



Professional Chef

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Foreword



I started cooking in 1992 after many years of wondering what I would pursue as a career while finishing my VCE. My father suggested a job in a kitchen as a means to an end until I found what I was looking for. My first job was in Melbourne's Caffe e Cucina, and it was within these four walls that I found a career which was both creative and structured; just what I needed. I started studying at Box Hill TAFE and was wrapped to learn all of the basic techniques taught to me, not to mention the stories teachers told from their careers in kitchens all over the world. I very quickly realised this was the direction for me; and so turned from a kid without much direction into a young man with a drive to travel, learn and then learn some more.

With my knives in hand I travelled to Italy, Switzerland and London working in kitchens

and meeting people who have become lifelong friends. While travelling, I also learnt another language and some fantastic skills. I can't imagine not being in a kitchen and, when I'm away, I can't wait to get back in there turning ideas and feelings into dishes.

Working in kitchens is a hard job and you must be passionate if you're to make it in this industry, but once you're a qualified chef the world is your oyster and every person's experiences are different. For me, there is no better feeling than sourcing ingredients and working on a dish with your team, serving the dish and then seeing smiling faces in the dining room.

Inside *Professional Chef* you will learn about some amazing chefs who share their wealth of knowledge from both Australia and overseas. This book is super special as it is written by such a broad variety of chefs, providing you with concise step-by-step guides to some fantastic dishes, not to mention the little tips they have learnt during their careers.

I wish you all the best through the tough times (there will be many) and the good times. Treat your food and workmates with the utmost respect, always carry a notepad and pen, write everything down and make big plans of your own. Don't take the easy road, ask lots of questions and tackle the jobs that you find scary. Most importantly, have fun and guard this book with your life.

Go hard,
Tobie Puttock

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burns and scalds. It acts as a barrier and gives a few vital extra seconds to protect its wearer should hot liquid be spilled onto the upper body. The sleeves should be worn to the wrist to protect the arms from burns.



Trousers

These are generally made of lightweight cotton or mixed material and Teflon-coated fabric. They should not be worn tight-fitting to the leg, as this creates a hazard if a spillage occurs. Loose-fitting trousers also improve comfort when working in a kitchen.



Apron

The apron must be worn at full length (always to below the knee) to protect the legs. If a spillage of hot liquid occurs, it is the first line of protection. It should be tied at the front to allow for quick release. Any difference in colour can be relevant to the particular organisation.



Necktie

The necktie was originally used to stop the bow due to the lack of ventilation and the heat generated by solid fuel stoves. A system of coloured neckties can identify departments or seniority within the workplace, allowing for an assumption of ability based on a quick visual inspection.



Chef's hat

The tall hat, known as a toque, has always epitomised the stature of the chef. Traditionally an apprentice cook would wear a skullcap and graduate to a toque when they reached a position of Chef de Partie. Nowadays even some Head Chefs prefer the skullcap. The main functions of the hat are to stop loose hair falling into the food and help absorb perspiration on the forehead. However, when the hair is worn beyond collar length it cannot be contained in a hat. In this case a hair net should be worn.



Safety shoes

Shoes should be of a sturdy design with non-slip soles and non-absorbent outer material. If clogs are preferred, then they too should be protective and have a back strap to prevent slipping. The colour is usually dictated by the workplace. An important element is that footwear should be comfortable and give support to the chef who will be on their feet for many hours.

The wearing of trainers and non-specialist shoes is dangerous and unhygienic. The soles slip easily on tiled floors, and the shoes offer little spill or impact protection and are a breeding ground for bacteria.

Kitchen cloths

Kitchen cloths must be clean, dry and undamaged. They provide important protection for the hands from the sometimes very hot equipment that chefs regularly handle.



Chef's Tip

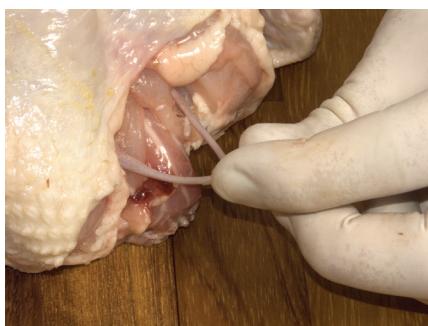
Uniforms must be changed for each shift. The clothing should be of an easily washable material. Chef's attire is usually white in colour to show when clothing has been soiled, thus when it needs to be changed.

