

Zayden Fitzgerald

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SUMMARY

Banquet and high volume culinary leader with 9 years of progressive full service kitchen experience, including more than 5 years directing **sous chef** and **kitchen management** operations. Leads cooks through **banquet production**, recipe execution, tasting, plating, portioning, sanitation, and timely service for events serving 75 to 900 guests. Controls food cost through production math, yield calculations, inventory reviews, requisitions, waste reduction, and practical batch planning. Trains culinary associates through demonstrations and station coaching, reinforces hygiene and internal controls, and keeps work areas organized during demanding service periods. Holds specialized culinary training and **Food Safety Manager Certification**, with hands on command of charbroiling, poaching, deep frying, pan frying, sautéing, roasting, griddling, and par cooking. Steps into chef leadership during absences and resolves service concerns with calm judgment.

EXPERIENCE

Banquet Sous Chef

March 2023 - Present

Prairie Ember Hotel & Conference Center

Tulsa, OK

Leads banquet culinary execution for weddings, conferences, and social events serving 75 to 900 guests. Converts event details into station plans, production timing, staffing assignments, and service controls. Supports chef leadership through inventory planning, associate training, sanitation oversight, **conflict resolution**, and quality checks across simultaneous functions.

- Directed **banquet production** plans for weddings and conferences, aligning stations with guest counts and service timing.
- Supervised recipe execution, tasting, plating, and **presentation** checks across simultaneous hot line and banquet functions.
- Calculated batches and portions from event counts, reducing overproduction while preserving reliable service coverage.
- Reviewed **inventory** and prepared **requisitions**, keeping ingredients, cleaning products, and preparation supplies available.
- Trained new associates through demonstrations, station practice, **sanitation** instruction, and safe food handling coaching.
- Led kitchen operations during chef absences, resolving staffing, guest, timing, and production conflicts.

Sous Chef

January 2021 - February 2023

Redbud Hospitality Group

Broken Arrow, OK

Managed high volume dinner and private event production within a full service kitchen. Coordinated line assignments, prep priorities, menu execution, **food cost controls**, sanitation records, and team communication around changing reservation and event demand. Applied broad cooking technique knowledge while coaching cooks through service challenges.

- Managed dinner and private event production, aligning line assignments with reservations and changing demand.
- Corrected recipe, portion, **taste**, and visual issues during pre service tastings and station checks.
- Applied charbroiling, sautéing, roasting, griddling, **deep frying**, **pan frying**, poaching, and par cooking.
- Tracked trim, spoilage, usage, and batch production against covers, supporting practical **food cost** decisions.
- Maintained sanitation logs and organized storage practices, keeping work areas safe and inspection ready.
- Coached **cooks** through menu execution and conflict resolution, preserving professional communication during peak service.

Lead Line Cook

June 2019 - December 2020

Cimarron Table Kitchen

Oklahoma City, OK

Led assigned stations in a busy **full service** restaurant, coordinating preparation, firing sequences, station readiness, and quality communication during high volume meal periods. Supported developing cooks through hands on instruction and supplied kitchen leadership with clear information about shortages, equipment concerns, and guest issues.

- Led line stations during high volume meal periods, coordinating preparation and firing sequences for steady ticket flow.
- Prepared menu items with sautéing, **charbroiling**, roasting, frying, griddling, poaching, and **par cooking**.
- Checked ingredients, utensils, **sanitation** supplies, and backup mise en place before service began.
- Guided newer cooks on knife work, temperatures, recipe execution, plating, and safe equipment use.
- Counted key ingredients and communicated replenishment needs, supporting accurate requisitions and **production** coverage.
- Escalated **quality**, equipment, and guest issues with clear context, helping managers make timely decisions.

Line Cook

October 2017 - May 2019

Stone Creek Dining House

Norman, OK

Executed grill, sauté, fry, and pantry production for a full service dining room. Built core capability in recipe adherence, portion control, batch preparation, par cooking, sanitation, inventory support, yield calculations, and organized station readiness across changing service volumes.

- Executed grill, sauté, fry, and pantry production while maintaining recipes and station readiness.
- Used batch preparation and **par cooking**, protecting texture, flavor, and **presentation** during peak periods.
- Verified **portions** and ingredient quality during prep, reporting shortages before scheduled service.
- Followed food safety, **hygiene**, cleaning, cooling, holding, and storage procedures throughout each shift.

- Supported inventory counts and yield calculations for proteins, produce, and dry goods.
- Built proficiency across stations, accepting complex assignments that prepared later kitchen leadership.

PROJECTS

Banquet Production Planning 📅 2024

Built a repeatable planning approach for large events by translating banquet counts, menus, yields, portions, stations, and timing into practical kitchen execution. Focus remained on dependable service, controlled waste, consistent presentation, and clear communication across culinary staff.

Culinary Training Program 📅 2023

Created hands on station coaching for new culinary associates covering sanitation, safe food handling, recipes, cooking methods, portioning, plating, and service standards. Practical demonstrations helped staff build confidence during demanding full service operations.

LEADERSHIP & AWARDS

- Banquet service leadership recognition for maintaining coordinated culinary execution during events serving up to 900 guests.
- Food quality and sanitation recognition for consistent recipe adherence, organized work areas, and safe kitchen practices.
- Team leadership recognition for coaching newer cooks and supporting smooth service during chef absences.

EDUCATION

Diploma in Culinary Arts

Francis Tuttle Technology Center GPA: 4.0

2017

Oklahoma City, OK

Coursework: Culinary production, food safety, sanitation, menu preparation

CERTIFICATIONS

- Food Safety Manager Certification 📅 2025
- Specialized Culinary Training 📅 2017

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Cooking Methods:** Charbroiling, poaching, deep frying, pan frying
- **Additional Cooking Methods:** Sautéing, roasting, griddling, par cooking
- **Banquet Operations:** Event production, station assignments, service timing
- **Food Safety:** Food Safety Manager Certification, hygiene, safe food handling
- **Sanitation Systems:** Sanitation logs, cleaning procedures, inspection readiness
- **Food Cost Control:** Yield calculations, portion control, waste tracking
- **Inventory Management:** Inventory counts, requisitions, supply monitoring
- **Recipe Standards:** Recipe accuracy, flavor checks, presentation checks
- **Production Planning:** Batch quantities, production levels, banquet counts
- **Kitchen Leadership:** Culinary supervision, associate training, chef coverage
- **Service Operations:** Full service kitchens, high volume service, private events
- **Conflict Resolution:** Guest concerns, associate conflicts, operational judgment

SKILLS

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|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| • Banquet Operations | • Sanitation | • Portion Control | • Production Math |
| • Kitchen Management | • Food Cost Control | • Recipe Accuracy | • High Volume Service |
| • Team Training | • Waste Reduction | • Production Planning | • Culinary Techniques |
| • Food Safety | • Inventory Control | • Conflict Resolution | |

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Full Service Culinary Operations Network, professional participant focused on kitchen leadership and banquet execution.
- Tulsa Hospitality Community, local participant supporting culinary service standards and professional kitchen collaboration.

LANGUAGES

- English (Native)
- Spanish (Intermediate)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Work Status : Authorized to work in United States. No sponsorship required.

REFERENCES

AVAILABLE ON REQUEST