

# ARTISAN BAKING AND THE USE OF REGIONAL PRODUCE



## Paul Herbig

International ISS Institute/DEEWR Trades Fellowship

Fellowship supported by the Department  
of Education, Employment and Workplace  
Relations, Australian Government



**ISS Institute**

Suite 101  
685 Burke Road  
Camberwell Vic  
AUSTRALIA 3124

**Telephone**

03 9882 0055

**Facsimile**

03 9882 9866

**Email**

[officemanager@issinstitute.org.au](mailto:officemanager@issinstitute.org.au)

**Web**

[www.issinstitute.org.au](http://www.issinstitute.org.au)

---

Published by International Specialised Skills Institute, Melbourne.

ISS Institute  
101/685 Burke Road  
Camberwell 3124  
AUSTRALIA

April 2010

Also extract published on [www.issinstitute.org.au](http://www.issinstitute.org.au)

© Copyright ISS Institute 2010

This publication is copyright. No part may be reproduced by any process except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. This project is funded by the Australian Government under the Strategic Intervention Program which supports the National Skills Shortages Strategy. This Fellowship was funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The views and opinions expressed in the documents are those of the Authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Whilst this report has been accepted by ISS Institute, ISS Institute cannot provide expert peer review of the report, and except as may be required by law no responsibility can be accepted by ISS Institute for the content of the report, or omissions, typographical, print or photographic errors, or inaccuracies that may occur after publication or otherwise. ISS Institute does not accept responsibility for the consequences of any actions taken or omitted to be taken by any person as a consequence of anything contained in, or omitted from, this report.

# Executive Summary

This Fellowship involved an extended period of time in the United States of America (USA) to study the latest developments in artisan baking techniques and presentation.

The Fellow was given unique access to the Thomas Keller Restaurant Group (TKRG) in New York City and Yountville in California's legendary Napa Valley.

New baking techniques, such as dough development, moulding and shaping, proving, and artisan bread and associated pastry baking, were invaluable new learning experiences. The Fellow also examined TKRG's marketing and supply chain relationships.

TKRG is recognised as a world leader in artisan cooking, baking and patisserie. As part of its business development strategy TKRG aggressively markets its use of Napa Valley regional produce. This provided the Fellow with important insights into possible new business and culinary strategies for regions such as the Tamar Valley in Tasmania, Margaret River in Western Australia, the Barossa and McLaren Vale regions in South Australia and the Hunter Valley in New South Wales.

The Fellow worked with outstanding chefs to construct dishes with innovative plate presentation, design and aesthetics. New skills were learnt about cooking methods that enhance flavour and texture, as well as best-practice food storage to maximise shelf life. The bread and pastry skills learnt by the Fellow from TKRG will, over time, add substantial value to the Australian bakery sector.

The Fellowship has reinforced the Fellow's belief in the commercial benefits in regional food businesses that promote produce sourced from their immediate region. While a number of Australia's regional areas already focus on the development of a regional food industry, the TKRG experience has provided invaluable insights into further initiatives to synergise regional-based restaurants and other food outlets with regional-sourced produce.

The Fellow has a vision for Tasmania's Tamar Valley to become the leader in inspiring food and hospitality businesses in other regional areas across Australia to implement the kind of business strategies that has made the Napa Valley such a food, wine and hospitality tourism magnet.

A significant outcome flowing from this Fellowship is the establishment of an ongoing relationship between the Fellow and TKRG. Plans are now set in train to link TKRG to a local pilot culinary scholarship program supported by Australian Governments, hospitality education and training providers and community groups.

# Table of Contents

<b>i</b>	<b><i>Abbreviations and Acronyms</i></b>
<b>ii</b>	<b><i>Definitions</i></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Acknowledgements</b>
1	Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)
2	Fellowship Supporter
2	Supporters
2	Organisations Impacted by the Fellowship
<b>5</b>	<b>About the Fellow</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Aims of the Fellowship Program</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>The Australian Context</b>
7	SWOT Analysis
<b>9</b>	<b>Identifying the Skills Deficiencies</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>The International Experience</b>
10	New York City
11	Yountville, Napa Valley
21	St Helena, Napa Valley
<b>25</b>	<b>Knowledge Transfer: Applying the Outcomes</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
26	Government
26	Industry Networks and Professional Associations
26	Education and Training
26	ISS Institute
<b>27</b>	<b>References</b>
27	Books
27	Websites

# *Abbreviations and Acronyms*

ATTHEA	Australian TAFE Tourism and Hospitality Teachers Association
BIAT	Baking Industry Association of Tasmania
BMIAA	Bread Manufacturers Industry Association of Australia
CIA	Culinary Institute of America
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
TKRG	Thomas Keller Restaurant Group

**Bulk fermentation**

Resting dough usually over a period of time.

