

# 1000 Hills Chef School

## Term 1 Newsletter

### A Term of Excellence, Experience & Achievement



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#### A note from Aunty D

What a start to the year it has been!

Just three and a half months into 2026, and I can honestly say we have not stood still for a moment. It's been a full, energetic, and incredibly rewarding term, and I couldn't be prouder of what our students have achieved.

I always say that chef training is about so much more than cooking, it's about discipline, exposure, confidence, and real-world experience. This term has delivered on all of that and more.

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#### Advanced students | Getting stuck in

We kicked off the year with a strong focus on coffee and not just making a good cup but truly understanding it. Did you know the taste of coffee can stay with you for up to 20 minutes? That's why we take it seriously.

Our visit to Beaver Creek Coffee Farm really brought everything together. Seeing the process from start to finish gives our students a level of understanding you simply can't teach in a classroom.



We also spent time out in industry, visiting Cure House in Hillcrest and The Waffle House. These behind-the-scenes experiences are invaluable, students see the pace, the systems, and what it really takes to run a successful operation.



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## **Foundation students | Laying the groundwork**

Our foundation students have had a big start to their journey.

They've completed their First Aid and Fire Safety training, essential skills that I believe every chef should have, not just for the kitchen, but for life.



We also brought in Brand Candy Agency to talk about something I feel strongly about, building your brand as a chef. It's not just about what you can cook, but how you present yourself, your work, and your story on the digital platforms.



Then of course... Bugology! Yes, there were a few squirmy moments, but this is such an important part of what we do. We are fully committed to zero waste to landfill, and understanding sustainability in a real, hands-on way is non-negotiable.



Geochem also spent time with our students, reinforcing just how important chemical safety is in our industry. Health and safety is something we take very seriously.



One of my personal highlights this term was our Toque Ceremony. Watching our advanced students place chef hats on our new students' heads never gets old. It's a proud, symbolic moment and a proper welcome into this industry.



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## In the kitchen | Where it all comes together

And then... the kitchen.

We have been busy.....properly busy.

To date, we've had 2578 Guests through our Classroom Café Restaurant. That's 2578 real-life opportunities for our students to learn, adapt, and grow. (Numbers taken on 8 May)

We also hosted two Gourmet Evenings. One 7-course and one 6-course dinner, and I can honestly say they were executed beautifully. The level of focus, teamwork, and attention to detail made us incredibly proud.



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## Specialised training | Learning from the best

Our advanced students completed their sushi course with Chef Roger, and what a privilege that is.

Chef Roger has been teaching with us for 21 years. That's 21 years of knowledge, skill, and passion being passed down to our students. It's something very special to be part of.



## Achievements | Moments to be proud of!

We've got some real highlights this term.

Our students completed the Highfield Level 4 HACCP qualification with a 100% pass rate, an outstanding achievement. This success would not have been possible without the dedication of our entire team of lecturers, who played a huge role in preparing, supporting, and guiding the students through this demanding programme. This qualification represents the highest level of food safety training and sets our students apart both locally and internationally.

We also had three students selected for the regional round of the South African Chef of the Year 2026 competition:

- Chef Robin (Senior Category)
- Chef Arhan (Junior Category)
- Chef Sihlengiwe (Junior Category)



What makes this even more exciting is that this is not a school competition, it's an industry competition. To be selected at this level speaks volumes about the standard we are working at.



## National success

A proud moment was seeing Arhan make it through to the National Finals, representing both KwaZulu-Natal and 1000 Hills Chef School on a national stage. To achieve Second Place in South Africa against such strong competition is an incredible accomplishment, and a true reflection of the hard work, passion, and commitment. As if that was not enough, he also received the coveted Hygiene Award.



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## **And yes... We had some fun too**

It's not all work — I promise!

We had a karaoke evening this term, and let's just say... there were some standout performances, and some very enthusiastic ones! Either way, it was a great way to relax and enjoy some time together.



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## **Looking ahead**

I think it's fair to say we've earned a bit of a breather, but knowing us, we won't stay still for long.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. It means a great deal to all of us, and it plays a big role in what we are able to achieve with our students.

I'm incredibly proud of every single one of our students.

Warm regards and lots of love  
Aunty D