

## SIT rolls out culinary degrees by Culinary Institute of America



by Evelyn Choo

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SINGAPORE - The Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) has finalised its first intake of culinary students.

Forty will take to the stoves next month, under a reputable degree offered by the Culinary Institute of America (CIA).

Boasting idea-generation rooms and R&D kitchens, the campus which is housed at Temasek Polytechnic is the first CIA branch outside the United States.

The kitchen at Temasek Poly's Culinary Academy has been expanded to accommodate CIA undergraduates, who were busy preparing meals for yesterday's launch.

Mr Sean Lim, 20, took time off his National Service duty to test out the premises.

He is looking to set up a French restaurant once he graduates with a Bachelor of Professional Studies in Culinary Arts Management.

Mr Lim said: "I'm going to expect a lot of competition in the industry, so with a CIA degree, it's definitely going to set you apart from all the other people."

But the heat is on and he knows it. Mr Lim competed with 70 others - including diploma holders, working adults and GCE A level students - for a spot in the programme.

SIT director (student and career services) Desmond Soon said: "The love of food spans all levels of education, so it's not just limited to the poly grads. We did get applications from a small number of A level applicants."

The school has decided to admit promising A level applicants who have at least six months of kitchen experience in the second admissions exercise in February, capping the total intake at 40 students.

Mr Soon said the limit must be maintained, due to the staff-student ratio and availability of facilities.

He said: "... We want to make sure the people we make offers to are going to graduate successfully from the programme and they're going to bear the brand of CIA around the world well."

The heavily-subsidised course will teach students how they can prepare healthy meals, which Health Minister Khaw Boon Wan strongly advocates.

In his blog, Mr Khaw said the Health Promotion Board is facilitating some seminars conducted by the CIA, as there is a common objective to promote healthy eating among Singaporeans.

These leadership sessions for the food service industry here would bring together the best of world cooking and the latest in nutrition science, said Mr Khaw.

He said the institute has been working with the Harvard School of Public Health for many years to organise "The World of Healthy Flavours" annual leadership retreat in the US for restaurant chains, food service chains, hotels and supermarkets.

Eventually, these sessions may reach out beyond Singapore.