

2014

PARTING ADVICE

The ALUMNI of NVCS have some parting words for you as you go out on your externships. We are very proud of you and happy to have you represent our school out there in the field. Stay in touch this summer and beyond. You are now part of NVCS history and we hope to preserve the relationships we've made this year!

Feel free to contact us any time to request alumni contact information. Also, Facebook is a tool for you to stay up to date on what we're doing year-round but it is also a way for the alum to stay in touch. Please leave comments on how you're doing and where you've been!



**NAPA VALLEY
COOKING SCHOOL**
NAPA VALLEY COLLEGE

Congratulations Class of 2014, and best of luck in your externships!

Sincerely,

Chef B, Maggie, Sergio and the rest of the NVCS Faculty & Alumni



Chef Krista Garcia - CLASS of 1998

Externship Site: Catahoula - Calistoga, CA

Keep an open mind and sharp knives; taste as you go, and write it all down

Gina Bishop – Class of 1999

Externship Site: Northcote Manor, Lancashire, England.

Here are my bits of advice for future interns...

Cheers to the beginning of your careers! Now you are fleeing the safe cozy nest of culinary school to enter the workforce as a trained professional. I have been out of school going on 14 years (yikes!) and have been a working chef/cook all 14 years. I have learned and am still learning lessons every day. Here are my bits of advice...

1. Culinary School does not make you a "Chef" you have been given the tool to become one, but it takes years of honing your craft to become one. STAY HUMBLE. Losing my ego was the best thing I ever did for myself, I became a happier cook and my food got better instantly.
2. If you like to have a drink after work, keep it chill. The most successful in the business keep that under control. It keeps the drama under control at your workplace because you are a direct reflection of your school.
3. If you are a woman, work your ass off. You will have to work twice as hard to get half as far so embrace that. Don't fight the men- join them. It will make your life a beautiful one. Do not be tempted by the cute boys, always keep it professional. It's never comfortable in the kitchen the next day after a hook up and it's not worth it... ever. And most of all cry when you get home, never let them see you fall apart.
3. Show up to work without baggage from your outside life, have a pad of paper and a sharpie on you at all times. Write down a recipe or a method or a prep list that the Chef may ramble off to you. It will save you from asking dumb questions later. You will be looked at as smart and well prepared.
4. Put you head down and do the job that you have been asked to do fast and quietly, no one wants to be around a loud & slow intern. Always do your best.
5. Soak it in.... this is one of the best time of your career
6. Hoard Recipes from the restaurant you are placed in. Later on in life you will think of that "one" recipe that stands out in your mind and will remember it with nostalgia and sentiment.
7. If you are placed in savory and you wanted pastry or vice versa...accept it. It will make you better!!
8. Take your job seriously, because everyone else around you does.
9. If you are feeling sick- suck it up apple cider vinegar or baking soda and water will clear up nausea or a stomach bug. olive oil for chapped lips. a little cornstarch here and there for chaffing...lol. Always have motrin in your knife bag and super glue for a bad cut works great.
10. Everyone will want to borrow the interns tools because they are new and sharp... beware!
11. Keep Clean, don't be a slob.

12. DONT GIVE UP...when you have had a low day. When the Chef made you feel unworthy, or you feel like you maybe have made the wrong choice of careers, or you feel like you just suck. Don't give up, get your tail out from between your legs and try better the next day. This career is HARD and it's not the glory that Food Network portrays. Stick with it. Love your white chef coat. Love your knives. Love your burns. Love your mangled hands. Love that you smell like fish when you meet your friends after work and they smell heavenly. Love it all because food & the kitchen is an amazing place to grow and mature.

13. Hardest bit of advice from me is...find balance. Try not to lose your sense of self. You most likely won't be going to your friend's wedding or be there for your sisters graduation. You will be working. If you don't make friends and family a priority you will become a bitter angry cook. Find time to be with friends and family and get some sun on your face. The nature of the business is that your job always comes first.... but keep balance.