Methods	Quality points	Disadvantages	Common dishes using this method
Simmering Food is cooked at a gentle boil.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less evaporation occurs than during boiling • produce holds shape better • less chance of burning produce • scum will not boil back into liquids such as stocks • fast method of reheating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scum that rises must be removed • must monitor heat source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chicken stock • onion soup • reduction of veal • orange glaze • diced potatoes • blanched whole seafood
Poaching Food is cooked by placing it into a prepared liquid that has been heated to just below boiling point.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeps food moist when cooked correctly • produce holds shape • prevents shrinkage of proteins that occurs at higher temperatures in fish, meat and poultry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poaching • poaching is a slow method of cookery that is only for tender cuts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fish fillets • court bouillon • poached eggs • pears • chicken breast • dried fruit
Atmospheric steaming Food is cooked by placing it in the steam produced from boiling water. This produces an atmosphere of moist or wet heat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colour, flavour and nutritional value of food are retained • a fat-free method of cookery, therefore healthy • vegetables remain crisp • a fast cooking option • can rehydrate produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • steaming (not unlike boiling) will not greatly enhance the flavour of a dish • only small pieces can be cooked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bok choy • potatoes • dim sum • sticky rice • puddings • fish fillets
Pressure steaming Food is cooked by placing it in the contained steam under high pressure. This produces an atmosphere of moist or wet heat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a fat-free method of cookery, therefore healthy • a very fast cooking option • can cook tougher cuts of meat and larger pieces • food will be initially sealed by the higher temperature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • steaming green vegetables in non-atmospheric steamers will make them go brown. The solution is to blanch them in boiling water first and steam them when required • less taste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mutton shank • ox tongue • chat potatoes • older poultry • beetroot • plum pudding • suet pie
Stewing Pieces of food are cooked slowly in a liquid. The liquid is then served as a sauce to accompany the stewed food.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most food can be cooked this way • maximum flavour of produce is retained in the sauce • can make the poorest cuts of meat palatable • cheap produce can make a great-quality dish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flavours mix together • slow and energy-intensive method of cookery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blanquette • bouillabaisse • Irish stew • fricassée • goulash • navarin • ragout • apricot compote

into a bonbon-like shape around the fillet. It can then be cooked by steaming, poaching, simmering, braising or low-temperature roasting.

Trussing can be done with string by tying the string around one end of the fillet then continuously looping the string along the breast at even intervals to create a ribbed sausage-like shape. This can then be sealed and cooked, often roasted or braised. Sometimes dry pieces of meat (such as wild birds, older birds or non-desexed birds) are larded or marinated to add moisture and lubrication to the dish. Larding involves inserting solid fat into poultry meat, for example pork fat into pheasant.

Step-by-step preparation of chicken for sauté



Remove wishbone



Remove the wing by cutting through the joint just between the winglet and drumette, cutting through the bone cartilage cap.



Remove the legs by cutting through the skin between the leg and the breast; don't forget to cut around the oyster muscle to prevent wastage of meat



Cut the leg in half at the knee joint



The thigh and the drumstick



Remove the knuckles from the drumstick close to the tip of the bone to prevent shattering



Twist the sinews into the drumstick to form a neat compact shape



Remove the petit suprême by cutting 2–3 cm on either side of the breast, straight down through the drumette joining the carcass, leaving the wing bone on the suprême



The petit suprême removed

Coffee and chocolate éclairs Éclairs au café et chocolat

Ingredients	20 éclairs
Choux paste (see page 491)	250 g
Fondant	300 g
Stock syrup	90 g
Alcohol of choice (Kirsch, Grand Marnier, Tia Maria)	20 g
Crème pâtissier	200 g
Dark chocolate (melted)	75 g
Diluted strong coffee	25 ml
Assorted confectionery colourings (optional)	as required



Chef's Tip

To ensure that each éclair is piped to the same size, mark two tramlines down the baking sheet as a guide for the correct size and portion control.

Method of work

- 1 Preheat an oven to 220°C.
- 2 Place the prepared choux paste into a piping bag and using a 1 cm plain tube, pipe out 10 cm lengths on a silicone baking mat or a lightly buttered and floured baking sheet.
- 3 Brush the choux with eggwash and bake in the preheated oven for approximately 30 minutes until crisp and light brown in colour.
- 4 Place on a wire rack and allow to cool.
- 5 Take the crème pâtissier and divide it into enough separate bowls to create as many different flavours as required.
- 6 Flavour the crème pâtissier by adding either melted chocolate, coffee or flavoured alcohols.
- 7 Pierce the end of each éclair with a knife. Pipe the flavoured crème pâtissier into different piping bags with a small plain tube and fully fill each éclair.
- 8 Prepare the fondant by warming in a double boiler to a temperature no higher than 36°C. Add a little stock syrup to create the correct dipping consistency and flavour or colour the fondant as required.
- 9 Carefully dip the tops of the éclairs into the correct coloured and flavoured fondant and remove the surplus.
- 10 Sprinkle some melted chocolate over each or set a small motif on top of each éclair before they set. Serve for afternoon tea.



Pipe out 10 cm lengths on a silicone baking mat or a lightly buttered and floured baking sheet



Fully fill each éclair with crème pâtissier using a piping bag with a small plain tube



Carefully dip the tops of the éclairs into the correct coloured and flavoured fondant and remove the surplus