



LE CORDON BLEU®

The Leading Global Network of Culinary Arts
and Hospitality Management Institutes

Alumni Careers



20 ALUMNI INTERVIEWS ABOUT
INSPIRING CAREER PATHS



Exploring a world of possibilities with a culinary and hospitality education

The hospitality industry is one of the largest employers globally. Within the sector, there is a wide array of establishments offering different career possibilities - from resort management to event planning, from managing a restaurant to designing menus. However, with a culinary and/or hospitality education you can choose your own path within the industry.



Possibilities are endless and around the world Le Cordon Bleu is proud to see its alumni thrive in a variety of different careers, such as chefs, culinary stylists, food photographers, caterers, entrepreneurs, app creators, consultants, wine buyers, journalists, writers, food critics, award winners and Michelin-starred restaurateurs.

Le Cordon Bleu is the leading global network of culinary arts and hospitality institutes, it offers the most complete and comprehensive training in the foundations of culinary techniques under the guidance of world class chefs and hospitality experts in over 20 countries. Responding to the needs of our students and industry, Le Cordon Bleu has a wide range of programmes, from certificates, diplomas and short courses to Bachelor, Master and MBA degree programmes for the restaurant, hotel management, tourism and nutrition fields.

The many successes of our graduates attest to the quality of teaching, from Julia Child to Giada de Laurentiis, from Dame Mary Berry to Gaston Acurio, from Yotam Ottolenghi to Vicky Lau. Many of our former students are honoured with prestigious titles and prizes, such as Garima Arora, Clara Puig, Cristobal Munoz, awarded a star in the Michelin Guide, or Luciana Berry and Jessica Wang, major winners of Masterchef competitions in 2020. Le Cordon Bleu is proud to see the professional recognition of its alumni around the world.

Le Cordon Bleu programmes start students on a journey that inspires excellence, creativity, innovation and personal enrichment. Each graduate leaves Le Cordon Bleu with the skills – or toolbox – to launch an exciting career not only in the world's leading restaurants, hotels or resorts, but also as a journalist, sommelier, author, instructor, mixologist, consultant or entrepreneur. This is why we believe a Le Cordon Bleu education is a passport for a successful career.

We have gathered here a few examples of these various career paths, with inspiring interviews of 20 Le Cordon Bleu alumni from around the world. Each share insight on how they have met success, explain their role and passion, what they have found most useful withing their training, along with advice for the next generation of culinary and hospitality graduates. We hope it will guide your next steps in your choice of a career.

Amitiés Gourmandes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "André J. Cointreau".

André J. Cointreau

President and CEO, Le Cordon Bleu

100
Nationalities
LE CORDON BLEU IS
OVER 30
Institutes



20
Countries

20,000
Students
every year

18
University
partnerships

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- Celebrity Chef & Educator, Young Chefs Academy Malaysia
- Cluster Executive Chef, Waldorf Astoria & Hilton Panama City
- College Teacher and Entrepreneur, Colegiatura Colombiana and Come Calles
- Business Development Executive, Metro Gross Market Turkey
- Chef & CEO, My Black Kitchen
- Executive Chef & Entrepreneur, Restaurant Quito Identidad Culinaria
- CSR Programme Director & CEO, Splendour
- Private Chef, FEAST
- Commercial and R&D Director, Pro Agro
- Food and Lifestyle Journalist, lamarinade
- Gastronomic Promoter for the Peruvian Embassy in Singapore
- Success Coach at Torrens University & Business Owner
- Executive Chef and Director, James Boulangerie
- Private Chef to the Brazilian Ambassador
- Director of Foodservice Marketing, FGF Brands
- Founder, Gourmet Launch F&B Consulting
- Food & Travel Writer and Olive Producer, Tuzla Olive Farm Gemlik
- TV Producer and Presenter, KBS Media

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History

The expression “Cordon Bleu” is a reference to the Order of the Holy Spirit. It was created by French king Henri III in 1578, to honour those of merit to France. It was the most prestigious French Royal Order, and these knights were identified by a cross pendant hanging from a blue ribbon (cordon bleu in French). When the knighthood was granted spectacular feasts were given and have become to this day legendary, remembering those knights who wore their medal suspended on a blue ribbon.

It all began in 1895, when journalist Marthe Distel founded the first weekly culinary magazine of the period, *La Cuisinière Cordon Bleu*. The magazine had 20,000 subscribers!

Marthe Distel rapidly came up with the idea of inviting subscribers to take part in free cuisine lessons, with chefs demonstrating recipes. The magazine reflected the great French bourgeois cuisine of that era but also demonstrated an openness to world cuisines as it was published in several languages.

The first cuisine lessons were taught at Le Cordon Bleu school in Paris from 15th October 1895, and the international reputation of Le Cordon Bleu spread so rapidly that by 1927 the *Daily Mail* of London referred to Le Cordon Bleu as a “Babel of Nationalities.”

• **1895** French journalist Marthe Distel launches a culinary magazine entitled “*La Cuisinière Cordon Bleu*” in Paris. In October, subscribers are invited to the first Le Cordon Bleu cuisine lessons.

• **1897** Le Cordon Bleu Paris welcomes its first Russian student.

• **1905** Le Cordon Bleu Paris trains its first Japanese student.

• **1914** Le Cordon Bleu has four schools in Paris.

• **1927** The daily newspaper *The London Daily Mail* writes about a visit to Le Cordon Bleu Paris: “It is not unusual to see eight different nationalities in each class”.

• **1931** Rosemary Hume and Dione Lucas, trained at Le Cordon Bleu Paris under the supervision of Chef Henri-Paul Pellaprat, open *l'école du Petit Cordon Bleu* and the *Au Petit Cordon Bleu* restaurant in London.

• **1942** Dione Lucas opens a Le Cordon Bleu school and restaurant in New York. She is also the author of the best-seller *The Cordon Bleu Cook Book* and becomes the first woman to ever host a television cookery show in the United States.

• **1948** Le Cordon Bleu receives Pentagon accreditation for providing professional training to young American soldiers following their period of service in Europe. Julia Child, former member of the Office of Strategic Services, begins training at Le Cordon Bleu Paris institute.

• **1953** Le Cordon Bleu London creates the *Coronation Chicken* recipe served at Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's coronation dinner.



1954 The success of the film *Sabrina*, starring Audrey Hepburn in the title role, contributes to the increasing fame of Le Cordon Bleu.



1991 Le Cordon Bleu Japan opens its doors in Tokyo and then in Kobe. The institute is known as "Little France in Japan".

1996 Le Cordon Bleu opens in Sydney, Australia, following a request from the New South Wales government, and trains chefs in preparation for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.

2006 Le Cordon Bleu Thailand launches in partnership with Dusit International.

2011 Le Cordon Bleu Madrid opens its doors in partnership with Francisco de Vitoria University. Le Cordon Bleu launches its first online programme in Australia.

2013 Le Cordon Bleu Thailand is awarded the prize for Best Culinary School in Asia.



2016 Le Cordon Bleu Paris relocates to the banks of the Seine, building a breathtaking, innovative and eco-friendly institute.

2019 Opening of Le Cordon Bleu in the Philippines, in partnership with University Ateneo de Manila. Le Cordon Bleu in Thailand moves to a new state of the art campus in central Bangkok.

Celebrating
125 YEARS
with you!

lcbl.eu/aod



1984 The Cointreau family, descendants of the founding families of the Rémy Martin and Cointreau liquor brands, takes over the presidency of Le Cordon Bleu Paris institute from Elizabeth Brassart, who had been director since 1945.

1995 Le Cordon Bleu celebrates its 100th anniversary.

2003 Le Cordon Bleu Peru institute expands and becomes the country's leading culinary institute.



© Sony Pictures

2009 Le Cordon Bleu institutes worldwide take part in the launch of the film *Julie & Julia*, with Meryl Streep in the role of Le Cordon Bleu Paris alumna Julia Child.

2012 Le Cordon Bleu Malaysia launches in partnership with Sunway University College, and Le Cordon Bleu New Zealand opens in Wellington.

2015 Le Cordon Bleu institutes worldwide celebrate its 120th anniversary.

2018 Le Cordon Bleu Brazil opens campuses in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Le Cordon Bleu Paris partners with University Paris-Dauphine for its bachelors. Le Cordon Bleu in Peru reaches University status.

2020 Le Cordon Bleu celebrates 125 years in education and opens *Signatures* restaurant in Rio de Janeiro, Brasil. Le Cordon Bleu launches certified Online Higher Education Programmes.

2021 Le Cordon Bleu announces the opening of an institute in Rhiyad, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2023.

Le Cordon Bleu in a Nutshell



STATE-OF-THE-ARTS
FACILITIES IN PRIME
LOCATIONS



FINEST ACADEMIC TEAM WITH
HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE



AWARD WINNING
INSTITUTES



OVER
100
NATIONALITIES



20
COUNTRIES



18
UNIVERSITY
PARTNERSHIPS



PROGRAMMES
MEETING THE NEEDS
OF THE INDUSTRY



20,000
GRADUATES
PER YEAR*



OF EXCELLENCE,
GASTRONOMY &
INNOVATION

Le Cordon Bleu, it is more than 125 years of excellence in teaching the Culinary Arts and Hotel Management, providing vocational and higher education programmes around the world. With a network of more than 30 schools in 20 countries, Le Cordon Bleu is the world's leading network of Culinary Arts and Hotel Management institutes. The role of Le Cordon Bleu is to teach a whole range of technical and University training programmes for working in the restaurant, hotel and tourism industry around the world.

Founded in 1895, Le Cordon Bleu institute has been teaching the techniques and expertise inherited from the great names of French cuisine for over 125 years. Through an expanding international network of teaching, learning and research, Le Cordon Bleu programmes also embrace the innovation, the trends and new technologies, and continually adapts its academic programmes to the future needs of culinary, wine, tourism and hospitality industries. Every year, the network of Le Cordon Bleu institutes trains 20,000 students of 100 nationalities in cuisine, pastry, bread-making, wine, and hotel management.

Le Cordon Bleu is an award-winning network of institutes, which can be found around the world in some of the most innovative and dynamic cities. Providing training with a permanent team of professors and chef instructors, in prime locations and state-of-the-art facilities, recognised globally for its excellence in education, Le Cordon Bleu is proud to provide its graduates with an international passport for a successful career.

