

Recruitment News

 THE SCOTSMAN Fri 12 May 2006

Scottish chef plans to help prepare new generation

CAROLINE MACLEOD

TOM Kitchin, chef and co-owner of The Kitchin restaurant on Leith's Commercial Quay, knows how important a lucky break and a helping hand can be for a teenager wanting to build a career as a chef.

As a teenager living in Kinross, Kitchin started working in the kitchen of a local pub and knew at once that food was going to be his life.

Fortunately for him, the hotel owner recognised Kitchin's enthusiasm and arranged for the teenager to get a job at Gleneagles hotel during the school holidays.

That led to an apprenticeship at the prestigious hotel, after which Kitchin spent more than a decade working for some of the most famous names in the restaurant world: Pierre Koffman, Guy Savoy, Alain Ducasse - all legendary chefs, running restaurants bearing a galaxy of Michelin stars.

Now, having opened his own restaurant, Kitchin hopes to be able to pass on the help and mentoring he has received to a new generation of Scottish teenagers. "I was given a real break when the owner of that first pub I worked at introduced me to the kitchen at Gleneagles, and I would like to offer local kids who want to become chefs the same chance," Kitchin says.

"The experiences I've had and the contacts I've made are things that I can pass on to young people in Edinburgh. The kitchens I have worked in are like going to play for Real Madrid, and I can help them get there, I can really give them a head start."

Working in those renowned kitchens is the key to achieving success as a chef, and for that reason Kitchin says if he can identify youngsters who are really good and show promise, the last thing he wants would be to keep them working for him for ever. "I want to help them the way that I was helped when I was starting out."

But while Kitchin is keen to use his contacts and experience to help young Scottish would-be chefs get a step up on the ladder, he stresses that to have any chance of success as a chef people need the right attitude and enthusiasm, "and beyond everything else, be willing to work very, very hard."

This article: <http://jobs.scotsman.com/news.cfm?id=708372006>

Last updated: 11-May-06 00:34 BST