

NAF and Marriott International developed this Expedition to highlight the culinary industry, a dynamic and ever-evolving field that offers an exciting blend of creativity, craftsmanship, and culture. From the artistry of fine dining to the precision of baking, the culinary world is filled with diverse career opportunities that extend beyond the kitchen, including roles in food science, restaurant management, and culinary education.

Pursuing a career in the culinary arts is not only rewarding for the hands-on experience it provides but also for the unique chance to influence food trends, create memorable dining experiences, and contribute to the global conversation about food and well-being.

Throughout this Expedition, you will LEAD YOUR LEARNING by fully engaging with the resources and activities. You will be asked to -



- **REFLECT** about your skills, learning goals, and purpose
- **STRETCH** your knowledge and skills through active learning
- **INNOVATE** and iterate solutions for real-world challenges
- **SHOWCASE** your innovations and learning in a dynamic way

We also encourage you to utilize our [Expeditions Idea Book](#) as you navigate this Expedition as a resource and space to get your creativity flowing, organize your ideas and research, and share your innovations and reflections.



*This briefcase icon indicates an opportune time to have a conversation with a mentor or local business leader to discuss industry trends, ideate solutions, solicit feedback, and/or present your project. (Speak to your educator if you need support making contact.)*

## REFLECT

As you hear from [Quincy Winstead, a Sous Chef for Marriott International](#) think deeply on these questions:

### CULINARY

**QUINCY WINSTEAD**  
Marriott International  
Assistant Sous Chef,  
Marriott Downtown Bethesda

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- What excites you about the culinary industry?
- What skills or traits would help you succeed in a career in culinary?
- As you watch Quincy's video, what characteristics mentioned do you see in yourself?



## CULINARY CAREER MYTHS VS FACTS



*All you do is cook!*

*If you get your Associate degree in culinary, you will have an executive chef job right out of college.*

*Pay is typically lower than other careers.*



*You are on your feet, serving others and working hard.*

*There's a ramp up period, but there is a lot of room for growth. Continue to develop your skills and put in the work. It will pay off.*

*Although pay may be lower at the onset of your career (like many careers), there are other benefits, including working with a crew and being part of something bigger...and often you get food, too!*



## WHY A CAREER IN CULINARY?

What makes the industry so captivating is its ability to bring people together through food, while also providing endless avenues for personal expression, innovation, and impact on health and sustainability. Did you know that in the culinary industry...



- you get to create and try different things
- is an empowering career for people with neurodivergent traits
- is great for those with an entrepreneurial mindset



- you work really hard but also have a lot of fun
- you make lifelong friends (some of the best people are in the service industry)
- is good for people who enjoy taking care of others



- your work has immediate results – it is very ‘in the moment’
- you can make a really good living
- you can travel the world and engage with food anywhere
- there are many opportunities for growth and advancement
- there are many careers and jobs available

## CULINARY EXPERTS ARE NEEDED IN EVERY INDUSTRY!

*If you have a passion in another industry, why not combine it with culinary?*

### SCIENCE & HEALTH



help people make healthier food choices, plan diets, and even work with professional kitchens to create health-conscious menus - innovation, blending science with culinary arts to create new flavors, improve food safety, or develop sustainable food production.

### FOOD MEDIA



become a food stylist or food photographer for photo or video shoots for brands, magazines, restaurants, and cookbooks

### EDUCATION



share your love for food with others and inspire future chefs by training and educating in culinary schools.

### WRITING



write about food, create cookbooks, be a food critic, or have a food blog

### SUPPLIER



become a farmer to supply local restaurants or farmers' markets (or an artisan food producer to make food for retailers or wholesalers)

### ARTS & CREATIVITY



put your creative and baking skills and craft elaborate cakes, pastries, and chocolates.

### ENTREPRENEURSHIP



tap into your entrepreneurial spirit and start a restaurant, food truck, or packaged food business

*Whose expertise can you tap into to learn more about this career? Could they participate in an informational interview with you and your peers or serve as a mentor?*



## REFLECT

- > What are you passionate about, or what brings you joy?
- > What do you see your future self doing?
- > How can you combine your different interests for a career in culinary?



## NAVIGATING A CAREER IN CULINARY: A ROADMAP FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS

To help you on your journey to a career in culinary, here are six tips to optimize your opportunities in high school and get you future ready!



Meet with your guidance counselor (or college/career advisor) to develop a plan to support your learning and college and career aspirations.



Research [scholarships](#) and colleges, attend college and career fairs, and maintain a [repository of information about the colleges](#) and companies that interest you.



Join (or start) a club like [FCCLA](#), [SkillsUSA](#), or [ProStart](#)...or enter one of their competitions.



[Update your resume](#), professional portfolio, LinkedIn\* page, and college admissions essays to showcase your learning and employment experience.

\* Check [here](#) for age requirements.



Collaborate with your educator to invite local culinarians to be guest speakers and/or mentors. Check out [these scripts](#) to help you get started! [Prepare for and solidify an internship](#) to develop your future-ready and culinary skill sets.