*Graduate: a person who has successfully completed a course of study or training



LE CORDON BLEU



A word from the Commanderie des Cordons Bleus

The Commanderie des Cordons Bleus, Le Cordon Bleu's exclusive international alumni network, is well represented here in all 20 testimonials of inspiring graduates from around the world. Following their passion while making the most of the skills learnt at the institute, they have forged their own path to success in a variety of fields and roles. This is a sample of what Le Cordon Bleu alumni network is made of; graduates with talent, passion and vision.

To be part of the Commanderie des Cordons Bleus means that one has met the high standards set by the institute throughout the course of a programme. Le Cordon Bleu is recognised worldwide for its excellence in education, providing students with an international passport for a career in the food and hospitality industry. The numerous success stories of its alumni are proof of that, from Julia Child to Giada de Laurentiis, from Dame Mary Berry to Gaston Acurio, and from Yotam Ottolenghi to Vicky Lau.

Le Cordon Bleu is often spoken of as a powerful network, and it is so on many levels. A network of over 30 institutes worldwide in over 20 countries, of partners and stellar establishments with whom it works to provide the best learning experiences, but above all it is an international network of people. Le Cordon Bleu is a grand family of Le Cordon Bleu master chefs, teachers and industry experts, F&B professionals, industry partners, students and alumni.

Join Le Cordon Bleu family, your future awaits!



Possibilities are endless

Where will Le Cordon Bleu lead you?
DISCOVER OUR VIDEO LCBL.EU/AMJ



20 ALUMNI INTERVIEWS ABOUT
INSPIRING CAREER PATHS



Content Coordinator, Tá na Mesa

| When did you realise you wanted to become a content coordinator?

I joined Tá na Mesa to be a chef at one of our content recording studios and I asked my boss, chef Paula Rizkallah, for the opportunity to start working with gastronomy. Shortly after I started working at the studio, Chef Paula told me she wanted me to work with the content team, sharing my knowledge and techniques in the preparation and curation of our material.

| What is the best thing about being a content coordinator?

The best part is being able to study hard and learn every day. In content creation every recipe involves research, countless tests or trying different techniques until we reach our best, so even

though I am not in the kitchen every day, everything is related to the culinary arts.

| What are your main responsibilities?

I take care of our two kitchens routines, giving all the support for recording classes and content, our entire process of purchasing and curating our e-books. I also develop recipes for our website and record videos explaining them step by step and the ways to achieve the best result.

| Something that surprised you when starting this job?

At first, I was afraid to take off my cooking apron and leave the kitchen. However, what I did not imagine is how I would be delighted with this new routine! It is enriching to be able to study and improve, solve doubts and find ways to minimize mistakes,

being able to have a 'laboratory' to test, create and find the best way to do the things better.

| How do you work with your team? Do you have any management tips?

I always try to be transparent in my communication, so we are all equal; we make mistakes together, we make things right together, and I listen to all points of view with empathy. Each person cooks in a way, or learnt in a way, and has more aptitude in their field.

| Why did you choose Le Cordon Bleu São Paulo?

I took a gap year to study in the culinary area and I found Le Cordon Bleu in São Paulo. As I had no experience in the area and wanted to leave engineering aside.

I wanted to study at the best gastronomy school, I knew that the knowledge coming from there would open doors for my new career.

So, I structured my time to do internships, tutoring and spending this year to make my dream of being in the kitchen come true! Le Cordon Bleu is the structuring and fulfillment of a dream in my life. I am very proud to be an alumna and to be able to carry its name in my story.

| How has studying CordonTec helped you to fulfill your current role?

CordonTec was the right fit for my plan. Dynamic and comprehensive, it brought me technical knowledge, experience in the kitchen and the opportunity to learn from the best chefs. I had Cuisine, Pâtisserie and Boulangerie, in addition to the disciplines of Services and Management as well. I know that the best of me was put into practice every day, and I am so grateful for this!

| Do you still meet Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Yes, I still meet them! They were classmates; they became life friends. Not only in the kitchens, but in many aspects, we always talk, exchanging experiences and daily routines.

| What has been the greatest moment of your career so far?

It was unique to see the first e-book which I helped create, from all the cooking in the kitchen to publishing! Every detail fills me with happiness.

| What were some of the challenges you overcame in your position?

The biggest challenge for sure was my first recording! Being in front of the cameras, cooking and explaining was something that did not cross my mind!

My advice would be always do your best, even if it looks like no one is watching. I carry this advice into my life in all respects, especially on those tough days when it seems like everything has gotten out of hand.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

My biggest inspiration is my mother, Suzelí. She taught me something I cannot pass up: “Darling, put love in everything whatever you do!” and, for me, being in the kitchen is this.



Biography

Cristina Martins has a Management Engineering and Robotics degree from Federal University of ABC (FUABC), and she worked for 15 years in the automotive market; but she always kept her love of her family's kitchen with her. A pivotal point in her life, she decided to bet on what made her heart flutter, returning to the classroom in search of a change in career. Today she is working on the co-ordination of a digital platform for gastronomic content with emphasis on being a meeting point for renowned chefs, specialists and food lovers. From childhood to the engineer and cook today, one thing has never changed: the kitchen has always been the place where she feels most comfortable.

Andrew Gibbon

DIPLOÔME DE CUISINE,
LE CORDON BLEU PERÙ



Chief of the Research, Development & Innovation Department, Le Cordon Bleu Perú

| When did you realise you wanted to become a research chef?

It came from the interest I still have today for trying new flavours, experimenting with new sensations, learning about new ingredients and meeting people that work with the land and the products. I've always understood that the value of my work was the influence it could have on people through insight, culinary techniques and especially when changing habits through education.

| What's the best thing about being a research chef?

Definitely the journey of applied research on techniques, products or procedures, allowing you to discover new uses, properties, flavours, colours and textures. It's like the start of an adventure when you receive a brief for a

new project, and when it all comes together as a new product that is introduced successfully to the market, that's when you feel really good about it.

My family is my biggest inspiration, and especially teaching my young child to enjoy and appreciate the pleasures of eating good, fair and biodiverse food.

| What are your main responsibilities?

Leading research and development projects for commercial and social purposes. Innovations on key operations for the company.

Promoting entrepreneurship skills throughout our student community, which also includes intellectual property tools and photography skills. Of course, it's also very important to have a fluent connection with our strategic partners, government entities and always being alert for funding opportunities for different types of research projects or startups for Le Cordon Bleu community.

| Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

What surprised me the most was the natural resistance people have for change. I have been called vehement, and that actually motivates me and has allowed me to learn how to deal with different styles of personalities and to have different approaches when needed, in order to

make positive changes happen smoothly.

| How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

Dealing with people always requires an understanding of human diversity, and what helps a lot is to recognise that we all have different talents, which allows everybody to think and see the world in different ways. What matters the most are the common objectives you have with your team, even though the level of responsibility might differ between members.

| What does Le Cordon Bleu represent for you in one word?

In one word for me, Le Cordon Bleu represents: PASSION!

| How did studying the Diplôme de Cuisine help you to achieve your current role?

It's been a crucial aspect on developing a systematic work methodology. For applied research, a well proven methodology is the key for success, and thanks to Le Cordon Bleu I was able to understand and master work flows, culinary techniques, decision making, the sensorial approach for technical matters and the most important part is being able to combine creativity with the technical and applied approach of the work that is needed in the gastronomical world.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Virtually of course, I have a chat with most of them, but

we don't really meet physically because most of them are all over the world, from Australia, Switzerland, Venezuela, Chile, Colombia, Brasil, USA, and some of the provinces of Peru, like Cusco for example.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far?

Success comes in the form of our graduates. I'm their biggest admiror, trying to promote their restaurants, start ups, products and even hiring them when doing catering events. Its gratifying when former students contact you for advice for their careers, it shows that our knowledge is still valuable to them.

I chose Le Cordon Bleu Perú because it is the best Gastronomy and Hospitality Management School on the South American continent.

| What advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

The best advice I could offer to any person wanting to become a chef or work in the hospitality industry is to always remain humble. The day you stop being humble, you stop learning.



Biography

Andrew Gibbon was raised in Lima, and spent much of his early years in the family restaurant, La Rosa Nautica: one of the most emblematic restaurants in Lima. He enrolled at a local university to follow an industrial engineering career, but after two years he dropped out and moved to New York City. He eventually fell in love with the catering industry, and decided to change career. He returned to Lima and enrolled at Le Cordon Bleu Perú in 2007. After graduating and spending a season working in Stockholm and Sweden he decided to start his own company in 2011, with a Gastronomical Services Agency in Lima. This allowed him to work for some of the most important brands and clients in the local gastronomic sector. In 2017, Andrew accepted the offer to work directly for the culinary school that he admired the most, Le Cordon Bleu.



Celebrity Chef & Educator, Young Chefs Academy Malaysia

When did you realise you wanted to become a chef & educator?

Growing up it never crossed my mind and even when I ended my journey in Masterchef Malaysia, I did not envisage that someday I would be doing what I do now. I guess it was an on going realisation that took place as I spent more time surrounded by food and the warmth of people I have met professionally. The passion for education was ignited when I had the chance to teach at a cooking school for children where I am a partner as well.

What's the best thing about being a chef & educator?

I get to wake up with a smile knowing that I am helping to build a society that is more aware of the “joie de vivre” that lies in food and cooking.

What are your main responsibilities?

Not a single day is the same for me. There are constant meetings scheduled to discuss possible food experience collaborations with food brands, tv producers, publishers and potential business partners where I am involved with other food related businesses. Of course, I am also constantly in the kitchen producing yummy, exciting and entertaining original culinary content for followers. Sometimes I do both at the same time!

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

At the time I started in the culinary, entertainment and education world, there were not many local references unlike today when I'm asked “Who do you liken yourself to as a

personality?” when it comes to other celebrity chefs, and while I am inspired by all of them I do not know anyone who has the mix of all the “quirky” things I do and I want to be the best version of me with the hopes that I can leave a mark in this world as a chef and educator.

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

I absolutely hate micromanaging and I believe in the good of people. Sometimes this strategy has been taken advantage of but, focusing more on the carrot just makes me a happier person than using the stick so I am going to focus on just that! Empowerment. In my experience people can surprise you positively if you just believe in them.

| Why did you choose Le Cordon Bleu Malaysia?

