

# Melissa Ghelani

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## Professional Summary

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High-performing culinary consultant, trainer, instructor, and recipe creator with experience in restaurant and direct-to-consumer settings. Skilled at driving cross-functional collaborations, managing multifaceted projects, and creating innovative food concepts. Passionate about the hospitality industry, and eager to bring my years of experience and growth to another flourishing company.

## Core Competencies

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Menu/Product planning and development, Competitive Analysis, Recipe Development, Food Costing, Training, Test Kitchen Management, Budgeting, Staff Management, Food Media and Merchandize.

## Professional Experience

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### Hudson Table | Brooklyn, NY

#### Chef Instructor | August 2021 – Present

- Developed and conducted over 200 public and private cooking classes covering different cuisines like Italian, Mexican, Indian, Peruvian, and various themes like Romantic Date Night.
- Updated the course material with the guidelines and alignment with brand standards and business goals.
- Commended for exceptional presentation and experience to attendees leading to increase in booking of classes.
- Developed and conducted over 100 private classes in coordination with clients to provide tailored experience.

### Hudson Table | Brooklyn, NY

#### Recipe Developer | January 2022 – Present

- Developed more than 250 recipes from initial consultation to successful execution for private events, corporate catering, and meal kits, including competitive analysis and market research.
- Developed food menus incorporating seasonal ingredients, special requests, and dietary constraints while keeping food cost within or below the budget guidelines.
- Developed and documented best practices for plating, packaging, and presentation guidelines for kitchen staff which led to 10% decrease in labor time.
- Provided culinary direction for troubleshooting and resolving issues during production.

### Marquee Brands - Sur La Table | New York, NY

#### Culinary Consultant | February 2021 – March 2022

- Worked directly for brand Sur La Table working with production deadline to produce a variety of content for Sur La Table Culinary.
- Executed editorial work for 800+ recipes to be distributed nationally via multiple channels such as online classes, in-person classes, and websites.
- Developed and executed recipe creation, and documentation of new content for the internal stakeholders.
- Developed a teaching plan including instructional notes, talking points, and brand immersion for the internal teams across 50 locations nationwide.
- Developed in-person cooking classes for Sur La Table stores.
- Developed the recipes, class format, and class content for the website.

**The Doe Fund | Brooklyn, NY**  
**Culinary Trainer | May 2021 – July 2022**

- Provided culinary training for multiple 8-week culinary courses designed to teach students the technical skills to begin their careers in restaurant kitchens.
- Created a comprehensive and stimulating curriculum appropriate for the goals of students.
- Incorporated classic techniques into a global menu, introducing students to a variety of ethnic cuisines.
- Differentiated curriculum to meet the needs of diverse learners.

**Peck's Specialty Foods | Brooklyn, NY**  
**Head Chef | February 2018 – March 2020**

- Directed all culinary operations for a multi-site cafe & bakery, including recipe and menu development and plating standards.
- Collaborated cross-functionally with marketing and leadership to develop marketing and promotional strategies resulting in a 40% increase in food sales company-wide.
- Spearheaded company-wide cost & inventory management projects, including creating a master list of vendors for all the kitchen ingredients.
- Revised POS system and production schedules to meet demand resulting in thousands of dollars saved on inventory and food costs.
- Led a team of 20+ staff, conducted onboarding, professional development training, and increased internal promotion rates.

**NYC Wine & Food Festival | New York, NY**  
**Asst. Stage Manager | October 2016 – November 2018**

- Coordinated and managed the mise en place for 25+ chef demonstration recipes, including overseeing food styling and the creation of “beauties” for live demos.
- Collaborated with stakeholders and renowned chefs, including Bobby Flay, Duff Goldman, Valerie Bertinelli, Marcus Samuelson, and more to produce innovating & engaging food concepts and activations for over 10,000 festival attendees.

**The Brooklyn Kitchen | Brooklyn, NY**  
**General Manager / Lead Culinary Instructor | September 2016 – August 2018**

- Conducted qualitative research to identify untapped markets and opportunities.
- Developed plans to introduce new programs and food products to refined target audiences.
- Developed and implemented on-site programs to increase customer engagement and satisfaction including supper clubs, family events, and children's curriculum.
- Launched partnerships with emerging brands and established companies to create new income streams and increase customer engagement.
- Hired & managed a team of 40+ staff to host thousands of patrons for public & private events.

**Sur la Table | New York, NY**  
**Assistant Resident Chef | September 2016 – December 2017**

- Oversaw food styling and packaging for a brand partnership between Sur La Table, Sandra Lee, and MasterCard. Food styling displayed on local and national television segments, including Fox News, Pix11, NY1, and Good Day New York.
- Instructed food menus and curriculum for more than 350+ public classes, including Healthy Vegetarian Meals, Thai Takeout at Home, and Indian Home Cooking.
- Supervised culinary operations, including vendor management, food ordering, equipment maintenance, and sanitation procedures.
- Managed a team of 25+ kitchen assistants and chef instructors. Scheduled staff hours and approved daily timesheets and reconciled expenses.

## **Education/Certifications**

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**Associate of Arts, Culinary Arts**, Art Institute of Seattle, October 2012  
**Bachelor of Fine Arts, Studio Art**, Texas Christian University, May 2011