JULIAN MERCER

SOUS CHEF

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Sous chef with 9+ years in Chicago restaurant kitchens, including three years running daily operations for a 200-seat restaurant. Manages a brigade of 12, controls food cost, writes prep and ordering, and keeps standards high through service. Trained at the Culinary Institute of America and certified as a ServSafe manager.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Sous Chef Mar 2023 - Present
Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises, Chicago, IL

- Run daily kitchen operations for a 200-seat restaurant doing about 1,100 covers a week, leading a brigade of 12 cooks and dishwashers.
- Cut food cost from 33% to 30% in eight months through tighter par levels, weekly butchery yield tests, and menu item costing.
- Wrote the schedule, prep lists, and weekly orders, which kept labor within 1% of budget across the last four quarters.
- Introduced a pre-shift line check with tasting and station walk-throughs that reduced plate returns by about a third.
- Developed four seasonal menu features with the executive chef and costed each for target margins before launch.
- Trained and promoted two line cooks to chef de partie through station checklists and weekly coaching.

Chef de Partie Jun 2019 - Feb 2023

- Ran the saute and sauce stations for dinner, producing up to 220 plates per night with consistent quality.
- Led the opening team's training on a new restaurant concept, writing station guides for three cooking stations.
- Improved fish ordering accuracy by working with purveyors on standing orders and daily counts, reducing spoilage.
- Kept the walk-in organized to Health Department standards and passed every inspection without critical violations.

Line Cook Jul 2016 - May 2019
Hyatt Regency Chicago, Chicago, IL

- Worked grill, garde manger, and banquet stations for conferences of up to 1,500 guests.
- Assisted the banquet chef with plated dinners for 600 and kept timing within five minutes of the event schedule.
- Completed all prep lists accurately and trained incoming cooks on the hotel's food safety and cooling procedures.

CORE SKILLS

Kitchen operations management | Food cost control | Menu development and costing | Scheduling and labor control | Ordering and purveyor relations | Team training and coaching | Butchery and fish fabrication | Sauce and saute technique | HACCP and sanitation | Prep systems and par levels | Allergen management | Plating and quality control | Toast and Restaurant365

EDUCATION

Associate of Occupational Studies in Culinary Arts, The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, NY

CERTIFICATIONS

ServSafe Manager, National Restaurant Association | Illinois Food Service Sanitation Manager Certificate | ServSafe Allergens