I graduated from Paris in finance and accounting and I speak French. It was a dream to go back to France to do my studies in cuisine and pastry when my career path took that sudden change. Alas, the reality of life was that I had to make a living which I had started to and I could not bring myself to leave my mother alone in Malaysia. Hence I chose the best of what I could do at that time which was to pursue my culinary training at Le Cordon Bleu Malaysia.

| How did studying the Grand Diplôme® help you to achieve your current role?

It enhanced my knowledge and skills that help in my daily undertakings and gave me that irreplaceable place of being part of Le Cordon Bleu family.

| What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

My fondest memories of being in Le Cordon Bleu was the diversity of students and chef instructors that led to a colourful blend of expertise, cultures and languages which was grounded by a common factor - our love for food!

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Definitely! We often come together to share experiences and work together on certain projects. One of my cookbooks was actually shot at a fellow alumni's restaurant!

| What has been the best moment in your career so far, and what have been some challenges you've overcome in your role?

Entering the entertainment and culinary world! I did not fit in one specific box and was often told I didn't belong. Being where I am today is a testimony to young kids that they can be special even if they don't fit in, that diversity is a strength if we just work hard, be kind and believe!

My father asked me at the lowest point of my career "What would you do for the rest of your life even if no one paid you a penny for doing it? Go and do exactly that!"

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

My father's battle with cancer was the reason I stepped into the kitchen. Prior to that I grew up in a family where boys were not allowed in the kitchen and I was just told to pursue the Asian dream of higher education and a professional career. When he fell ill, I took it upon myself to cook and care for his special dietary requirements; stuff that I just researched on the internet, videos and experimented in the kitchen itself...whilst I did that I found my peace when I was surrounded by food. It was and will always be my love for my father who guided me in my daily walk in life.



Biography

Chef Brian Chen, or more affectionately known as Abang Brian, gained a degree in finance and accounting at Université de Paris in 2009. Well on his way in the world of finance, Brian's journey into the culinary world began with a sad twist. His father's diagnosis of cancer in 2012 brought him into the kitchen for the first time where he prepared nutritious meals for him. This inspired him to complete his training in televised cooking competitions, reaching the finals for Masterchef Malaysia. To better equip himself to face the culinary world, he completed his training at Le Cordon Bleu Malaysia 2015. Within 5 short years in the industry, he has written 7 cook books, featured on numerous tv shows and hosts his own daily foodie radio show on SuriaFM. He now tries to do for others through his cooking school for kids, Young Chefs Academy (YCA) which focusses on developing children through food and cooking.

Daniel Sosa

GRAND DIPLÔME®, LE
CORDON BLEU OTTAWA



Cluster Executive Chef, Waldorf Astoria & Hilton, Panama City, Panama

When did you realise you wanted to become a chef?

I realised how good food was for developing relationships, building memorable moments around it, and understanding how important it is to share your knowledge with others.

What's the best thing about being a chef?

The team! They are everything, they are the best of us. They give us the opportunity to be creative, to share our life with them, to see a happy guest, to support us in the hard times. To teach and to learn. That's the best part of our profession.

What are your main responsibilities? Talk us through your average working day...

I start with a daily check at both properties, the Hilton Hotel and the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, in Panama City, ensuring the previous night went smoothly and everything is ready for the day ahead. Later we hold a managers briefing, sharing important information with the rest of the managers. By noon the lunch service starts, I check everything is ready and after the rush is over we have lunch together. Before I leave I greet all the staff starting their shift, have a quick meeting with the chefs and supervisors to get everyone on the same page.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

How big a hotel operation is, what it involves and how important our role is in the industry and the community.

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

My guys from the Waldorf and the Hilton are the heart of the operation. You have to build your team, you have to develop their skills. I'm always very honest with them, I am very respectful, I listen to them and I support them, and I like to remind them all the time the importance of tasting the food they make.

| How did studying the Grand Diplôme® help you to achieve your current role?

It helped me to have strong knowledge of cuisine and pastry, to know where to go in terms of techniques and ingredients, it helped me to build discipline and consistency.

I chose Le Cordon Bleu Ottawa for what it represents to the culinary world, for the responsibility of carrying that background in your career, for the tradition and because I love Ottawa, its an amazing city to live in.

| What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

My fondest memories were during my pastry lessons with Chef Christian and Chef Herve, they were fantastic! The level of ability was amazing, I remember during our theory lessons learning the recipe and thinking in my head “how am I going to do that?” and then during the practical lessons seeing the result was one of the most rewarding moments ever!

The best advice I can give to anyone who's looking to follow in my footsteps is to keep in touch with the community, build a solid team, be consistent, clean your kitchen, be honest, taste your food, and work for the job you want not for the one you have.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far?

When I got promoted to executive chef for the first time, that was such an achievement for me and for my family!

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

My family.



Biography

Daniel was born in Bogota, Colombia, in a small family of four. He initially went to university to get a bachelor's in industrial design. While studying, Daniel was intrigued by people who worked with food, and that curiosity led him to decide to continue his education at Le Cordon Bleu. After graduating from Le Cordon Bleu Ottawa, Daniel eventually moved back to Colombia to continue his journey in the hospitality industry. He joined the culinary team at The Hilton Bogota, and after several promotions he got the opportunity to move to Panama to become Executive Sous Chef and Banquet Chef for The Hilton Hotel. Following a lot of hard work and training, Daniel was made Executive Chef, managing the kitchens at the two best hotels in Panama City; The Waldorf Astoria and The Hilton Hotel.

LCB[®] ALUMNI



Edwin David Acosta

PROFESSIONAL THAI CUISINE
DIPLOMA, LE CORDON BLEU
THAILAND



College Teacher and Entrepreneur, Colegiatura Colombiana and Come Calles

| When did you realise you wanted to become a chef?

I realised I wanted to become a chef when I discovered the aesthetics and cultural aspects of cooking. When you understand what's behind the preparation, the full picture starts to grow, from the farmers, to the markets, and the technique. Gastronomy is the best way to showcase a culture.

| What's the best thing about being a chef?

The best thing about being a chef is the possibility to prepare a dish with the sensitivity and creativity that it takes to plan and execute a meal, and to contemplate all the cultural aspects related to that plate of food: tradition, culture, nutrition, anthropology and so on.

| What are your main responsibilities?

As a cooking teacher it's important to listen to all of my students and understand they all have differences. I put all my passion into becoming involved in the learning process. As an entrepreneur I showcase my kitchen with Thai influences. I use my creativity in designing dishes with Thai flavours. People come to my dining table wanting to taste a mixture of Thai flavours and culture.

| How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

The way I work with my team is always based on respect. I can not expect a good result when I don't respect my team.

Why did you choose Le Cordon Bleu Dusit in Bangkok, Thailand?

I chose Le Cordon Bleu Dusit because I visited before I decided to study. I used to stay next to the Dusit Thani hotel where the school was located, and I thought to myself ‘I want to study here.’ It was like love at first sight.

How did studying the Professional Thai Cuisine Diploma help you to achieve your current role?

Studying the Thai diploma helped me develop my dining experiences based on Thai flavours. It helped me to understand the complexity of Thai gastronomy, and find a respectful way to showcase it.

My best moment is when I see my diners eat, and I listen to how much they enjoyed my food. I think for a chef that's the best part of cooking.

What have been some challenges you've overcome in your role?

One thing I learnt the most is not being scared of failure. Sometimes things don't go the way we want, and there is always a lesson to be learnt.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

My advice is to never forget what it was that made you decide to become a chef. We cannot forget the passion we feel when we do what we love.

My biggest inspiration is the cooks who are on the street cooking traditional street food. They have very important knowledge of flavour.



Biography

Edwin David Acosta is a College Teacher at Colegiatura Colombiana and runs Come Calles, his own Open Chefs Table project in Colombia.

After graduating from the Gastronomy course at Colegiatura Colombiana, Edwin decided to join the 9-month Professional Thai Cuisine Diploma from Le Cordon Bleu Dusit in Bangkok, Thailand. This was a fulfilling year for him in terms of learning and getting to know more about Thai cuisine.

Living in Thailand and studying the Professional Thai Cuisine Diploma helped him to develop his dining experiences based on Thai flavours by understanding the complexity of Thai gastronomy.



Business Development Executive, Metro Gross Market Turkey

When did you realise you wanted to become a business development executive?

After working in professional kitchens for a while I wanted to extend my knowledge and learn more about the management part of the job. Working in the kitchen has always been a passion for me, but as I am at the very beginning of my career I thought I should see more of the gastronomy sector.

What's the best thing about being a business development executive?

Being an executive for a culinary discovery platform gives me many chances for professional

development and continuous learning. As I manage a new project or organise a new event with my team, I learn more and can develop myself professionally.

What are your main responsibilities?

I get together with my team weekly, that consists of the kitchen chefs and business development clerks. We work on long term projects which I lead. For example, right now we are working on brasserie restaurant menu analysis and product development projects. I also work directly with the marketing and sales teams, as I am in charge of the sponsorship and external sales. I also support our education department.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

I cannot say that I was surprised in a negative way. Honestly I did not expect to learn this much whilst on the job but each day is like a new school day. Also my role in the company required more experience than I had back then, so that made me motivate myself to learn more.

Why did you choose Le Cordon Bleu İstanbul?

I didn't really know what my role might be after graduation but I certainly knew I wanted to work with food or anything related to it. Le Cordon Bleu was the best option, I chose it without a second thought. Le Cordon

Bleu is an iconic institute that is known worldwide, so coming from such a prestigious institute has always been a plus in the professional world.

Studying the Restaurant Management programme allowed me to do both management and kitchen based courses. I could work in any part of the gastronomy sector after graduation since I have a great foundation of knowledge in both areas.

| What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

I have so many great memories from my years at Le Cordon Bleu. I always remember my pastry classes with a smile on my face. I had the best chef instructor, he made me like pastry even more. The classes were always so much fun and very educational at the same time.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Yes, I am still in touch with many friends of mine from school. I know where they are, what they do and also we try to get together in person from time to time.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far? What have been some challenges you've overcome in your role?

So far, the highlight of my career was in Miami when I was asked to make a Turkish dessert. I made them a very traditional dessert from my hometown with some personal touches. They loved the dessert and put it on the menu with the original Turkish name. My biggest challenge was working abroad with the cultural differences. It was sometimes hard to find a common palate but with some observation and some trials, I could understand what they like and I adapted my country's cuisine to theirs.

