

Recipe for culinary excellence

US institute ties up with SIT to offer culinary arts management course

By JANE NG

SINGAPOREANS with a penchant for the culinary arts now have the chance to get a degree from the world-renowned Culinary Institute of America, and at a fraction of the price it costs in the US.

The Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), which offers industry-oriented degree courses for polytechnic graduands, will run the institute's Bachelor of Professional Studies in culinary arts management course.

This is the first time the culinary institute, which counts among its alumni chefs such as Anthony Bourdain, is offering its degree course outside the US.

Tuition for the two-year course, to be held at Temasek Polytechnic, will cost \$19,800 after government subsidy. The tuition fee at the institute's New York campus costs about US\$110,000 (\$S150,000).

Its first intake will be in January next year, for 40 polytechnic graduands.

To ensure standards are on a par with those in the US, the institute's associate dean Eve Felder relocated to Singapore last month and will be stationed here to manage the course.

Chefs will also be brought in from the institute's New York City campus to teach technical courses such as baking techniques, while the non-technical subjects, like business and liberal arts, will be taught by local faculty members.

"We will be offering the exact same curriculum here, and will not be using adjunct lecturers for technical courses," said Ms Felder.

Bringing the course here would enable more students to get a degree from the world-class institute, said Ms Felder.

"What may start out as a dream can be realised through a partnership of support from the government, the school and scholarships from the private sector. This would help bridge the financial gap for some students," she added.

During the course, students will pick up classic and contemporary culinary



Ms Eve Felder (far left), associate dean of the Culinary Institute of America, with Mr Terence Chuah and Ms Jerraldine Chen, who are both hoping to enrol in the degree course in culinary arts management offered by the Singapore Institute of Technology.

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techniques and study topics such as nutrition, menu development and food safety.

To ensure the course turns out well-rounded students, undergraduates will have lessons on writing, history and the culinary traditions of the world.

They will also learn about the business aspect of the food and beverage industry and have a three-week stint in the US.

This holistic approach is what enticed the owner of European restaurant Iggy's, Mr Ignatius Chan, to offer a scholarship for one student for the January intake.

"We're not looking for a chef who can slice the thinnest piece of meat, because machines can do that. We're looking for qualified people wanting to be restaurateurs - people who are culinary efficient

and able to manage an entire restaurant," said Mr Chan, 47.

The scholarship holder will work at Iggy's at The Hilton for two years.

Polytechnic graduands and industry professionals who have a relevant diploma can apply for the course.

National serviceman Terence Chuah, 23, said he had wanted to apply to the institute in New York after his O levels but his parents felt he was too young and the course too expensive. He went to junior college instead, but dropped out when he heard there would be a diploma in culinary and catering management at Temasek Polytechnic. He graduated from the course last April and intends to apply for the institute's degree course.

Ms Jerraldine Chen, 19, a third-year culinary and catering management student at Temasek Polytechnic, is also keen to take up the course. She enjoyed her internship at Les Amis restaurant so much that she extended her stint by two months. She wants to be a sommelier.

"The course would teach me about food and wine pairing and further what we've learnt in the diploma," she said.

The Singapore Institute of Technology is also accepting applications for a Bachelor of Fine Arts in digital art and animation, offered by the DigiPen Institute of Technology.

For more details and to apply, visit www.singaporetech.edu.sg

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