

Future chef broadens his horizons in Malta

After a somewhat disordered start to his four-week work placement in Malta, Christofer Hammar from Boden, a student chef with us at Utbildning Nord, has now begun his work placement at a top-class restaurant in Sliema, The Chophouse, which among other features boasts the biggest charcoal grill in Malta.



Picture: From the left, Victor Garrido Luis, deputy chef, whose schedule was followed by our student Christofer Hammar (on the right). In the background, the gigantic charcoal grill.

Getting to know new preparation methods

I spoke to Christofer Hammar on the second day of his work placement, and he started by telling me that four weeks' placement had become three due to start-up difficulties.

“When I got here just over a week ago, the restaurant did not know I was coming. The intermediary organisation Paragon had forgotten to do something, but they put things right and I have been extremely well received here.”

The Chophouse specialises in meat, which suits meat-loving Christofer Hammar perfectly. The restaurant is perhaps the best meat restaurant on the island, and has indeed won several awards, most recently this year.



The restaurant chooses its meat suppliers with care and uses every cut of meat from head to tail, as a look at the menu shows. Christofer Hammar tells me that the restaurant uses a special tenderising method called “dry aging”. Tenderising takes place in a special dry-aging room and takes a very long time.

“The meat gets a quite special aroma, and is prepared on a vast charcoal grill, which they say is the biggest on the island.”

The international kitchen crew

“The head chef is from South Africa, and the cook whose schedule I am following is from Spain and is *chef de partie*, which means he is responsible for a special area of production in the kitchen.”

And now the team includes a future chef from Norrbotten who also speaks Japanese, having been in Japan for about five years, where among other things he studied the Japanese language. I begin to understand that Christopher has interesting and educational weeks to look forward to. One of the restaurant staff says that the restaurant is booked for large group of 160 guests on the very day of my visit. The restaurant is also known on the island for its large and special wine cellar, a glass cave where wines are stored in high air humidity and the temperature is carefully monitored.

“I will be making the most of my time here. I appreciate this opportunity and I think I will benefit greatly from the experience my time here will give.”



Picture: It can be hard to find the restaurant, but once there the restaurant guest has one of the finest views in Malta.

Soon ready for the labour market

The overseas work placement is made possible by the EU programme Erasmus+, from which Utbildning Nord applied for funding to be able to send students on the exchange. The exchange in Malta is the last of the programme and in addition to Christofer, three IT students are on work placement in Malta. Four personnel members have also been given the opportunity of so-called job shadowing in Malta for one week.

Christofer adds that he has not much studying left after returning home and that he has begun to look for work.

“At the recruitment drive which the school organised in March, I was in touch with among others Scandic Ferrum (in Kiruna) and Haparanda Statt, which I also had time to visit. I am not tied to any particular place so I can apply for work almost anywhere. I want to gain broad experience before I specialise,” a pleased Christofer Hammar has time to round off with before he returns to his duties.

Text&Photo: Birgitta Jysky, Translation: ELEX



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union