

Karlo Kovaček

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SUMMARY

Culinary professional with 10 years of kitchen experience, progressing from Chef de Partie to Sous Chef through dedication, hard work, and a hands-on approach. Skilled in fine dining, Asian fusion, and bistro kitchens, with a strong understanding of diverse cuisines, service styles, kitchen operations, and team collaboration.

Experienced in leading kitchen teams, menu development, staff training, inventory management, ordering, shift scheduling, and maintaining high standards of food quality, hygiene, and safety in fast-paced environments.

Prior to my culinary career, I spent eight years with Agrokor, where I developed strong organizational, communication, and operational skills that continue to support my approach to kitchen management and leadership.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Yezi - Arena Hospitality Group, Sous Chef 11/2023 – Present | Zagreb, Croatia

- Assisted the Head Chef in managing the day-to-day operations of the kitchen.
- Successfully handled high-volume service while maintaining quality and consistency.
- Led and supervised the kitchen team during service, ensuring smooth operations and consistent food quality.
- Developed and introduced new menu items and seasonal specials.
- Trained, mentored, and onboarded new chefs and kitchen staff.
- Managed inventory, stock ordering, and supplier communication while minimizing food waste.
- Created staff schedules and coordinated shifts to ensure efficient kitchen coverage.
- Maintained high standards of food safety, hygiene, and HACCP compliance.
- Monitored food quality, presentation, and portion control to meet company standards.
- Worked closely with the Head Chef to improve kitchen efficiency and workflow.
- Assisted with food cost control and stock management to support profitability.
- Implemented procedures to improve kitchen efficiency and productivity.
- Oversaw the hiring process for new kitchen staff, including conducting interviews and selecting suitable candidates.
- Helped create a positive, organized, and team-focused working environment.

Zinfandel's - Esplanade Hotel Zagreb, Chef de partie 08/2021 – 11/2023 | Zagreb, Croatia

- Managed various kitchen sections, ensuring efficient preparation and service.
- Prepared and presented dishes to a consistently high standard.
- Maintained quality, portion control, and presentation throughout service.
- Assisted with menu preparation and daily mise en place.
- Monitored stock levels and informed Sous chefs of ordering requirements.
- Minimized food waste through proper storage, rotation, and portion control.
- Ensured compliance with food safety, hygiene, and HACCP standards.
- Maintained a clean, organized, and efficient work station.
- Performed well under pressure during busy service periods while meeting service times.
- Contributed ideas for new dishes and seasonal menu development.

Brunch, Head Chef 11/2020 – 08/2021 | Zagreb, Croatia

- Managed all daily kitchen operations, ensuring smooth and efficient service.
- Designed and developed seasonal brunch and all-day dining menus.

- Led, trained, and motivated the kitchen team while maintaining high performance standards.
- Maintained consistency in food quality, presentation, and portion control.
- Managed inventory, stock ordering, and supplier relationships.
- Controlled food costs, reduced waste, and optimized kitchen profitability.
- Created staff schedules and managed labour costs.
- Ensured compliance with HACCP, food safety, and hygiene regulations.
- Introduced new dishes and menu specials based on seasonal ingredients and customer trends.
- Coordinated kitchen workflow to deliver fast, high-quality service during busy brunch periods.
- Monitored kitchen equipment, cleanliness, and overall organization.
- Worked closely with management to improve guest satisfaction and overall business performance.
- Maintained a positive team culture and supported the professional development of kitchen staff.
- Oversaw the hiring process for new kitchen staff, including conducting interviews and selecting suitable candidates.

Terra Zisseria Catering, Head Chef

10/2019 – 10/2020 | Zagreb, Croatia

- Managed all kitchen operations for catering events, ensuring efficient planning and execution.
- Planned and developed menus tailored to client requirements, budgets, and dietary needs.
- Led, trained, and supervised kitchen staff to maintain high performance and consistency.
- Coordinated food production and service for events of varying sizes.
- Managed inventory, purchasing, and supplier relationships.
- Controlled food costs, labour costs, and kitchen budgets while minimizing waste.
- Ensured compliance with HACCP, food safety, and hygiene regulations.
- Maintained high standards of food quality, presentation, and consistency.
- Created production schedules and coordinated kitchen workflow to meet event timelines.
- Collaborated with event managers and front-of-house teams to ensure seamless service.
- Oversaw equipment maintenance and kitchen organization.
- Resolved operational challenges quickly in fast-paced, high-pressure environments.
- Implemented procedures to improve kitchen efficiency and productivity.
- Oversaw the hiring process for new kitchen staff, including conducting interviews and selecting suitable candidates.
- Ensured customer satisfaction by consistently delivering high-quality catering services.

Man02, Chef de partie

01/2019 – 10/2019 | Zagreb, Croatia

- Managed a designated kitchen section, ensuring efficient preparation and service.
- Prepared and presented dishes to a consistently high standard.
- Maintained quality, portion control, and presentation throughout service.
- Assisted with menu preparation and daily mise en place.
- Monitored stock levels and informed Sous chefs of ordering requirements.
- Minimized food waste through proper storage, rotation, and portion control.
- Ensured compliance with food safety, hygiene, and HACCP standards.
- Worked closely with the Sous Chef and Head Chef to ensure smooth kitchen operations.
- Maintained a clean, organized, and efficient work station.
- Performed well under pressure during busy service periods while meeting service times.
- Contributed ideas for new dishes and seasonal menu development.

Time, Chef de partie

01/2018 – 12/2018

Agrokor, Warehouse manager

10/2008 – 12/2017 | Zagreb, Croatia

CERTIFICATES

Ecole Ducasse (Master class - a la carte training mediterranean cuisine)

SKILLS

Kitchen Leadership, Team Management, Staff Training & Mentoring, Menu Development, À la Carte Service, Fine Dining, Mediterranean Cuisine, Asian Fusion Cuisine, Food Preparation, Food Presentation, Inventory Management, Stock Control, Ordering & Supplier Management, Food Cost Control, Waste Reduction, Staff Scheduling, Shift Planning, HACCP, Food Safety Compliance, Quality Control, Kitchen Operations, Time Management, Problem Solving, Communication, Teamwork, Attention to Detail, Creativity, Menu Innovation, Working Under Pressure, Microsoft 365 (Word, Excel, MS Teams).

EDUCATION

Hospitality and Tourism School Zagreb (Ugostiteljsko-turističko učilište Zagreb), *Cook*

LANGUAGES

Croatian | English