

James Harrison

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Executive Head Chef with over 15 years of experience leading high-profile Mediterranean restaurants in London. Proven track record of reducing food waste by 22% through strategic menu engineering and local vendor renegotiations. Expert in building award-winning culinary teams and maintaining 95% staff retention in high-pressure environments.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Executive Head Chef | The Northern Quarter Grill | Manchester, UK

May 2019 - Present

- Directed all kitchen operations for a £3.8 million annual revenue establishment, managing a staff of 35 culinary professionals.
- Engineered a new seasonal menu strategy that increased dessert sales by 30% and overall starters by 15% within six months.
- Reduced food costs from 32% to 26% through rigorous portion control and the implementation of a waste tracking audit system.
- Spearheaded a kitchen refurbishment project with a £150,000 budget, improving workflow efficiency and reducing ticket times by 20%.
- Maintained a 5-star Food Hygiene Rating through eight consecutive surprise inspections by enforcing strict hygiene protocols.

Chef de Cuisine | Victoria Station Brasserie | London, UK

Aug 2015 - Apr 2019

- Managed a high-volume hot line producing over 400 covers per night during weekend dinner service.
- Developed and executed a specialised tasting menu that earned two AA Rosettes.
- Mentored and promoted 4 junior cooks to Sous Chef positions, establishing a culture of internal growth and excellence.
- Negotiated new contracts with local organic farms in Kent, reducing produce costs by 12% while improving ingredient quality.
- Implemented a labour-scheduling model that reduced overtime spending by £12,000 annually without affecting service speed.

Sous Chef | The Riverside Inn | Stockport, UK

Jun 2012 - Jul 2015

- Supervised daily prep lists and line setups for a team of 12, ensuring consistency across all shifts.
- Controlled inventory for dry goods and proteins, reducing monthly spoilage value by approximately £950.
- Facilitated weekly training sessions on advanced French techniques and sauce foundations for entry-level staff.
- Coordinated with the events manager to execute banquet services for weddings of up to 300 guests with 0% error rate.

EDUCATION

University College Birmingham | BA (Hons) Culinary Arts Management | Culinary Arts and Business

Sept 2008 - May 2012

Manchester College | Level 3 NVQ Diploma | Professional Cookery

Aug 2006 - May 2008

SKILLS

Menu Development, Plate Styling, Advanced Knife Skills, Knowledge of Global Cuisines, Pastry and Baking Fundamentals, Sourcing and Procurement, Kitchen Staff Leadership, Food Cost Analysis, P&L Management, POS Software (e.g. Tenzo, Zonal), Inventory Management, Supplier Relations, Food Safety (HACCP Level 3), Health & Safety Regulations, Food Hygiene Standards, Allergen Management Protocols, Equipment Maintenance, Crisis Management, Effective Communication, Time Management, Creative Problem Solving, Conflict Resolution

CERTIFICATIONS

Level 3 Award in Food Safety for Catering | Highfield Qualifications (Jan 2023)
HACCP Management for Catering Level 3 | City & Guilds (Nov 2021)

LANGUAGES

English (Native)
French (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

ACTIVITIES

Community Cooking Volunteer

Teaching basic cooking skills and nutrition at local youth centres in Greater Manchester.

Sustainable Food Trust

Active contributor to discussions on ethical sourcing and reducing carbon footprints in UK kitchens.