

# ZACK FURST

## APPRENTICESHIP, COMMERCIAL COOKERY BROOKS OF MELBOURNE

**What duties did you do as part of your apprenticeship?** On a day to day basis I controlled meat, fish and sauce sections as well as junior sous chef for a prestige restaurant specialising in modern french cuisine with an emphasis on nature and vegetables, including preparation of seafoods such as whole Kingfish, Barramundi, Snapper Moreton Bay Bugs, Scampi, Marrons and Squid. A variety of butchery work including lamb, beef, duck, squab, foie gras, pork and offal.

As a junior sous chef I learnt to manage staff and train others, offer leadership and build a team and moral for a brigade of 13 chefs. Working in a fine dining environment and also an open kitchen I became more and more evolved with greeting customers, maintaining composure, and keeping the most highest standards of quality food and service.

As a modern high quality restaurant we have adapted to current issues and changes in the environment, so we would forage the local creeks, forests and gardens for wild ingredients and new ingredients in which to work with. I would spent 2 to 3 of my mornings a week before work travelling to the beach and the creeks near my house to gather herbs, flowers and fruits such as Samphire, sea bylth, wild pea flowers, wild onion flower, native plums and many more.

This for me has been an amazing experience, allowing me to get a connection from the food I serve and to where it comes from, and also I gained a lot more respect for the ingredient I was working with.

**What do you love about your job?** I love this line of work purely because I feel at home; for me cooking is like being in the most comfortable place in the world. I tend to feel quite stressed and restless if I haven't been in a kitchen for a period of time. It also comes down to creativity and how you can transform the ingredients into something amazing, and even sometimes barely having to change them at all due to the quality of your produce and ingredients. Its such an amazing feeling to witness an ingredient in its best evolution in growth and being able to share that to someone.

**Are there any downsides to commercial cookery?** The only downside I would say about this line of work would be time. I have let this career consume me due to drive I have to better myself; this career can take a lot out of you but for me it has giving me back ten fold. I have looked outside of just work to other activities in my career like The Golden Chef Hat Challenge in which I took part in and won the Victorian finals and obtained a bronze and 2 silvers in the national finals and also The Dilmah High Tea Challenge in which I obtained an Worldly accredited WACS (world association of chefs society) silver medal. They have been amazing things to be a part of and I have learnt a lot from them.

