

Title:

The Chefs Mindset

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Summary:

Have you ever wondered what the difference between a great chef and an ordinary chef is? How can one produce food recipes that are remembered and another produce food that is quickly forgotten? Disregarding all the jokes about never trusting a skinny chef I can only say that the 80/20 rule applies in this profession the same as in other professions. It is a fact of life that 20% of lawyers, doctors, accountants, financial planners etc. are outstanding; the other 80% are medio...

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Article Body:

Have you ever wondered what the difference between a great chef and an ordinary chef is? How can one produce food recipes that are remembered and another produce food that is quickly forgotten? Disregarding all the jokes about never trusting a skinny chef I can only say that the 80/20 rule applies in this profession the same as in other professions. It is a fact of life that 20% of lawyers, doctors, accountants, financial planners etc. are outstanding; the other 80% are mediocre to awful. The same applies to all trades and professions. So the challenge vis-à-vis chefs is to find what differentiates the 20% from the 80%.

The first thing you will notice about the top 20% is creativity; they create meals and set the standard for others to follow. The most obvious sign of creativity is in the way that a meal is served. Can you look at the meal before you start eating and think: This meal appears to be unique? This must be obvious before you taste it; the meal truly needs to stir something (other than hunger) within you. Top chefs are like interior decorators in their presentation; mixing colors, shapes and textures to be sure that they are eye-catching.

Next we come to the recipe itself. Top chefs rarely present a recipe as it is presented in a recipe book; instead they add their own signature to it. This signature is better known as flair and varies from adding a simple extra ingredient to a number of ingredients. It could also be a variation of some

ingredient quantities. For instance there is a recipe on our website for chocolate truffles flavored with cayenne pepper. - Now that looks stupid on paper because it is one of those things that you must taste to believe. The result is a truffle that leaves a taste for at least half an hour after you eat it. This is just one example of a chef that thinks outside of the square. There are many more that are not quite so radical.

Another thing I like to test when I eat out is the taste of simple boiled vegetables; you don't need me to tell you that they can be bland. So, what if you boil all non-root vegetables in chicken, beef or vegetable stock rather than plain water. Also boil them together for the same time. You finish up with extra flavored vegetables and different textures because some vegetables require longer cooking time than others. Does it spoil the vegetables? Only you can be the judge, just remember that vegetables shouldn't be cooked for too long or you boil the goodness out of them.

Why not start collecting your own top chef's tips when you eat out. If there is something on your plate that excites you ask the waiter to ask the chef how he achieved that taste. Chefs are like artists and are usually happy to discuss their techniques with people who show a genuine interest.

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