My advice would be not to give up too quickly. We have so many options in the field of gastronomy. You might love gastronomy but think the kitchen is not the right place for you and that's fine. All they need to do is consider the options and give them a try until you find the best fit.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

There are so many chefs that inspire, and there are some great people I got to meet on my gastronomy adventure. I cannot really name one.



Biography

Elif graduated from Le Cordon Bleu Istanbul's Restaurant Management Programme in 2016. After graduation she opened an Italian restaurant with some of her fellow graduates. Eventually she accepted a job as a pastry chef at one of Daniel Boulud's restaurants in the US, and she moved to Miami to work in Boulud Sud restaurant. She worked there for a year and then came back to Turkey, finding work with Metro Gross Market where she still works today. Since 2019 she has been the Business Development Executive for the culinary discovery platform, Gastronometro.

Joanna Asmar

GRAND DIPLÔME®, LE
CORDON BLEU LEBANON



Chef & CEO, My Black Kitchen

When did you realise you wanted to become a chef?

I've always had a passion for cooking for as long as I remember, unfortunately, culinary studies weren't an option when I was about to enter university. So, when Le Cordon Bleu opened in Beirut, I enrolled without hesitation.

What are your main responsibilities? Talk us through your average working day...

My day starts very early. I prepare my orders and after sending them for delivery, I go on to prepare for the next day. Moreover, I keep an eye on the supplies, social media and work on new items.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

The amount of organisation and the varied skills needed to run a pastry kitchen. Maths being one of them!

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

We work as one family, having the Black Kitchen's best interest at heart. It's important to give each person the tasks they're most skilled at to optimise efficiency.

How did studying the Grand Diplôme® help you to achieve your current role?

Studying the Grand Diplôme® gave me the tools, skills and knowledge I needed to succeed in my endeavor.

I chose Le Cordon Bleu Beirut because it is quite simply the key I needed to pursue the career I was destined for. I couldn't have done it without Le Cordon Bleu.

What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

My fondest memories were definitely the pastry practicals. Those mouthwatering smells that

came from the kitchen as we prepared one item after the other and that utter pleasure that came with the completion of a flawless dessert.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Of course! I had the chance to be part of a cohesive and friendly group, so we still meet to catch up and remember the good times we spent together as a team.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far, and what have been some challenges you've overcome in your role?

The best moments were undeniably the delightful

comments I got from my customers who couldn't believe what they were eating. Nothing beats the look on their face after their first bite. A definite challenge were the long standing hours! But that's a chef's life!

| What advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

Discipline and organisation are key. And that's coming from an already disciplined and organised person. You can never underestimate the importance of these two qualities. Passion is another essential factor. Unless you are crazy passionate about what you do, you cannot succeed in it. You must be in love with your work.

My biggest inspiration would be all the amazing French pastry chefs who aren't mere artisans but artists who use the ingredients at hand to produce delicate edible works of art.



Did you know?

Le Cordon Bleu in partnership with the Holy Spirit University, proposes international programmes such as a Bachelor of Business Administration: Hotel and Resort Management. In 2017, Le Cordon Bleu opened another campus focusing on Culinary Arts classical training in Tabarja, just outside Beirut by the sea and located in 5 star Hotel Burj On Bay.

Biography

Passionate about food, Joanna Asmar graduated with a B.A in Interior Design but found her true path through studying the Grand Diplôme®. She went on to open her own food delivery kitchen, mainly focused on pastry.

Juan Sebastián Pérez

GRAND DIPLÔME®,
LE CORDON BLEU MEXICO



Executive Chef & Entrepreneur, Restaurant Quitu Identidad Culinaria

When did you realise you wanted to become a chef?

5 years into my profession, I realised this was my lifestyle and my happy place. I couldn't imagine doing anything else. Even when there was and still is a huge road to take, I decided I had enough knowledge from the basis of cuisine to start a journey in my own land that will never end.

What's the best thing about being chef?

That I make people happy with my work.

What are your main responsibilities? talk us through your average working day...

I have to keep direct contact

with indigenous farmers and producers, and handle my personal time to do research and creativity development with my native ingredients in order to serve a tasting menu that changes every day according to our daily sourcing.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

Yes, my chef teachers at Le Cordon Bleu. They were so wise and skillfull, it was like they came from another world.

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

I apply the hospitality rules and teaching techniques I learnt when I was working as a chef's

assistant at Le Cordon Bleu, and also use the patience that my teachers had to get the very best of me.

I chose Le Cordon Bleu Mexico because of the mixture of cultures between French haute cuisine and American biodiversity.

What does Le Cordon Bleu represent for you in one sentence?

For me, Le Cordon Bleu means excellence in work, it's a key to get to know a better version of yourself and transform it into hard work and success.

If I wasn't a Le Cordon Bleu Grand Diplôme® student, I wouldn't be free and creative. Having this preparation, gave me enough knowledge to create, innovate and discover my culinary roots, but most of all, be able to teach, show and communicate them to the world.



| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Of course, I have even served alumni from India in my restaurant. I learn a lot from my Le Cordon Bleu colleagues.

The best moment in my career so far was in June 2021, when I became the first Ecuadorian chef to participate at Madrid Fusion. I performed just like I learnt in Le Cordon Bleu.



Did you know?

You can find recipes by Juan Sebastian Perez, Laura Herreras, and other Le Cordon Bleu alumni in our new Le Cordon Bleu book *A Culinary Journey*. Mixing the great classics of French gastronomy and international cuisine, this collection of 70 recipes offers a glimpse of Le Cordon Bleu alumni's savoir faire and their exemplary career paths. Available at La Boutique.

Biography

Juan Sebastián Pérez began his career in kitchens when he was 15 years old, working after school. He finished school at 17, and immediately applied to Le Cordon Bleu Mexico. After three months, Juan Sebastián got a job in the preparation kitchen at his school and soon he became chef's assistant, and would go on to graduate with the Grand Diplôme®. He returned to Ecuador to work in the most prestigious restaurants and hotels of Quito and the Galapagos Islands.

10 years after starting his culinary journey, Juan Sebastián opened his restaurant Quito Identidad Culinaria, and has become a leader in South American native cuisine and fair trade business models for restaurants of the region.

Hyewoon Yang

DIPLOÔME DE CUISINE,
LE CORDON BLEU-SOOKMYUNG
ACADEMY



CSR Programme Director & CEO, Splendour

When did you realise you wanted to become a CSR programme director?

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) was not mandatory for many companies when I started working at NGO 10 years ago. But, gradually more companies gave importance to CSR programmes. The vast possibilities of creating interesting and meaningful programmes for both companies and people in different countries attracted me.

What's the best thing about being a CSR programme director?

When I visit schools with books which are donated and sometimes made by employees of the companies. The children are

just overjoyed. Also, I am always learning, I always have to study since I work with companies in different businesses.

What are your main responsibilities? Talk us through your average working day...

As I begin my day at work, I always think about what's next. For example, 'this time pop-up books will be better than felt books.' After graduation I worked on a picture book which had no words, only illustrations, to bring out interests from kids. This book will go to a kindergarten in India that I have been working with.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

I was happy to witness the increasing number of companies looking for different kinds of CSR programmes. CSR didn't mean much more than volunteer work before. They are becoming more and more involved now.

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

Ideas, ideas, and ideas. Brainstorming is very important. Even stupid or very unrealistic ideas are welcomed. I value openness the most. And the first thing I ask to my team and to myself is 'do we have a motivation without bias?'

I chose Le Cordon Bleu Seoul because I wanted to join an educational programme on ‘proper eating’, and my question was ‘where should I learn expertise on cuisine and food from the basics?’

I decided to join the cuisine diploma at Le Cordon Bleu Seoul, which provides the fundamental knowledge of cooking.

| How did studying the Diplôme de Cuisine help you to achieve your current role?

The most precious lesson that I have learnt from this course is respecting the value of all ingredients. It inspired me to make a course to let people know the right mindset and respect for food. And the technique, knowledge, and attitude of respecting food that I have learnt from Le Cordon Bleu paved the way for the new opportunity in my career. It would have been a disaster talking about “eating” without what I learnt at Le Cordon Bleu.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

We have a chatting room and exchange whereabouts. We became more like battle buddies. We helped each other to survive in the class! I am very lucky to be included in this group.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far?

When I introduced the first CSR programme nobody was interested. NGO, where I worked was not an internationally famous nor financially stable company. But I loved its stubbornness not to appeal to sympathy. Hotel Shilla (one of the best hotels in Korea) wanted to participate. They were the first big company to join the programme. I was ecstatic and worked every weekend. They have been the biggest supporter for nearly 9 years.

It doesn't matter where you work or what you do. When your intention is pure it leads to the right way. One of the best decisions in my career was to go to Le Cordon Bleu. Knowledge is very important but when it comes with an actual skill you will have a different level of execution. Skill itself can be a tool but when you add a new professional skill to an existing profession you can open a new chapter in your career.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

Jacques Pepin and Thomas Keller. They know they have powers and they absolutely know how to use their power. Not to mention their constant efforts on their job as well as their awareness towards public interests.



Biography

After working in various fields, Hyewoon Yang decided to utilise all her experiences with one more additional skill — cooking. While working at NGO she visited local schools, daycare centres, and orphanages in remote places such as Sikkim, India and Thanlyin, Myanmar. She began to realise the importance of teaching children about food and eating. Hyewoon had been making children's books which emphasize pursuing their dreams, however, not many were telling kids about eating well. Now, she is working on educational programmes about eating and food which include how to maximise local ingredients.

Julia Shirley

INTERMEDIATE CUISINE
CERTIFICATE, LE CORDON BLEU
LONDON



Private Chef, FEAST

| Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

Since graduating from Le Cordon Bleu London, I have lived in Hong Kong, New York and France. These experiences have given me a rich source of inspiration for my culinary adventure, gathering knowledge, inspiration and different techniques along the way. I have 3 adult children, all of whom are very interested in food and its preparation.

Le Cordon Bleu London was the inspired choice of my parents, who recognised in me an artistic and creative potential. I will be forever grateful.

| When did you realise you wanted to become a private chef?

I wanted to become a private chef after years of working in various areas of the hospitality industry. I decided that I wanted to be my own boss, thus allowing me to be as creative as possible without any restrictions.

| What are your main responsibilities?

