

CH&CO celebrates its 2022 Barista Graduates

3 years ago



CH&CO has celebrated its 2022 cohort of graduate baristas, all of whom have successfully completed an eight-week Specialty Barista Traineeship.

CH&CO's venues and workplace businesses, Venues by CH&CO, Gather & Gather and Vacherin, have partnered with social enterprise Well Grounded to offer the free Specialty Barista Traineeship programme to Londoners who are under or unemployed.

The training programme provides technical coffee training and employability skills, with paid work placements at prestigious sites across the Venues by CH&CO, Gather & Gather and Vacherin portfolios and guaranteed work with CH&CO on completion.

The eight-week course, which includes four weeks of intensive training and assessment followed by a four-week work placement, is accredited by the Specialty Coffee Association. Each graduate has gained the globally recognised Foundation Barista Skills qualification, plus Level 2 in both Customer Service and Food Safety.

Well Grounded is an award-winning social enterprise that provides accredited coffee training programmes, work placements and ongoing support to Londoners facing social and economic barriers to employment. Formed in 2017, the partnership is part of CH&CO's ongoing commitment to raising the profile of hospitality as an exciting and rewarding career opportunity and attracting new talent to the industry.

Over the duration of the programme, the graduates gained a solid foundation of knowledge to help them grow and thrive in the coffee industry. They developed customer service skills, technical coffee skills encompassing roasting, green coffee and origins as well as essential soft skills through their work

placements and one-to-one mentoring.

Their skills and achievements were celebrated at the graduation ceremony which took place at RSA House, London. CH&CO, Well Grounded and coffee industry colleagues gathered as graduates showcased their learnings by running a pop-up coffee shop and shared their personal journeys ahead of moving into employment at CH&CO sites across London.

Rob Fredrickson, Managing Director for CH&CO Leisure, who spoke at the graduation ceremony said: "Huge congratulations to the 2022 graduates. They've all shown fantastic energy, dedication and a real desire to learn throughout their traineeship. It's been an absolute privilege to watch their personal and professional growth and hearing them speak so confidently about their experience and the impact the programme has had on them is heart-warming and very rewarding. We're excited to welcome them all to the CH&CO family and I can't wait to see their careers and bright futures unfold with us.

"A very big thank you to our partners Well Grounded who have supported the graduates throughout their traineeship. This is the fourth cohort of barista graduates that we've celebrated together and there's no doubt that this inclusive programme changes lives. It's a great way to link those with barriers to employment with an industry looking for talent and we look forward to progressing our partnership and continuing to make a positive difference."

Mike Rogers, Interim CEO at Well Grounded, said: "This graduation marks another milestone for the partnership, with another fantastic cohort of graduates entering their careers in the coffee industry. The commitment of the teams at CH&CO to support and provide opportunities for the individuals has been key to the success of the programme and we look forward to seeing their continued progression as they move into roles with the organisation.

"Our traineeship programme is designed to support individuals with a range of barriers to employment through a structured, personalised learning programme – based around technical barista skills but supplemented with soft skills and employability coaching. These, along with the work placements and into work support allow the trainees to grow and become confident in their future roles. We are excited to see their progress for the future."