

Research what it takes to become a chef specializing in Southern cuisine. Learn about education requirements, job duties, average wages and job outlook to find out if this is the career for you.

!!!Career Information At a Glance

Southern cuisine includes foods that have originated or are popular in those states located south of the Mason Dixon line. Check out the following chart to find out about education options, industry certifications and job growth.

	__Degree Required__		<i>Associate's or bachelor's</i>
	__Education Field of Study__		<i>Culinary arts</i>
	__Certification Options__		American Culinary
			<i>Cooking expertise, knowledge</i>
	__Key Skills__		<i>creative</i>
	__Training Required__		
	__Job Growth (2012–2022)__		<i>5% "(for all chefs)"*</i>
	__Average Salary (2013)__		<i>\$46,620 "(for all chefs)"</i>

"Source: *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics"

!!What Types of Southern Cuisine Educational Programs Are Available?

Stand-alone and accredited certificate or degree programs specializing only in Southern cuisine do not exist. Culinary programs aim to prepare you for as wide a range of employment opportunities as possible; with this in mind, you'll most likely study classical techniques. You will also learn regional American styles of cooking and other cultural specialties, such as French or European cuisine.

You may want to consider enrolling in an associate's or bachelor's degree program in culinary arts. In these types of programs, you'll study culinary basics, such as food safety and sanitation, baking and pastry arts, beverage service, stocks, sauces and nutrition. You can learn how to plan a menu while controlling your inventory and costs. You may also enroll in one or more courses that cover classical and contemporary American cooking. These courses will give you an opportunity to explore the rich history and heritage of Southern cooking.

!!What Do I Need in Addition to My Degree?

As an aspiring chef who specializes in Southern cuisine, you'll want to have experience working in a restaurant featuring Southern specialties. A partial list of these delicacies includes chicken fried steak, fried chicken, grits, bread pudding and pulled pork. Since nearly all culinary degree programs feature internship opportunities, you may want to look into programs at culinary schools in the south. This region may provide you with greater opportunities for gaining valuable work

experience in a kitchen specializing in Southern cuisine. You'll also get to network with professionals in your chosen niche.

!!Are There Additional Education Requirements to Consider?

While additional mandatory education requirements aren't in place for Southern cuisine chefs, you may find that earning certification from a trade organization can add to your marketability. Such groups as the American Culinary Federation ("www.acfchefs.org") offer a multitude of specific programs and courses designed to appeal to the full range of kitchen professionals. Some designations available through this federation include certified culinarian, certified executive chef and certified master chef. Your qualification will vary according to your education level and experience.