My main responsibilities are to ensure that all the food I produce for my clients is of the highest quality, and to the standard that everyone has come to expect from me.

| How did studying the Intermediate Cuisine Certificate help you to achieve this role?

Studying the Intermediate Cuisine Certificate gave me the confidence to go out into the industry with the knowledge that I had the very best training in my chosen field.

| Talk us through your average working day...

An average day might begin by liaising with clients, and planning a selection of menus for the given events. My working day would revolve around contacting local suppliers and wholesalers. I would then set to preparing food for upcoming events.

| How do you work with your team?

I work on my own, preparing all the food, and when required I call on staff to serve the food at the events. I work closely with a trusted group of loyal staff who all respect the hard work that goes into the preparation of my food.

| Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

The enormous range of dietary requirements!

| What has been the best moment in your career so far?

Spending 6 months as Elizabeth Taylor's personal chef.

| What have been some challenges you've overcome in your role?

Accommodating dietary requirements!

| What's the best thing about being private chef?

The best thing about being a private chef is the freedom it gives me to express my creativity and artistic flair.

My advice to future chefs is be prepared to work hard. Remember that your eyes taste the food before your palate does, so presentation is just as important as flavour.

| What does Le Cordon Bleu represent for you in one sentence?

To me Le Cordon Bleu represents the highest of standards, and a knowledge of classical culinary techniques

| What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

Working alongside my fellow student and friend Vanessa Wickham, and feeling privileged to be given the opportunity to learn at such a prestigious establishment.

| What's the best piece of advice you've received?

To love what you're doing. When you stop loving the creative process and the creativity it unleashes, it will most certainly show on the plate.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

Rosamund Roberts. We worked together in the 1980's preparing food from her flat in Chelsea for events such as gallery openings and City lunches. She introduced me to the joys of food presentation. Her influence has been with me for over 40 years.



Biography

Julia Shirley has been catering professionally for over 35 years, making a name for herself both at home and abroad. In addition to spending 6 months as the personal chef for the late actress Elizabeth Taylor, she has had extensive experience curating and preparing menus for large corporate institutions in both London and Hong Kong, as well as living and working as a chef in France. Now based on the east coast of Northern Ireland, Julia uses only the best available locally sourced produce to provide individually tailored lunches and dinners, as well as catering for large events such as weddings and parties. Julia prides herself in taking time with each client to compose bespoke menus. Early in her career, prior to her Le Cordon Bleu training, Julia was awarded a silver medal in the Salon Culinaire food and cookery competition Northern Ireland division at Belfast Castle.

Laura Fabiola Herreras Carranza

DIPLOME DE CUISINE,
LE CORDON BLEU MEXICO



Commercial and R&D Director, Pro Agro

When did you realise you wanted to become a commercial and R&D director?

It was in 2009, when the company started a frozen food business, we had to create a new product development area and I was interested in doing so.

What's the best thing about being commercial and R&D director?

What I like the most is dealing directly with our customers, knowing their needs and creating dishes that exceed their expectations of taste and quality. It is a very creative job, no product is the same as another, it is a constant challenge that keeps me active all the time.

What are your main responsibilities? Talk us through your average working day...

My job consists of contacting potential customers, serving, maintaining and capturing our clients needs, creating business opportunities, developing new products from the laboratory level until the client approves, as well as scaling them to an industrial level without losing their essence - a flavour, original characteristics, texture and presentation. Furthermore, my job includes working alongside the design team to create packages that tell a story and helping the marketing team with communications and media promotion, including social networks.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

The main challenge was to develop the skills and acquire the necessary knowledge to be able to scale a product to an industrial level. We have to balance all the ingredients again, think about the type of pots, equipment and tools that we are going to use to obtain the expected result.

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

My team of collaborators are dynamic and versatile, with a high degree of commitment who are always open to learning. They all know how to use the equipment and tools and the quality standard which they have to work to every day. I always tell them that they have to try

everything we prepare and give their opinion. The improvements always come from them, and they also have to be alert to any unexpected change in flavour so we can implement the necessary actions.

I chose Le Cordon Bleu Mexico because I wanted to learn from the best. I believe that if you have a good foundation and know the techniques and secrets of haute cuisine, then you can develop any dish successfully.

| How did studying the Diplôme de Cuisine help you to achieve your current role?

After having studied at Le Cordon Bleu anything is possible; I know that I can develop any dish using the proper technique with the best flavour.

| What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

My fondest memory was when Chef Carlos Santos taught me how to peel poblano peppers quickly without mistreating the product, due to this we were able to obtain a contract to make the chiles en nogada for the largest price club chain in México.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

To this day, I still keep in touch with my teachers, they help me with any questions I have. Also,

maintain good friendships with some of my classmates, which I hope will last a lifetime.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far, and what have been some challenges you've overcome in your role?

More than an achievement, each successful project opens up new sources of sustainable employment, which makes me very happy. The biggest challenge we have had to overcome is that a frozen product must maintain the same quality when it is thawed and hot, remaining as an extraordinary experience for those who try it.

| What's the best piece of advice you've received? And what advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

The best piece of advice I received was from my father. He said “the size of the problem is the size of the effort.” It is important to point out a problem, but more importantly to offer solutions. My advice for entrepreneurs is to make a business plan, use all available tools to minimize the risk of failure. Be prepared and acquire the necessary knowledge to successfully execute your project and become passionate about it.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

The passion which my people work with, they inspire me to always keep going.



Biography

Laura is proudly from Tabasco, Mexico. She comes from a family who loves cooking, and grew up among the smells and flavours of spices and conversations around recipes. She is a senior partner and commercial and R&D director at ProAgro, a company dedicated to the manufacture of natural vanilla extract and natural flavours. In 2009, Laura started a new line of business, a frozen food packer, which prompted her to train professionally in gastronomy. She currently develops and markets products for food service, culinary specialty stores, self-service chains and price clubs. In 2012, the ProGourmet brand was launched on the market.

Marina de Massiac

DIPLOÔME DE CUISINE,
LE CORDON BLEU PARIS



Food and lifestyle journalist, Lamarinade

When did you realise you wanted to become a food and lifestyle journalist?

I once visited the chocolate shop of Patrick Roger on Place de la Madeleine back in 2012. At that time, I was still a student at Le Cordon Bleu Paris. My Mexican friend, also a Le Cordon Bleu alumnus, encouraged me to talk to Patrick Roger. The chocolatier kindly invited me to his impressive atelier and production area in Sceaux. I wrote a small story about this unexpected visit and fell in love with the idea of portraying more passionate people. Looking back, I think that was a very important moment in life that would determine a big part of my future. So, Cristian, if you are reading this: thank you very much!

What's the best thing about being a food and lifestyle journalist?

Being able to meet all kinds of people with different characters and influences, and travelling to lovely destinations.

What are your main responsibilities? Talk us through your average working day...

My responsibility is to pitch ideas for new articles to various magazines. When they are interested, I contact chefs, restaurants and hotels in order to find out if they would like to collaborate. If so, I do some research online and call acquaintances who know the person or place to get to know the ins and outs. When that's all set, I visit a person or place for a few hours or days, and later when I'm back at home I write the article and collate images.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

When I started to write for print magazines and actually featured world renowned chefs, I was surprised to see how male dominant the gastronomic scene is. I obviously had experienced this during my short internship, however visiting many different countries with many different kitchens and many types of hierarchy made me conclude that it was almost the same everywhere. I am very happy to see and experience a change nowadays.

Why did you choose Le Cordon Bleu Paris?

Prior to enrolling at Le Cordon Bleu Paris, I had visited the London campus. In the end I chose Le Cordon Bleu Paris because I think French gastronomy should be taught in

its country of origin. Choosing Paris seemed logical and felt natural to me. I still get butterflies in my tummy when thinking of Le Cordon Bleu Paris, and I would even say that it gives me an instant shot of happiness!

| How did studying the Diplôme de Cuisine help you to achieve your current role?

Studying at Le Cordon Bleu opened many doors because of its world-renowned reputation. Le Cordon Bleu lays the foundation of traditional French cooking. I do think it's very important to not solely rely on an open door that has been opened by a private school. If you want to become something or someone in this very competitive industry you need to work hard and have determination in order to succeed, even if it's just a little bit.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Yes, I do. I have visited my friends in their home countries, including India, Costa Rica, Australia and Japan. One of my good friends from Le Cordon Bleu lives in Paris and even if we do not see each other every month or so, we do call each other often.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far, and what have been some challenges you've overcome in your role?

Once one of my beloved editor-in-chefs told me that interviewing chefs is like throwing yourself to the lions. I must admit that years ago I had to overcome some personal

fears. It took me years, but I can now proudly say that I have mastered the art of observing and handling chefs as a journalist in various situations. The best part of my career was probably the day Michelin accepted my request to interview CEO Gwendal Poullennec along with a photoshoot somewhere outside Paris.

For anyone looking to follow my footsteps I would advise you to contact all kinds of media and pitch your ideas. Many will probably not reply, but that's okay and very common. Keep on contacting them with good ideas they can't refuse until they get the point. Keep your eyes and senses open and inspire yourself just about everywhere.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

I could say that I admire cool chefs who create good-looking pastries or refined dishes. For me - whether it's professionally or personally - it's very much about how you treat others. Are you a good person? Do you encourage a healthy and safe working environment? Do you create opportunities for employees in order to help them? I also look up to journalists who dare to write the untold story of what is happening in the kitchen. I follow them on a weekly basis with great interest in order to find out what's truly going on behind the glamorous scenes.



Biography

Marina de Massiac was born in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France. After growing up in a small residential area in the Netherlands she decided to enroll at Le Cordon Bleu Paris. Although her parents did not take her to fancy restaurants, being expats in the Netherlands, her parents put a lot of effort into clean-eating and using top-notch ingredients. French culture and cooking were very present at home. Marina now works as a food and lifestyle journalist based in the Netherlands. She often travels abroad for work, and visits France on a regular basis in order to keep up with its evolving food and hotel scene.

Marlon Walter Chanjan Ghio

DIPLOMA IN GASTRONOMY AND
CULINARY ARTS, LE CORDON
BLEU PERU



Gastronomic Promoter for the Peruvian Embassy in Singapore

When did you realise you wanted to become a chef?

When I realised my patients could not manage to cook healthy recipes. At that time I only knew what ingredients are healthy but I did not know how to cook, so I decided to learn it.

What's the best thing about being a chef?

Travelling around the world representing your national culinary culture.

