

"I love my work. It's an amazing job. The other chefs have been very supportive and sharing with me all their experience of working in restaurants."

Rizal had just completed the level 2 apprenticeship when the chef at Arrowe Park Hospital left. He applied for the position and is now a chef who is passionate about his food.

Rizal San Pedro

Chef

Employer or university

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Rizal San Pedro - Chef at Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

How I got into the role

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I'm originally from the Philippines where I was a civil engineer. I moved to Wirral in 2001 as my wife came over here to work as a nurse. Initially I got a civil engineer job but took some time off to look after my family.

I later started working as a catering assistant at Arrowe Park Hospital. When the chef left two years ago I had the opportunity to become a chef and I have just completed my level 2 apprenticeship. My mother owns her own restaurant in the Philippines so I knew a lot about cooking.

What I do

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We plan first thing in the morning what we are doing that day. We always work ahead and if needed, we stay to prepare the next day's menu. It's very challenging. I want to provide a decent meal every single day. Every day we have a different menu.

I especially like it when I get the opportunity to cook international food such as Asian, Mediterranean and Italian. I just want to serve quality food. If I'm not happy with the food when I taste it in the kitchen then it doesn't go out. I'm always really proud of what I'm doing.

It's always very busy. We have to be aware of potential hazards in the kitchen and the importance of food hygiene.

The best bits and challenges

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I love my work. It's an amazing job. The other chefs have been very supportive and sharing with me all their experience of working in restaurants. Their attitude is phenomenal and, because of their experience, they work really professionally. I've learned a lot from them.

The challenges I face include planning the right menu that customers will love and making food taste good in a short amount of time.

Life outside work

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I have a wife, two teenagers and a dog. I love weekend walks with my family and our dog. I also love playing basketball and socialising with friends.

Career plans and top tips for others

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My advice for those interested in being a chef is that no matter how young or old you are, always remember that you can achieve your dreams as long as you set your heart on it.

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