14. Never stop learning!! you will Never know it all....

I did my internship in the UK.. At Northcote Manor a 2 Michelin star hotel in Lancashire, England. Chef Bob Hurley was my mentor at the time and placed me. I worked 18 hours a day and completed my 800 hours in 3 months. The best time of my life! I wanted to work savory and I was placed in pastry. Although I wished I wasn't in pastry, I am the well rounded cook I am today because of that. We had 4 types of handmade bread (made/shaped/baked twice a day) and 3 ala minute Souffles on the dinner menu. It was overwhelming, but I survived. I returned home to graduate and started working at Domaine Chandon for Chef Robert Curry and thrived!!! His kitchen in a school in itself, he is an amazing mentor to me still to this day.

Ricardo Sanchez – Class of 2003

Externship Site: Domaine Chandon - Yountville, CA

My first advice would be is always stay humble as a chef in the industry. Your demeanor and eventual skills will shine through and reward you with a gratifying and fulfilling career. My second advice is always stay and work impeccably clean, keep extremely organized, and your knives sharp at all times. With this, you'll see that you'll separate yourself quickly from the rest of the pack in the kitchen.

Chef Barbara Alexander and the Napa Valley Cooking School was the most amazing teaching facility. I still today, hear Chef B ring in my ear about her wonderful stories, advice, and industry knowledge. Trust me; you will thank her and NVCS for the rest of your career.

Good luck to you all!

Colby Vogt – Class of 2007

Externship Site: Bouchon, Yountville, CA

You could go as far as you want to go in this business; there are plenty of opportunities in Northern California and across the United States. When you are done with school, keep in mind that there are plenty of opportunities to work in Big Restaurants with Big Names go Big if you want to.

Kim Wiss – Class of 2008

Externship Site: Buca Lapi – Florence, Italy

- Follow directions —this is the first step in having a great culinary career.
- Be observant.
- Respect your fellow employees—you never know when you may need their help.
- Arrive 15 minutes before your shift and be presentable. No one likes to eat food made from a disheveled cook.
- Save your money -- it takes time to earn a respectable amount.

Jeannette Webber - Class of 2009

Externship Site: Mustard's Grill – Yountville, CA

- Look at challenges as Opportunity.
- Keep your little notebook close by with all of the basic formulas – you will need them.

Ashley Roebken – Class of 2010

Externship Site: Gary Danko – San Francisco, CA

- Keep your head down, sharp knife on the board, but always do it with personality.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help or ask questions, but don't question yourself too much. Find balance between the two.

Caroline Schaub – Class of 2010

Externship Site: The Culinary Institute of America - St. Helena, CA

I did my externship at the CIA and looking back I wish I had done it at a restaurant. Having a restaurant experience under your belt is invaluable. I did learn a lot at the CIA but I do lack the "on the line experience and speed".

Marielle Fabie – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Saison - San Francisco, CA

- Don't take criticism personally. Practice (and patience) makes perfect.
- Don't be so hard on yourself. Thomas Keller didn't start off with 3 Michelin stars.. he had to make a few mistakes along the way to get there.
- Be curious! Ask questions. Being a chef isn't about knowing every technique. It's being able to embrace what you know and continue the learning process every single day.
- Always have guidance from your chef. Even though you know how to make a bechemel, it might not be the same way they do it. Never assume you know everything.
- Don't fall in love with your boss. ;)

Hope this helps!

Tony DiMichelle – Class of 2012

Externship Site: The Grange - Sacramento, CA

It gets harder, there's no need to be upset. That's my advice, don't be a crybaby.

Tara Arvin – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Roya's Garlic Garden - La Fayette, CA

My advice for the externships is to just STICK IT OUT! If you have a difficult externship experience, it could help you! If you can power through something that you don't love, it'll make you stronger in the end. I learned that voicing my opinion was NOT the way to go. Talk about awkward tension. Anyways, just keep quiet and do your job and you'll be moving on in no time.

John Lundy – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Amangiri Resort - Jackson Hole, WY

Ok, so advice...So for me it was all about adjusting to getting things done fast. Being able to multi-task, and being able to do 5-6 things at once. Tackle big projects first, like sauces, soups, stocks, that can be working while you are doing other things. I think one of the biggest challenges I have faced, and I'm sure some of you might come across in your externships/ in the future, in this industry we work with all walks of life. Some people are jerks, create hostile work environments, drama etc. Focus on yourself and trying to better what you do. Stick to your principles, ethics, morals etc. Stay true to yourself. Don't let people bully or push you around, it happens a lot.

