

Abbie Smith

Overview



The Combe Restaurant at the Skills & Enterprise Centre within West Somerset College in Minehead was where I found my love for hospitality. The opportunities that were provided during my time here have shaped me as a person today. I gained confidence and knowledge that gave me a stepping stone into

the industry and provided me my first job in Dunster at Reeves Restaurant where I completed my apprenticeship.

We were also lucky enough to be chosen to cook at Glastonbury Festival and in 2012 we were encouraged to partake in the Rotary Chef of the Year competition where I won 1st place at the district finals. I will always be thankful for my place at The Combe Restaurant and the memories and experiences it holds. I believe if it wasn't for this I wouldn't be where I am today.

Case Study – Faye

Overview

Starting college at The Combe Restaurant was a very exciting prospect for us students, entering a professional and successful restaurant with teachers and mentors from the industry was a very promising start for us all.

Being given the freedom to learn how to cook, serve, organise, plan and run a restaurant and kitchen has been a staple part of setting up my career. From learning how to cook amazing dishes from the chef tutors, setting up the kitchen, hygiene standards and the daily running of the kitchen, the professionalism that came from the tutors, along with the patience they had whilst teaching was great.

Being part of running the restaurant was where things really shone for me: from learning the basics of how to lay tables, cashing up, dealing with customers and providing the best customer service we could. This teamed with the theory elements of the course that we were taught really pulled my interest further, as the course was taught with such passion and knowledge and this really resonated with me to make my choice and begin a career within the hospitality industry.

Fast forward 10 years and after 4 years of business studies at university

(something I never would have considered without the support of my tutor) I'm now managing a 3 rosette fine dining restaurant, winning awards and learning so much about what the industry has to offer.

Without The Combe Restaurant, my career and life path would certainly have been very different and it really was the building block of my hospitality career. From the support of our tutors to the experience we gained throughout our two years undertaking the BTEC course, it's such a shame to know that other students will no longer be given the opportunity to have the same experience that we did as students.

A massive thank you to all the staff and tutors at The Combe- life wouldn't be the same without it!