What are your main responsibilities?

My main responsibility is to be very well informed about the history of our culinary heritage in order to be ready for any promotion event. I also have to investigate about the nutritional

value of our Peruvian ingredients, the wide variety of our food products, Peruvian superfoods, new tendencies, opportunities of exports, and finally to cook for important events organised by the Embassy that could be for few or many people.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

Yes, being medically trained and a doctor by profession, it hit me when people started to call me "Doctor".

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

I prefer to work developing a horizontal network instead of a hierarchical structure. A Leader

has to be part of the team, not a Boss.

I chose Le Cordon Bleu Peru because the institute is one of the best in the world. I have inherited a very important culinary tradition which is rooted in the long Peruvian history.

What I needed to know were cooking techniques to enrich even more my heritage. The perfect place to develop those skills is Le Cordon Bleu, which represents for me the door for a global experience as a culinary ambassador.

| How did studying gastronomy help you to achieve your current role?

Studying gastronomy was crucial to change my working life.

| What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

My fondest memory was to be surrounded by talented students, full of energy and passion for their careers. This made me feel a little bit intimidated, however on the graduation day I was honored with the maximum recognition, the "Cordon Bleu to Academic Excellence".

| What's the best piece of advice you've received and what advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

I received many pieces of advice from my closest friends during our studies. I think each piece of advice was the best one because it was made in the right time. My general advice is "be humble, help your friends, focus on what is important, be obedient, and always live with faith".

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

I do not have any specific person who is my biggest inspiration, I think I receive a certain amount of inspiration from each person I meet with.



Did you know?

Founded in 2000, Le Cordon Bleu Peru is located in the upscale district of Miraflores, in Lima. From Le Cordon Bleu university to its culinary institute, modern facilities provide students with an optimal environment to develop their theoretical and practical skills.



Biography

Marlon was born in Lima Peru. He has always enjoyed living a healthy life style since he was a child. He has studied Medicine, Public Health, Nutrition, Sport, and Gastronomy.

Michelin Dapo

ADVANCED DIPLOMA OF
HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT,
LE CORDON BLEU SYDNEY



Success Coach at Torrens University & Business Owner

| When did you realise you wanted to become a success coach and business owner?

After years of experience working as a chef in renowned restaurants and hotels in Manila and abroad, I decided it was time to give back to the community and share my knowledge in the industry by becoming a success coach. I enjoyed mentoring and helping students complete their course when I was a VET lecturer at Le Cordon Bleu Sydney and at the same time, I appreciated how hospitality operates from my work visits. I realised that there is a lot of potential to run a food business if you have the right resources and product to sell.

| What's the best thing about being a success coach and a business owner?

I remain current in the industry and I can share my knowledge with my students. It is also easy to connect and relate with my students as we are in the same field of profession and we share the same passions and interests.

| What are your main responsibilities?

My main responsibility depends on which workplace I am at. It is a good mix because I get to work in the kitchen, run a business and at the same time coach and mentor students in the University. For example, as a business owner my main responsibility will be the operations, compliance, budgeting and book keeping etc.

My job as a success coach is more so motivating students, retention and strength based coaching. From there I can relay to them my experience in the industry and my time as a student and share with them tips for success such as time management and work – life – study balance.

| How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

Clear communication is the key to ensure that your goals are met as an organisation. Trust and respect is also essential within the team. Work around their strengths as productivity is far greater when they love or enjoy what they do.

| Why did you choose Le Cordon Bleu Sydney?

I knew back then that Le Cordon Bleu was one of the top culinary schools in the world and can potentially open more career opportunities for me. At the same time, I wanted to move to Sydney. This was the perfect opportunity for me to travel and study overseas.

| What does Le Cordon Bleu represent for you in one sentence?

Global and diverse career opportunities.

| What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

My fondest moment will be during our practical class with Chef Josef Schacher; he taught me a lot of things. Aside from being a great teacher, he was a good mentor. I will always remember his passion for sharing his knowledge in the kitchen. He gave me that extra push and motivation all the time. I remembered when I came back to Le Cordon Bleu but this time to work as a VET lecturer, he was the first person I reached out to and told him I am coming back. I was excited because I hadn't been to campus for a decade. For me, it was nostalgic coming to campus and meeting with my chefs and lecturers. It was my home.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Yes of course most of the time.

The best moments in my role are when I see my students succeed with their career and become employable, it gives me a sense of fulfillment. It feels good when you help someone.

| What advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

Be yourself. Be patient. Be resilient. Always take time for yourself, our work can be very busy and demanding. Having "me" time gives us balance mentally and physically.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

I get my inspiration through different people. For example, during my time working as a chef at a young age, it was my lecturers in Le Cordon Bleu Sydney and my chefs at work. Now that I am a mum, I get my inspiration from my 3-year-old son. He makes me want to achieve more in life. Everything I do is also for him.



Biography

Michelin is a Success Coach for business, culinary, and tourism at a University in Sydney; and Co-founder of various businesses in Sydney such as Manila St. ice cream and her newest project, Don't Doughnuts Sydney.

After graduating from De La Salle-College of St. Benilde, she pursued her culinary studies at Le Cordon Bleu Sydney, where she was recognised for her academic excellence and was the recipient of the Dux Award. Recently, she completed her post graduate studies in Business Administration in Torrens University Australia.

Following her passion in teaching and mentoring, Michelin went back to Sydney to work as a lecturer and success coach. She is driven to inspire and motivate her students with their personal development, career goals, and preparing to become industry professionals.

Pachara Thakerngkiat

(CHEF JAMES)

GRAND DIPLÔME®, THE ART OF
BAKERY, LE CORDON BLEU DUSIT



Executive Chef and Director, James Boulangerie

When did you realise you wanted to become an executive chef and director?

After I finished high school, I realised that I did not know what I was good at or what school I should go to. However, my parents know me so well so they advised me to try pastry school. The more I learnt, the more I loved baking, so it didn't take long to figure out that I should be a pastry chef.

What's the best thing about being an executive chef and director?

Personally, it's the opportunity to share my love of baking with someone. I'm so lucky to be able to serve great quality, tasty dishes and bakery items to my customers. Professionally, the best thing in my career was going from being an amateur baker to a professional chef, and showing that I can bake for a living.

What are your main responsibilities? Talk us through your average working day...

As a chef my duties are to create delicious pastries for our customers to enjoy, ensure that all pastries are well made and presented, and ensure that all kitchen staff perform their duties, as well as training my team with the right skills. As a business owner, I have to identify business opportunities, develop a strategic marketing plan and find the right partners.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

Unpredictable things can happen any time, like croissant dough not proofing while customers are waiting, flour running out of stock, etc. It made me anxious, but at the end of the day, I learnt from it.

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

I believe a leader should commit not only to the business' success but also to training and educating the team to improve their skillset. Apart from assigning them to the task that is relevant to their skills, I'm always encouraging my team to learn new skills both from their peers and me.

How did studying Grand Diplôme® help you to achieve your current role?

At Le Cordon Bleu Dusit, all the chefs and staff are friendly and helpful. I really felt welcome every time I went to school. The chefs always explained every process in detail; repeating and highlighting special techniques until we clearly understood, allowing us to apply the

The best moment in my career was when I made my first successful croissant and it tasted delicious. I admit that the croissant was not my expertise, but I was determined to overcome this, so I kept practicing and testing the recipes. So, I would pretty much say that perseverance is the key to success for me.

techniques and use them at home or work. They also taught us to work as a team.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu Dusit graduates?

Of course, they are my friends for life. So we usually meet and exchange our techniques.

| What advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

If you decide to be a chef, you have to take it seriously and be tough-minded because this industry requires commitment. Additionally, keep practicing and

try to seize any opportunity that comes your way.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

My parents inspire me to succeed. My mother always manages all her work so perfectly and efficiently, while my father is a very hardworking and a well rounded person. I think that these are essential life skills one should have. But, most importantly, they are my great supporters and created the person who I am today.



Biography

Chef Pachara Thakerngkiat, known as Chef James, completed the Grand Diplôme® and The Art of Bakery Programme at Le Cordon Bleu Dusit. He went on to gain experience as a Chef de Partie at Le Cordon Bleu Dusit for over 2 years, owned a bakery shop in Chiangmai, and was the winning challenger of the Iron Chef, Thailand. Chef James is now Executive Chef and Director of his own bakery shop, James Boulangerie, which opened in January 2020.

Did you know?

The golden pin is awarded to students at their first graduation. The pin is made to showcase one's belonging to Le Cordon Bleu alumni network, named Commanderie des Cordons Bleus. The pin can be used by the graduate in two ways: on a daily basis to wear on workwear, uniform or chef's whites, or in a more occasional way to wear at receptions and events.

Renata Pilat Curado Portasio

DIPLÔME DE CUISINE,
CERTIFICAT DE
PERFECTIONNEMENT
PROFESSIONNEL EN CUISINE,
LE CORDON BLEU PARIS



Private Chef to the Brazilian Ambassador in Paris

When did you realise you wanted to become a chef?

I can honestly say that it became obvious when I started my training at Le Cordon Bleu Paris. After four years of study, I had finally found myself.

What's the best thing about being a chef?

For me it is the feeling of giving pleasure and showing my passion for work.

What are your main responsibilities? Talk us through your average working day...

Since I started working at the Brazilian Embassy in Paris, I am responsible for everything

relating to the kitchen. We are two chefs at different times, preparing everything from A to Z, creating the menus, shopping, organisation and cleaning. There may be last minute surprises such as lunch, dinner or a cocktail, but everyday life is in a "normal" home.

My parents helped me choose Le Cordon Bleu Paris, because it was my father's dream that I would come here, to the best school. Without any doubt, for the excellence of learning, practice, and the certainty of a promising future.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

I didn't think it would be so exciting to work as a private chef, because every day is not the same, that's for sure.

What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

I will never forget the rigor and discipline that the school gave me. We were few in class and in practice even less, providing the opportunity of an almost private and privileged class with the best chef teachers I have ever had, unforgettable moments, etched forever in my memory.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far?

Without a doubt, it was when I was chosen to be the “French Chef” to the Ambassador of Brazil. I am very proud to be able to work for my country’s most important position in the city I chose to come to.

| What advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

Never give up when facing difficulties. My best advice is to take a deep breath and keep your head up towards your goals even though they seem impossible. Nothing is impossible. Be honest and proud of your ideas and actions.

