

# Madeline Tymchuk: Professional Cook

by Stu Rhodes

**Professional** Cook is the name given to practitioners trained and certified in the craft of cooking in a restaurant

or institution. Most often they are commonly referred to as "chef." Madeline Tymchuk could certainly be an ambassador for why the word "professional" is part of the name of this Red Seal trade. She is enthusiastic, bright and articulate. She explained to me that "there is way more to cooking than just following a recipe. There is a lot of science going on. A recipe is really more like the equation for a scientific formula."

Madeline is intrigued by the changes at work when different ingredients react with one another and/or react to varying amounts of heat throughout the cooking process. Her fascination for cooking, and especially baking, reaches back to her early childhood. "I guess you could say I grew up on a lot of cooking shows," she admitted. While other kids were watching cartoons and playing tag, she was watching the likes of Rachael Ray and learning, then experimenting, in the kitchen. In 11th grade she went to a school assembly at Claremont where she learned about the Professional Cook foundation program available in partnership with Camosun College and she knew she had to give it a try.

Madeline's 12th-grade year looked quite different than most. She completed her academic requirements online during the fall while she went to work full time as an apprentice cook under the tutelage of Andrew Faucett at Med Grill, where she got to sample firsthand what it's like to work in an actual production kitchen. Later she began the training program at Camosun, where she started to really learn the technical side of the craft and

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became increasingly interested in the complex science behind cooking.

Upon successfully completing the program, Madeline moved across the street to Fireside Grill where she currently works under the mentorship of Red Seal Professional Cook

Jonny James. Jonny appreciates the intelligent questions Madeline asks at work and added that she has advanced very quickly up the line of tasks for such a young apprentice. "When she is in charge of the veggie prep, she owns the station! It is very clear that she wants to be here," he said. It's obvious that in addition to developing the right knowledge and skills, Madeline possesses the right attitude too.

Eventually Madeline would like to use her trade ticket like a passport to travel the world, seeking learning and employment opportunities in different countries and cultures so she can advance her knowledge and skill in the culinary arts. Her mother, Anne Tymchuk, figures if that's what she is planning, it will probably happen. She describes Madeline as a determined young woman whose focus and maturity grew immensely through participation in the program.

Anne said: "It would be nice if every student had the opportunity for experiential learning in an adult setting and a real workplace." She encourages other parents to support their children's interest or desire to try this out the way her daughter did. Madeline says: "Try an apprenticeship. Explore. You might find your passion where you least expect it!"

Contact Stu Rhodes at 250-415-9211 for more information on how to get involved as a student apprentice, or as an employer sponsor in this, or any other career program in Saanich School District. View the promotional YouTube video, "Jump Start Your Career" at <http://www.youtube.com/user/saanichcareers>. 

