

BaxterStorey celebrates record year for Chef Academy graduates

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Hospitality business [BaxterStorey](#) saw 100 chefs graduate from its Chef Academy this month – the largest graduate cohort in its near 20-year history.

The graduates and their new qualifications were recognised at BaxterStorey’s first-ever Chef Expo – a celebration of sustainable food innovation and culinary talent and marking three years since the launch of the company’s internal ‘Obsessed’ culture.

Hosted at Protein Studios in Shoreditch, the event brought together more than 300 team members and industry guests for a full-sensory experience showcasing BaxterStorey’s commitment to foodservice.

Since its inception, BaxterStorey’s Chef Academy has offered hands-on learning, mentorship, and career development, with chef partner workshops, supplier-led study tours and practical masterclasses from butchery and bread-making to flavour profiling.

Since 2022, 85% of level 2 and 3 chefs achieved distinctions, well above the national average of 55%. In addition, 63% of chefs that go through the academy are promoted within two years of graduation.

New investment for 2025 will see the launch of a Culinary Arts programme designed to create culinary excellence through coaching sessions with chef partners including Bettina Campolucci Bordi and Josh Eggleton MBE. There will also be a new ‘smoke and fire’ space at the Academy’s Obsessed Lab in Newbury, promoting the caterer’s focus on sustainable cooking through a hub links garden and the introduction of fire cooking skills.

BaxterStorey CEO Ronan Harte said: “I’m truly delighted to celebrate each one of our Chef Academy graduates and their achievements. The Chef Academy culture underpins everything we do – taking the

best people and investing in them, to create something really special. It has given me great pleasure over the years to see those who have come through the Academy grow and become the driving force behind the innovation and success of our business.”

The business recently launched the industry’s first Association for Nutrition accredited training, which more than 100 of its chefs are expected to have completed by the end of this year.

The caterer brought its commitment to sustainable nutrition to life with a tasting room hosted by beverage partner Dan Fellows and chef partner Bettina Campolucci Bordi, an edible garden from Urban Organics, and Habitat’s food tech showcase. Guests were served strawberries and cream Danish pastries by Bristol-based baker and BaxterStorey’s newest chef partner Hannah Catley.

The Expo also reinforced BaxterStorey’s commitment to sustainable nutrition, with guest speaker Paul Newnham, CEO of the SDG2 Advocacy Hub and founder of the Chef’s Manifesto, and a keynote address from Henry Dimbleby, co founder of the Sustainable Restaurants Association, inspiring attendees with presentations on the future of sustainable food systems.

Freelance food writer and chef partner Jenny Chandler said: “I love the work I do with BaxterStorey. Bringing life to nutrition through joy and creativity, we’re all onboard to get more plants on plate. It’s a real honour to be here celebrating with everyone and to hand out these certificates recognising the hard work and commitment of all the graduates”.

BaxterStorey’s director of food Greg Bramwell said: “Obsessed is more than a campaign – it’s a movement. Today we show how we are going to modernise hospitality and the importance around removing the fear of change. We are ready to open the doors and invite everyone in to see what the future of foodservice looks like: sustainable, inclusive, and driven by craft, creativity and cheer”.

Harte added: “This event celebrates three years of truly changing the game in foodservice. Our Obsessed culture empowers our teams to create memorable dining through craft, creativity, and cheer. Today we’ve celebrated the momentum we’re building – and how we continue to positively disrupt the industry.”