My biggest inspirations without a doubt are all the strong women who are part of my life, my mom, aunt, sister, sisters-in-law, friends and my father who is my biggest fan, he always believed in me and gave me this dream opportunity to be part today of Le Cordon Bleu family! Who knows, one day I will also be an example for future female chefs!



Biography

Renata Portasia joined Le Cordon Bleu in Paris in 2004. After a year of professional training, Renata chose to continue her apprenticeship at the Paul Bocuse Institute in Lyon and abroad at ICIF in Italy. Renata also did several internships, including Michelin-starred restaurants in France, Italy and Portugal, finally returning to Paris to build her career. In 2014, at a Brazilian government tender, she was chosen to be the chef at the Brazilian Ambassador's residence in Paris, responsible for preparing the menu served to heads of state on each of their visits to Paris. Renata aspires to one day pass on all this love, this sense of work and discipline to a new generation and inspire other students as she once was at Le Cordon Bleu Paris.



Did you know?

In 2016, Le Cordon Bleu moved to a new Parisian flagship by the Seine. This modern establishment is dedicated to culinary arts, wine and hotel management, boasting the best equipment from stellar kitchens and classrooms, a Le Cordon Bleu Café and one of the biggest rooftop gardens in Paris. In 2021, after launching two bachelor degrees, Le Cordon Bleu partnered again with Université Paris Dauphine PSL to propose an MBA in International Hospitality and Culinary Leadership.

Sabrina Tessier

DIPLOÔME DE CUISINE,
LE CORDON BLEU OTTAWA



Director of Foodservice Marketing, FGF Brands

When did you realise you wanted to become a food marketer?

I always knew that I wanted to bring my passion for food and wine into the business world. After I graduated from Le Cordon Bleu, I studied commerce in university. That's when I realised that marketing would be the perfect fit for me. While it may seem like a different world, food marketers are responsible for many of the same tasks as a chef or restaurant owner - understanding the consumer, creating delicious foods they will want to eat, creating the optimal assortment, pricing them to fit the market, and showcasing them with authenticity.

What's the best thing about being a food marketer?

The best thing about my role is that I get to work directly with chefs and product developers to develop new items and menu concepts. There is something truly satisfying about getting to know your consumers, dreaming up foods you believe they will like, tweaking the recipe until it's just right, and helping foodservice operators to use it as part of their vision.

What are your main responsibilities? Talk us through your average working day...

My main responsibility is to ensure that our sales team has all of the tools they need to successfully sell our products in the foodservice market – the

right foods, the right pricing, the right packaging formats for back of the house, the right menu inspiration, etc. In a typical day, I research consumer trends, analyse sales, work with the culinary team on new menu concepts using our products, meet with our creative agency to ensure our advertising plans are on track, update packaging, and develop customer outreach plans.

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

As you support them and nurture their talents, give your team the leeway to try and fail. This is the best way to learn, grow and progress.

I chose Le Cordon Bleu because of its prestigious, international reputation. I was impressed by the pedigree of the chef instructors and I was so excited reading through the curriculum. To me, Le Cordon Bleu represents an unparalleled passion for French cuisine.



| How did studying the Diplôme de Cuisine help you to achieve your current role?

When it came to getting my first job in the food industry, my Le Cordon Bleu diploma definitely gave me an advantage versus the other purely marketing candidates. As my career in marketing has progressed, my culinary background and passion for food has helped me to earn credibility with team members and customers. My time at Le Cordon Bleu was one of the happiest periods in my life.

| What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

My fondest memory was watching the demonstrations each day; I can vividly remember how talented each chef was and marveling at the fact that they were passing their knowledge to us. I absolutely loved it.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Yes! My fellow graduates spread out all over the world and I have been lucky enough to visit them from Palm Beach to London.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far?

It's hard to define the best moment of my career...I think the best moment is seeing a food that I helped to develop appear on the menu or in the grocery store. It's really fulfilling to commercialise a food – from insight to development to launch – and then see people enjoying it!

| What's the best piece of advice you've received?

The best piece of advice that I can pass on is that you have to have a 'growth mindset'. Thrive on the challenge, take pleasure in the challenge, and try to see failure as nothing more than a necessary springboard for growth.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

My biggest inspiration are entrepreneurs. I am in awe of those who develop an idea that they believe in, put everything they have into it, build a team, try and fail and try and fail until they succeed!

Biography

After completing her Diplôme de Cuisine at Le Cordon Bleu, Sabrina Tessier went on to complete a Bachelor of Commerce from Concordia University and an MBA from the International University of Monaco. In her current role as Director of Foodservice Marketing, Sabrina has the opportunity to develop products and brands for the North American foodservice market. Passionate about food, her favourite part of the role is leading the innovation process - building guest insights, creating new foods and menu concepts, and seeing them through development and execution.

Sarah El Khoury

DIPLOÔME DE PÂTISSERIE,
LE CORDON BLEU LONDON



Founder, Gourmet Launch F&B Consulting

Why did you choose Le Cordon Bleu London?

After graduating from the American University of Beirut, with my Business Degree in hand, I knew that I wanted to work in the Food & Beverage industry. I decided the best way to learn everything I could about the industry is by getting hands on experience as a chef. I chose Le Cordon Bleu London because of the diversity of nationalities on campus and in the city.

When did you realise you wanted to become a food & beverage consultant?

I originally planned to become a chef and eventually open my own restaurant. At the Four Seasons, I was given the opportunity to work on the end-to-end rebranding and renovation of the F&B outlets, changing the whole concept and building new restaurants from scratch. When

I saw the new restaurants come to life, I realised that I wanted to become a consultant, to help and guide people with the same goal as mine; to succeed in opening their own restaurant.

What are your main responsibilities?

My main responsibility is guiding and supporting any restaurant to launch and run a successful venue; whether it's by creating a unique concept and menu, working on the interior design and identity, or training the staff to run an efficient operation.

How did studying the Diplôme de Pâtisserie help you to achieve this role?

The key to any project's success lies in the implementation, which is completely in the hands of the chefs of the restaurants that we work with. Studying at Le Cordon Bleu gave me a

deeper understanding of food knowledge and techniques, as well as the discipline required to run a kitchen, which is what allows me to speak the same language as the chefs.

Talk us through your average working day...

One of the best things about being an F&B consultant is that every working day is different, depending on the projects that I have. My day starts with a meeting with my team where we catch up on what we did the day before and plan for the day ahead. After this, my day is usually split between sending out proposals for prospective clients, working on our existing projects, and business development.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

I was surprised by the amount of

people working in different fields who were interested in moving to the F&B industry. Some of my clients were management consultants, tech employees and even architects who decided to change career paths and open their own restaurants.

What has been the best moment in your career so far?

The day I launched my own company. I always wanted to open my own restaurant and launching my own F&B consulting firm got me one step closer to this goal. It also provided me with a great amount of flexibility and time to test and work in parallel on new ideas that I wanted to try like launching my own virtual, delivery only restaurant.

What have been some challenges you've overcome in your role?

One of the challenges that I had to face at the beginning was constantly trying to sign new projects and clients. In the past, like most employees, I used to only worry about my deliverables. As the founder of a company I go above and beyond to constantly get new clients and projects because the future of the employees and the firm depends on it.

What's the best thing about being an F&B consultant?

The best thing is after spending months working on a project feeling that you succeeded, when you see your ideas come to life, the success of the restaurant and making your clients satisfied. Another great thing is the diversity. You can work with any type of restaurant, café, bar... with

different types of cuisines and concepts at the same time.

Try spending as much time as possible working in the operations, in front of house, back of house, or both. Understanding the depth of the operations will allow you to guide your clients and better assess the feasibility of your plans.

Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

Some of the people that I met at Le Cordon Bleu are my closest friends. Even though we currently live in different continents all around the world we talk regularly and try to meet up as much as we can.

What's your fondest memory from Le Cordon Bleu?

The best memories that I have from Le Cordon Bleu are all the practical lessons that we used to do in pairs. That's when I got to know and bond with most of my classmates.

What's the best piece of advice you've received?

Do what you love and you'll never work a day in your life.

Who is your biggest inspiration?

My biggest inspiration is all my Le Cordon Bleu friends, who chose to follow their dreams and achieve their goals. I'm constantly amazed with the paths they followed and what they have achieved in the past few years since we graduated.



Biography

Sarah gained a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Management from the American University of Beirut. She then moved to London to study the Diplôme de Pâtisserie, followed by a Food & Beverage Management degree from Cornell University, New York. She went on to work in the kitchens at the Four Seasons Hotel, before moving to the corporate side of F&B, merging both her passions for food and business. Her work at the Four Seasons included the end-to-end rebranding and renovation of all the F&B outlets, including Restaurants, Cafés and Rooftops. After the Four Seasons, Sarah moved to Dubai, and founded Gourmet Launch F&B Consulting, which offers services to existing and upcoming restaurants.



Food & Travel Writer and Olive Producer, Tuzla Olive Farm Gemlik

When did you realise you wanted to become a food & travel writer?

When I noticed that I plan my travels completely centred around food and wine, I realised I wanted to share my experiences not only with my inner circle, but with a wider audience. I first had some of my articles published in a few newspapers and magazines. And it became more interesting and enjoyable with my followers on my social media accounts.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

As years have passed and I gained more knowledge and experience, I realised there were many more cities to visit, foods to eat, and wine to taste. After 20 years of

discovering different food, I still feel curious and excited as if I have just started.

I chose Le Cordon Bleu because I wanted to learn cooking in the best school, and from the best chef instructors.

How did studying the Diplôme de Cuisine help you to achieve your current role?

When tasting and evaluating a dish, it is important to know how it is supposed to taste, and how to properly cook and serve it, in order to decide whether it is good or bad. Personal preferences and subjective comments are not relevant as they do not reflect

the truth of the dish. If you know how to cook the correct way, then you can evaluate and describe the dish beyond your personal preferences. I am confident in that as I have learnt cooking at Le Cordon Bleu in the best way.

Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

I often meet with my friends from Le Cordon Bleu. I usually visit the restaurants of my very successful chef friends, and enjoy their food. We have beautiful memories from school which we all miss.

| What has been the best moment in your career so far?

It is a great joy to have my social media accounts get so much attention, and to share my memories and experiences with thousands of people, and to inspire them.