Leah Quay – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Amangiri Resort - UT

If you get out there and it's not what you expected, the best thing you can do is hold yourself to your own standards (especially the ones Chef B taught you). It can be an ugly kitchen world out there, and people are doing some appalling practices. It hurts the soul to see a potentially fabulous restaurant not respect the food. Keep your integrity and "power thru it." Find some light in the dark and remember you are learning and seeing a new side of the industry. Try to find one person who does the right thing and latch on to them, or try to become that person yourself.

Brigitte Scharetg – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Christy Hill - Tahoe, CA

When in doubt... Google it! Just kidding, don't write that. Better advice... Don't be afraid to ask questions.

Words of wisdom.

Sarah Portnell – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Solbar - Calistoga, CA

Never be too intimidated to ask questions, even if you should or do know the answer. Ask! I've learned some neat tricks from prep cooks who've never had professional culinary educations.

Matt Noble – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Solbar - Calistoga, CA

1. Pay close attention to demos. Be prepared to see a technique or plating just one time before you are expected to repeat it.
2. Write everything down, it will help you remember.
3. Always keep your knives sharp.
4. Keep a close eye on you tools. They have a way of wandering off.
5. Be on time. Better yet, be early.
6. Keep your station clean.
7. Never stand still or lean on a counter.

Good luck!

Ashlin Garbocci – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Tra Vigne - St. Helena, CA

My best advice is DON'T BE AFRAID! Try to keep your head held high, stay clean/organized, be smart and remember to look at things with an open mind, and stay passionate. Passion and drive for perfection are the only things that will keep you pushing through the tickets and also set you apart from many others in this crazy industry. Best of luck class of 2013! GO FOR IT!

Malina Ramirez – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Cindy's Backstreet Kitchen - St. Helena, CA

Always ask questions no matter how stupid you think they may be.

Always ask your chef before throwing ANYTHING away.

Keep your station clean, obviously.

If you have nothing to do, don't just stand there. Find something to help out with or even better, CLEAN something.

Kaye Vita – Class of 2013

Externship Site: Antica Napa Valley Winery – Napa, CA

I'm very grateful for the opportunity to have attended NVCS .My dreams of doing what I love to do have come true with a lot of motivation on my part and the education the staff provided. You will need the computer skills so make sure to brush up on those if needed.

Nikole Valdez – Class of 2013

Externship Site: Aрызta – San Leandro, CA

-know the difference between baking soda and baking powder- both the functional and chemical differences.

-know the basics of the alkaline and pH scale

-gluten % in different types of flour (pastry, cake, AP, bread)

-know how to make a piping bag out of parchment

-work fast, but clean and precise

-never say no, even if you know what your boss is asking isn't possible

-differences between fat and sugar bloom

-remember how to convert from oz to grams back to lbs. You don't want to make a scaling error because you don't remember how to convert or didn't write the correct measurement next to your number. If you're ever in doubt, ask yourself "what would Maggie do?" :)

Mieke Fehrt – Class of 2013

Externship Site: Canlis - Seattle, WA

1. Show up 10 minutes early to your shift every day

2 Say Hello to chef when you walk in

3. Never call out sick

4. Be observant and if you see somebody needs help whether it be cleaning or putting an order away. OFFER TO HELP

5. Always ask question no matter how stupid you think they would be (better to do it right the first time)

6. Ask before throwing anything away

7. Have a positive attitude never be negative.

8. Get used to cleaning all the time

9. Sharpen your knives

10. Have a notebook and sharpie on you at all times

These are my tips I hope they help! Good luck with everything!

Maggie Chutz – Class of 2012

Externship Site: Silver Oak, Cakebread and Antica Napa Valley Wineries

Assistant Chef Instructor, Napa Valley Cooking School

- Say please and thank you to everyone, especially the dishwashers.
- If there's more work to be done and it's not your job, find a way to help.
- How you work can always improve. How you treat people defines who you are.
- Stay positive!

Chef B

Executive Chef, Napa Valley Cooking School

Skim, skim, skim...

Always keep \$20, salt, pepper and a paring knife in your glove box

Hot food, hot plates; cold food, cold plates