experience. Actively supported the main chef in administrative tasks around kitchen management.

- Implemented cost-effective techniques that streamlined meal preparations and reduced wait times significantly.
- Created daily special offerings that drove positive engagement from returning customers.
- Trained new team members in both culinary skills and safety protocols to raise the team's competency.
- Monitored ingredient inventories to ensure cost-control and elevated quality of stock.
- Gathered employee assessments to formulate actionable growth plans for skill enhancement.
- Proposed improvements for shift operations that resulted in an observable efficiency gain.

Culinary Instructor August 2017 - December 2020
Culinary Arts Academy Scottsdale, AZ

Developed and taught extensive culinary programs, inspiring future chefs in practical arts. Organized workshops to enrich students' food presentation skills and coordinated numerous competitive events.

- Structured culinary curriculums that addressed industry needs, enhancing graduate employability.
- Facilitated hands-on workshops focusing on modern plating techniques relevant to current market trends.
- Championed student competitions, which cultivated teamwork and presented opportunities for creative expression.
- Provided mentorship, helping many students secure internships that led to full-time roles.
- Hosted food safety sessions that enriched participants' understanding of local regulations and best practices.
- Fostering community connections through partnerships drew recognition to the academy's role in nurturing talent.

LEADERSHIP & AWARDS

- Winner of the Arizona Culinary Competition, 2023
- Recipient of the Excellence in Culinary Education Award, 2018

EDUCATION

Associate Degree in Culinary Arts 2016
Culinary Institute of America GPA: 3.8 Greystone, NY
Coursework: Food Safety, Menu Development, Culinary Techniques, Kitchen Management

CERTIFICATIONS

- ServSafe Food Handler Certification 📅 2022
- Certified Executive Chef (CEC) 📅 2024

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Culinary Equipment:** Ovens, Grills, Knives, Mixers, Food Processors
- **Safety Standards:** HACCP, OSHA, ServSafe
- **Management Tools:** Microsoft Excel, Inventory Management Systems, Scheduling Software
- **Culinary Techniques:** Baking, Grilling, Sautéing, Plating, Carving
- **Presentation Techniques:** Plating Styles, Garnishing, Buffet Styling
- **Communication Platforms:** Email, Scheduling Apps, Slack
- **Process Improvement Methods:** Lean Kitchen, Six Sigma
- **Inventory Control Systems:** Par Levels, FIFO, Just-In-Time Delivery
- **Budgeting Tools:** Cost Analysis Software, Profit and Loss Statements
- **Training Frameworks:** Hands-On Learning, Peer Mentoring, Workshops

SKILLS

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Culinary Techniques | • Budget Management | • Food Presentation Skills | • Equipment Maintenance |
| • Menu Development | • Customer Service Excellence | • Crisis Management | • Time Management |
| • Staff Training and Development | • Inventory Management | • Sustainability Practices | • Interpersonal Skills |
| • Food Safety and Sanitation | • Kitchen Operations | • Recipe Creation | |

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Member of the American Culinary Federation
- Volunteer Chef for local food banks, organizing community meal events

LANGUAGES

- English (Native)
- Spanish (Intermediate)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Work Status : Authorized to work in United States. No sponsorship required.

REFERENCES

AVAILABLE ON REQUEST