

Catering training in prison

Real restaurants and real customers

by **Sally Porter**, catering and hospitality tutor, HMP Peterborough

Our prison is unique, as it's the only one that houses male and female prisoners, separately. Whether it's Vita Nova on the female side or Vita Nova Duo on the male side, both our training restaurants mirror a commercial set-up. Participants need to study for their NVQ in Food Production & Cooking while catering for officers, staff, prisoners and visitors, so it's far from an easy life.

What you need to know

- 1 It's the same course that's taught in colleges.** It includes preparing fish, meat, vegetables, sauces, dough, pastry goods and desserts, as well as giving customers a positive first impression.
- 2 You need to show real skill.** For the pastry unit alone, you need to be able to make choux, puff, sweet and shortcrust pastry from scratch, and to do it well at least twice.
- 3 It's externally assessed.** Our tutors are trained assessors, and learners' work also gets verified by City & Guilds every three months.
- 4 There's written work as well as practical.** Learners work towards certificates in food safety, allergens and customer service.
- 5 We teach broader skills too.** We get learners involved in the business side where possible, like stock-takes and ordering, plus they're serving real customers daily.



“We've got two training restaurants here, and they're both really fast-paced.”

On the menu at HMP Peterborough

Level 1 and Level 2 NVQ Diploma in Food Production & Catering

Unit-based, so any units completed in one prison can be transferred to the next

Great practical experience, as trainees are planning and cooking dishes for paying customers.

Learning in numbers

2 tutors

12-16 weeks intensive training

4-5 GCSEs equivalent for the Level 2 course