I would say the best advice I have received was to stay away from phrases like “I know” or “I learnt”, because the more we learn, the more we realise there is so much more to learn. This is an endless but joyful journey.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

I have no doubt Anthony Bourdain has had an influence on me to cook and to travel to different countries all over the world to taste local, and sometimes extreme dishes. Upon watching his shows, I was visiting the same places and eating the same dishes he did, and trying to discover more.



Biography

After a 10-year finance career, Selin Ekim decided to pursue her interest in gastronomy. She graduated from both Le Cordon Bleu with a Diplôme de Cuisine and Institut Paul Bocuse Intensive Pastry. Selin has been interested in wine for the last 20 years. She completed WSET-Level 2 and took Food & Wine Pairing classes at the Culinary Institute of America. She has been to more than 95 countries, and is still travelling all around the world for food and wine. Also sharing her experience on her Instagram account @selinekim and her blog selinekim.com



Did you know?

To all of our that have created their own company, Le Cordon Bleu proposes an sticker that you can put on your business window to showcase that you are a Le Cordon Bleu graduate. Please contact your institute to make an enquiry.

WookJung Lee

DIPLOÔME DE CUISINE,
LE CORDON BLEU LONDON



TV producer and presenter, KBS Medi

When did you realise you wanted to become a food media content producer?

I worked on various programmes as a producer at the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS), and whilst I was making a documentary on mankind's food culture and the development of dietary life intertwined with noodles, I decided to become a producer specialising in food. However, being just interested in food wasn't enough, so I decided to experience the chefs' real world, and that is why I joined Le Cordon Bleu, where professional chefs come to learn.

What's the best thing about your job?

I think that cooking is the field that best demonstrates the cultural diversity and creativity of mankind. Travelling the world, experiencing various culinary cultures, interviewing master

chefs to get to know their lives. Producing new programmes based on these interviews and my experience as a producer specialising in food to share this indirect yet vivid experience with more people fills me with joy and satisfaction that is different from those that chefs get in the kitchen.

What are your main responsibilities?

I oversee all the work related to creating content, including planning a documentary, researching, conducting interviews, filming, editing, etc.

Is there anything that surprised you when starting the role?

To make documentaries, I interviewed numerous chefs from different regions and what I realised is that the diversity and creativity of mankind's cuisine goes beyond what I experienced

at school and is, in fact, limitless. It is truly a field that continuously evolves and creates something new.

How do you work with your team? Any management tips?

Being a documentary producer is like being an orchestra conductor. We are responsible for making a symphony by harmoniously gathering the strength of sounds from the cameraman, the sound operator, the writer, the computer graphic designer, etc. So, like a chef who brings out the characteristics of each ingredient to make a great dish, I have to understand the characteristics of each field, and I need to make each operator understand in what direction the documentary is going; that's my tip as a chief director.

Why did you choose Le Cordon Bleu London?

Le Cordon Bleu was a small universe that allowed me to meet French cuisine and the culinary culture of the whole world. One of the main factors I considered in deciding on the campus was not losing the sense of my main job, being a producer. The United Kingdom is where they make the best culinary television shows globally, and it's a place where countless star chefs are born despite an environment where food resources are not abundant. That is why the London campus was the ideal place for me to realise my dream.

The best part of my career is to share through documentaries that cooking is not just something that fills our stomach but is a creative field covering both knowledge and art that nourishes our soul. In the last decade, Koreans have accepted and rapidly developed its culinary culture. Seeing this evolution, I realised that promoting traditional Korean cuisine and culinary culture to the world is the food content producer's goal.

| How did studying the Diplôme de Cuisine help you to achieve your current role?

I learnt about not only the mysterious world of cooking but also the basic attitude and discipline of chefs. Although

I was still a trainee, timeliness, and cleanliness when wearing uniforms are basics that required discipline; this made me realise once again that only those who act rather than just talk can get what they want.

| Do you still meet with Le Cordon Bleu graduates?

I do meet alumni from other campuses who are now working in various fields in Korea, and through this networking, I do get ideas for new content, and insights on the trends of the industry.

| What advice would you give to anyone looking to follow in your footsteps?

From the courses at Le Cordon Bleu, I learnt that cuisine allows you to take over an infinite creative challenge by understanding the ingredients. It is a way of asking questions and thinking about a dish before us, and it is a show of respect and affection for the work of cooking food and the person who cooks it. If you wish to gain insight and experience that will help you shine anywhere, whether you wish to become a master chef or whether you work in the F&B industry, media, or arts. If you wish to gain experience and insights that help you succeed, I recommend applying to Le Cordon Bleu.

| Who is your biggest inspiration?

I first learnt about Ken Hom when I came across Simple Chinese Cookery while on a business trip in Europe. From this book, I learnt more about Ken Hom and the fact that he changed the perception

of Chinese Food in Europe by introducing the history of Chinese food. At that time, I was planning the documentary Noodle Road, about the origin of noodles, dissemination, and development. I sent him an email out of the blue, and that is how we got in touch and how he starred in and hosted Noodle Road. Ken Hom showed me how a chef could play a significant role in promoting a country's culture to the world, and he remains a mentor to me who gives me great inspiration.



Biography

Wookjung Lee has worked as a producer for 25 years at KBS (Korean Broadcasting System). He has a Bachelor's degree in English Literature and a Master's in Anthropology/Broadcasting Management and Policy. Wookjung Lee won the Peabody Award and the Grand Prize at the Korean Broadcasting Prizes for Noodle Road, a documentary on the history of noodles, and has directed a series of documentaries on humanity's food culture.



Le Cordon Bleu Institutes

Le Cordon Bleu Paris
13-15 Quai André Citroën
75015 Paris, France
T: +33 (0)1 85 65 15 00
paris@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu London
15 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2LS, United Kingdom
T: +44 (0) 207 400 3900
london@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Madrid
Universidad Francisco de Vitoria
Ctra. Pozuelo-Majadahonda
Km. 1,800, Pozuelo de Alarcón, 28223
Madrid, Spain
T: +34 91 715 10 46
madrid@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu İstanbul
Özyegin University
Çekmeköy Campus
Nişantepe Mevkii, Orman Sokak, No:13,
Alemdağ, Çekmeköy 34794
İstanbul, Turkey
T: +90 216 564 9000
istanbul@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Liban
Burj on Bay Hotel
Tabarja - Kfaryassine
Lebanon
T: +961 9 85 75 57
lebanon@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Tokyo
Roob-1, 28-13 Sarugaku-Chō,
Daikanyama, Shibuya-Ku, Tokyo 150-0033,
Japan - T: +81 3 5489 0141
tokyo@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Korea
Sookmyung Women's University,
7th Fl., Social Education Bldg.,
Cheongpa-ro 47gil 100, Yongsan-Ku,
Seoul, 140-742 Korea
T: +82 2 719 6961
korea@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Ottawa
453 Laurier Avenue East
Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 6R4, Canada
T: +1 613 236 CHEF (2433)
Toll free +1 888 289 6302
Restaurant line +1 613 236 2499
ottawa@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Mexico
Universidad Anáhuac North Campus
Universidad Anáhuac South Campus
Universidad Anáhuac Querétaro Campus
Universidad Anáhuac Cancún Campus
Universidad Anáhuac Mérida Campus
Universidad Anáhuac Puebla Campus
Universidad Anáhuac Tampico Campus
Universidad Anáhuac Oaxaca Campus
Av. Universidad Anáhuac No. 46, Col. Lomas
Anáhuac
Huixquilucan, Edo. De Mex. C.P. 52786, México
T: +52 55 5627 0210 ext. 7132 / 7813
mexico@cordondbleu.edu

Universidad Le Cordon Bleu Peru (ULCB)
Av. Gral. Salaverry 3180
Magdalena del Mar 15076, Peru

Le Cordon Bleu Peru Instituto
Av Vasco Núñez de Balboa 530
Miraflores 15074, Lima, Peru

CordonTec
Av. Arequipa 1198, Lima 15046, Peru
T: +51 1 617 8300
Peru@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Australia
Le Cordon Bleu Adelaide Campus
Le Cordon Bleu Sydney Campus
Le Cordon Bleu Melbourne Campus
Le Cordon Bleu Perth Campus
Le Cordon Bleu Brisbane Campus
Days Road, Regency Park
South Australia 5010, Australia
Free call (Australia only): 1 800 064 802
T: +61 8 8346 3000
australia@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu New Zealand
52 Cuba Street
Wellington, 6011, New Zealand
T: +64 4 4729800
nz@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Malaysia
Sunway University
No. 5, Jalan Universiti, Bandar Sunway,
46150 Petaling Jaya, Selangor DE,
Malaysia
T: +603 5632 1188
malaysia@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Thailand
17th-19th Floor, Zen Tower,
Central World Center,
Ratchadamri Road,
Bangkok 10330, Thailand
T: +66 2 237 8877
thailand@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu Shanghai
2F, Building 1,
No. 1458 Pu Dong Nan Road,
Shanghai China 200122
T: +86 400 118 1895
shanghai@cordondbleu.edu

Le Cordon Bleu India
G D Goenka University
Sohna Gurgaon Road, Sohna, Haryana,
India
T: +91 880 099 20 22 / 23 / 24
lcb@gdgoenka.ac.in

Le Cordon Bleu Chile
Universidad Finis Terrae
Avenida Pedro de Valdivia 1509, Providencia
Santiago de Chile
T: +56 24 20 72 23

Le Cordon Bleu Rio de Janeiro
Rua da Passagem, 179, Botafogo
Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 22290-031,
Brazil
T: +55 21 9940-02117

Le Cordon Bleu São Paulo
Rua Natingui, 862 Primero audar,
Vila Madalena, SP, São Paulo 05443-001,
Brazil
T: +55 11 3185-2500

Le Cordon Bleu Taiwan
NKUHT University
Ming-Tai Institute
4F, No. 200, Sec. 1, Keelung Road, Taipei 110,
Taiwan
T: +886 2 7725-3600 / +886 975226418

Le Cordon Bleu Kaohsiung
No.1, Songhe Rd, Xiaogang Dist.,
Kaohsiung, 81271, Taiwan
T: +886 (0) 7 801 0909

Le Cordon Bleu Ateneo de Manila
G/F George SK Ty Learning Innovation
Wing, Areté, Ateneo de Manila University,
Katipunan Ave, Quezon City,
1108 Metro Manila, Philippines
T: +63 2 8426 6001





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