Obtain certifications to validate knowledge and skills, such as [ServSafe](#), [ProStart National Certificate of Achievement](#), or the [American Culinary Federation](#). (Certifications give students a competitive edge when applying for jobs, ensuring they meet industry standards for food safety and culinary skills.)



Check out these YouTube videos from Marriott:

- [Begin Your Journey With Marriott](#)
- [A Day in the Hotel Industry](#)

## STRETCH

*Now that you have learned more about different culinary careers and tips to optimize opportunities, expand your knowledge and skills:*

Compete in local, state, or national culinary competitions, such as: FCCLA Culinary Arts Competition, SkillsUSA Culinary Arts Competition, ProStart Invitational, National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) competitions (They enhance technical skills, foster creativity, and prepare students for high-pressure situations they'll encounter on the job.)

Watch a video of a cooking show where a chef goes to a market to find ingredients, then go to a market and find your own ingredients and cook a meal based on what you found.

Read a cooking-related book of interest; reflect on what you can see yourself doing in the future.

Find a heritage recipe (can be a family recipe or one from a culture you're interested in) and learn how to make it.

Go to a grocery store and talk to a butcher to learn about cuts of meat, or seafood counter to talk about procurement, or ask produce manager to take you through produce dept and identify the different vegetables.

Create a career [vision board](#) to include competitions you want to enter, scholarships you would like to apply for, and colleges you hope to visit and attend.

Build a personal portfolio of dishes you've made, recipes you've tweaked, and culinary techniques you've been refining. (This helps grow your confidence and spark creativity.)

*Is there a skill you would like to further develop? Consider collaborating with your educator to invite a venue manager or event planner to host a Skills Workshop (virtually or in-person). [Here is a resource](#) to help your industry volunteer before, during, and after a Skills Workshop.*





**INNOVATE**

*Using the ideas in the choice board below, select one to complete. Another project idea is to choose one that's related to a competition you're entering...and take that on!*

<p><b>CHOICE 1: Recipe Development Challenge</b> Create an original recipe using local ingredients, document the process, and prepare it for a taste-testing event.</p>	<p><b>CHOICE 2: Culinary History Exploration</b> Research a specific cuisine's history, prepare a traditional dish, and present their findings.</p>
<p><b>CHOICE 3: Food Blogging/Vlogging</b> Create a blog or vlog documenting culinary experiments, local restaurant reviews, or food trends.</p>	<p><b>CHOICE 5: Food Entrepreneurship Simulation</b> Simulate opening a food truck, developing a concept, menu, and marketing strategy.</p>
<p><b>CHOICE 4: Farm-to-Table Event Planning</b> Organize and prepare a farm-to-table dinner, connecting with local farmers and highlighting fresh, local foods. (go to a local farmers market, do some research on what is available, and plan a recipe using those items, make it, film it, etc)</p>	<p><b>CHOICE 6: Cross Course Collaboration</b> Talk to one of your core teachers (English, math, science, history), and ask if you can respond to learning in a culinary context (e.g., design and/or make a three-layered cake where each tier represents the beginning, middle, and end of a novel...and the decorations represent the characters or highlights the author's use of symbolism).</p>
<p><b>CHOICE 7: Spread the Joy of Culinary</b> Collaborate with your peers to create a movement at your school or community to amplify this industry or the skills sets needed to succeed in this field. You can start a chapter for a Career &amp; Technical Student Organization (CTSO) or professional organization related to this field, host a college/career fair or local competition to highlight this industry. The possibilities are endless!</p>	



## SHOWCASE

Share what the project you completed from the previous page (and the learning and skills you further developed) with the world in one (or more) ways. Choose one of the options below or create your own way to highlight what you did with others.

**CHOICE 1:** Share your story by addressing one (or more) of these prompts on social media, by recording a video, or putting it in the post caption:

- Why do you want to pursue a culinary career?
- Give a shout-out to someone who supports your aspirations!
- How do you help your peers learn about culinary careers?

We'd love it if you tagged @nafcarreracads! (Before you post, however, be sure to get your educator's permission on the content and the platform you plan to use.)

**CHOICE 2:** Share what you learned in this Expedition in your digital portfolio, website, social media campaign, or a blog (like [Bulb](#) or [Google Sites](#)), then share it with an audience.

**CHOICE 3:** Present your project to an audience of:

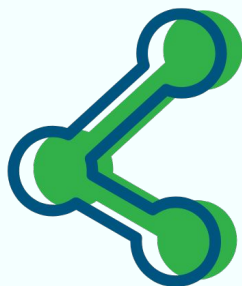
- culinarians, advisory board members, industry partners, or your mentor for feedback and insight
- local middle school students to encourage them to join your academy and pursue culinary.

*(Regardless of your choice, provide time for a Q&A session.)*

*Why not plan a showcase where you and your peers can share presentations with staff, administration, parents, and students, or for a panel of industry professionals?*



### STUDENTS, SHARE YOUR INNOVATION!



NAF would love to see your creation! After you get your educator's permission, submit yours [HERE](#). We may highlight you on social media!

(We WILL NOT share your work without your educator's and your approval.)