

# CHEF CHRIS HAZLE



**COMPANY:** Christopher Hazle LLC

**EDUCATION:** Johnson and Wales — degree in applied culinary sciences.

**HONORS:** In high school, placed in culinary Olympics competition. Corporate trainer for one of the top 20 busiest restaurants in the country: Wolfgang Puck Café, Orlando Florida.

**Y**ou could call Chris Hazle the cleric of cuisine, the father of fare, the preacher of provisions. When it comes to cooking and food, he is without question - zealous.

“As a chef I get a bit passionate at times, up on my soap box shouting to the masses about how important good food is and how heavily processed and sugar filled food-like substances are devastating the masses,” Hazle says. “There’s a big problem with the quality and lack of sustainability in the food system not only in this country but the entire world.”

You can hear it in his voice. It’s a passion that’s been brewing pretty much his whole life – starting when he was just a toddler. That’s when, during a visit to see his grandparents in Massachusetts, his dad and grandpa walked through the door one afternoon with live Maine lobsters.

“It was the first time I can remember loving the taste of what I was eating and begging for more, very rich and buttery.”

Not long after that, he reminisces, about helping cook Thanksgiving dinner. “I remember stirring gravy and cutting a red, can-shaped log of cranberry sauce with a plastic knife. Not really that glamorous but I loved it.”

And he recalls a time in eighth grade job shadowing a chef. “He cooked a lunch for me with mushrooms, something I was sure I wasn’t going to like. But it turned out amazing.”

After that Chris started looking at food differently. “A passion was born,” he says. He tried new things, started working in restaurants – “I just really started loving food.”

Over the years, Chris says he’s gone through a lot of different phases with food. In school he learned the textbook basics of cooking, and working in many different kinds of restaurant, he got to practice and build on those basics.

“Like most chefs, I’ve learned a lot from 15 years in the kitchen. I’ve made an extra effort to take on challenging roles – to step out of my comfort zone – and to learn as much as I can from everyone around me.”

But he says it’s when he actually steps out of the kitchen that he gains “a true understanding of the ever evolving eater.”

“I’ve been fortunate enough to work many different positions from serving and bartending to managing and event coordinating,” Chris says. “These positions taught me that being a great chef is more than just cooking great food. It’s being able to talk to and relate to people, share ideas and collaborate, create a fun and challenging work environment, and network and develop relationships.”

Top lessons he’s learned? “Make food taste good, really good. Always respect yourself and those around you, and above all else, try to have fun at work, stay positive.”

Today Chris says he’s much more health-focused and does his best to eat healthy from scratch foods.

That certainly makes him a great role model for kids. He’s undoubtedly happy about being a part of the LiveWell@School Food Initiative. “I feel truly blessed to be part of such a great organization and powerful movement, and hope to continue changing lives.” 🍌



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