

CHRISTOPHER ASTER

Executive Chef | Banquet, Hotel & Restaurant Operations

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Authorized to work in the US for any employer

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Culinary leader with 20+ years directing banquet, catering, hotel and restaurant operations at luxury resorts and large-scale corporate hospitality, from intimate dinners to 12,000-guest park buyouts. Develops the sous chefs and managers who lead large teams, holds food and labor cost, and builds the production systems that keep a kitchen consistent at any count. Leads with empathy backed by systems-based accountability, so every level of the kitchen understands the why behind the numbers and can see where it stands against them. Uses AI-enabled tools to build firing charts, recipe-driven ordering and KPI reporting that scale from the line to senior leadership.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Catering Sous Chef | The Walt Disney Company

Dec 2023 – Present

Walt Disney World Catering Event Operations, Yacht & Beach Club region · Orlando, FL

- Direct daily culinary operations for events ranging from jewel-box weddings to 12,000-guest park buyouts.
- Lead Assistant Sous Chefs and 60 cooks and team members in a unionized environment, developing cooks into leads through consistent, documented coaching.
- Built AI-assisted production systems: firing charts for plated events up to 2,600 guests, recipe-driven order guides, and daily one-sheets that scale from line checklists to KPI-focused report-outs for senior leaders.
- Coordinate standardized recipe development across the sous chef team for global banquet menu programs, tracking ownership and gaps.

Chef / Owner | Aster Hospitality

Jul 2017 – Present

Orlando, FL

- Produce private catering from intimate dinners to 100+ guests, built to each client's specifications.
- Built inventory systems, menu pricing and recipe guides for several startup restaurants.
- Provide F&B consulting in menu and recipe development, costing and SOP writing.
- Partner with award-winning mixologists to design beverage programs, including pricing and menu structure.

Banquet Chef | JW Marriott Marquis Miami

Apr 2016 – Jul 2017

Miami, FL

- Directed culinary operations for Miami's largest and busiest hotel gala and meeting space, generating \$18M in annual F&B revenue.
- Led a team of 40 cooks and stewards producing events for 10 to 2,000 guests.
- Directed hiring, scheduling and ordering for the full banquet team.
- Maintained and exceeded JW Marriott brand standards across all areas of operation.

Executive Chef | Miami Beach Resort & Spa

Jan 2015 – Apr 2016

Miami Beach, FL

- Oversaw all F&B operations, front and back of house, for a 422-room oceanfront resort, including banquets.
- Led a culinary labor turnaround at a union property under heavy renovation, bringing labor cost in line with volume.
- Opened two new outlets while steadily decreasing food cost.

Garde Manger / Outlets Chef | Hyatt Regency Pier Sixty-Six

Sep 2011 – Jan 2015

Fort Lauderdale, FL

- Oversaw three restaurant outlets, three-meal in-room dining for 384 rooms, and all cold-side banquet and catering production.
- Managed budgets across menu costing, payroll and kitchen operations, both overall and by event.
- Closed 2012 at \$10.79M in F&B revenue: food cost 22.2% vs. 24.6% budget, culinary labor 18.8% under budget, and gross operating profit 38.8% vs. 36.7% budget.

Chef de Cuisine | Trio on the Bay

Aug 2010 – Sep 2011

North Bay Village, FL

- Opened a 23,000 sq. ft. restaurant and event center.
- Developed SOPs for a 15+ person kitchen team and partnered with the Executive Chef on menu development and costing.
- Directed daily restaurant and banquet operations, including ordering, scheduling, cost control and training.

EARLIER CAREER

Sous Chef | Petit Rouge French Bistro, Miami, FL

2009 – 2010

Oversaw kitchen operations, ordering, inventory and budgeting at a highly rated North Miami bistro.

Executive Sous Chef | La Goulue, Bal Harbour, FL

2007 – 2009

Trained directly under four-star Chef Christian Delouvrier; managed production, quality, ordering and scheduling in a high-volume fine dining kitchen.

Chef de Cuisine | Serafina Waterfront Bistro, Fort Lauderdale, FL

2006 – 2007

Directed menu planning, private catering, cost control and hiring; voted Best New Restaurant in Broward County by New Times.

Chef Tournant / Sous Chef | Hotel du Vin, Auckland, New Zealand

2004 – 2005

Oversaw the menu and daily operations of a fine dining Pan-Asian restaurant and produced banquet and conference meals.

Cook 1 / Chef de Partie | Ritz-Carlton South Beach, Miami, FL

2003 – 2004

Opening team member in a leadership role in a high-volume banquet kitchen; certified in Ritz-Carlton service standards.

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Advanced Diploma, European Culinary Management · DCT International Hotel School, Lucerne, Switzerland · 2002 – 2003

Executive Certificate in Hospitality & Tourism Management · Florida Atlantic University

Journalism and Political Science · University of Oregon, Eugene, OR · 1997 – 2001

Certifications: ServSafe Manager

CORE SKILLS

Leadership & Development: Developing sous chefs and managers · Coaching and performance management · Recruiting and training · Labor relations · Cross-functional communication

Financial & Cost Control: P&L and budgeting · Food and labor cost management · Menu costing and pricing · Labor analysis and staffing models

Operations & Production: High-volume banquet and catering production · Firing charts and event timelines · Recipe-driven ordering · Inventory and vendor management · Outlet openings

Quality & Compliance: Recipe standardization · Health code and food safety compliance · Kitchen safety SOPs · Brand standards

Technology: AI-enabled kitchen workflows · KPI reporting · Microsoft Excel, Word and Outlook