**Commis**

A recently qualified chef

**Chef de partie**

The chef in charge of a particular section in the kitchen, ie fish or sauce.

**Chef de cuisine**

This is a person who has total responsibility for a kitchen, someone of authority.

**Design**

Design is problem setting and problem solving.

Design is a fundamental economic and business tool. It is embedded in every aspect of commerce and industry and adds high value to any service or product—in business, government, education and training, and the community in general.

Reference: 'Sustainable Policies for a Dynamic Future', Carolynne Bourne AM, ISS Institute 2007.

**Innovation**

Creating and meeting new needs with new technical and design styles. (New realities of lifestyle).

Reference: 'Sustainable Policies for a Dynamic Future', Carolynne Bourne AM, ISS Institute 2007.

**Levain**

The Naturally occurring wild yeast used in sour dough bread production.

**Prove**

The rising of dough through aeration by the action of yeast.

**Petit fours**

These are small, sweet, baked items.

**Skill deficiency**

A skill deficiency is where a demand for labour has not been recognised and training is unavailable in Australian education institutions. This arises where skills are acquired on-the-job, gleaned from published material or from working and/or studying overseas.

Reference: 'Directory of Opportunities. Specialised Courses with Italy. Part 1: Veneto Region', ISS Institute, 1991.

There may be individuals or individual firms that have these capabilities. However, individuals in the main do not share their capabilities, but rather keep the intellectual property to themselves. Over time these individuals retire and pass away. Firms likewise come and go.

**Sous Vide**

A method of sealing food under vacuum and cooking by immersing in liquid.

# Acknowledgements

Paul Herbig would like to thank the following individuals and organisations who gave generously of their time and their expertise to assist, advise and guide him throughout the Fellowship program.

## **Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)**

The International Specialised Skills Institute Inc is an independent, national organisation that for over two decades has worked with Australian governments, industry and education institutions to enable individuals to gain enhanced skills and experience in traditional trades, professions and leading-edge technologies.

At the heart of the Institute are our Fellows. Under the **Overseas Applied Research Fellowship Program** the Fellows travel overseas. Upon their return, they pass on what they have learnt by:

1. Preparing detailed reports to government departments, industry and education institutions.
2. Recommending improvements to accredited educational courses.
3. Offering training activities including workshops, conferences and forums.

Over 180 Australians have received Fellowships, across many industry sectors.

Recognised experts from overseas also conduct training activities and events. To date, 22 leaders in their field have shared their expertise in Australia.

According to Skills Australia's 'Australian Workforce Futures: A National Workforce Development Strategy 2010':

Australia requires a highly skilled population to maintain and improve our economic position in the face of increasing global competition, and to have the skills to adapt to the introduction of new technology and rapid change.

International and Australian research indicates we need a deeper level of skills than currently exists in the Australian labour market to lift productivity. We need a workforce in which more people have skills, but also multiple and higher level skills and qualifications. Deepening skills across all occupations is crucial to achieving long-term productivity growth. It also reflects the recent trend for jobs to become more complex and the consequent increased demand for higher level skills. This trend is projected to continue regardless of whether we experience strong or weak economic growth in the future. Future environmental challenges will also create demand for more sustainability related skills across a range of industries and occupations.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, the Institute works with Fellows, industry and government to identify specific skills in Australia that require enhancing, where accredited courses are not available through Australian higher education institutions or other Registered Training Organisations. The Fellows' overseas experience sees them broadening and deepening their own professional practice, which they then share with their peers, industry and government upon their return. This is the focus of the Institute's work.

For further information on our Fellows and our work see [www.issinstitute.org.au](http://www.issinstitute.org.au).

### **Patron in Chief**

Lady Primrose Potter AC

### **Board Chairman**

Ms Noel Waite AO

### **Board Members**

Mr Mark Bennetts

Mr Franco Fiorentini

Sir James Gobbo AC, CVO

Mr John Iacovangelo

Mr David Wittner

### **Chief Executive Officer**

Mr Jeremy Irvine

<sup>1</sup> Skills Australia's 'Australian Workforce Futures: A National Workforce Development Strategy 2010', pp. 1-2 [http://www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/PDFs\\_RTFS/WWF\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/PDFs_RTFS/WWF_strategy.pdf)

# Acknowledgements

## Fellowship Supporter

This Fellowship has been supported by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

DEEWR provides national leadership and works in collaboration with the States and Territories, industry, other agencies and the community in support of the Government's objectives. DEEWR aims to touch the lives of all Australians in a positive way, working towards a vision of creating a productive and inclusive Australia. Paul Herbig would like to thank them for providing funding support for this Fellowship.

## Supporters

- Arthur Blewitt, Chief Executive Officer, AgriFood Skills Australia
- Lorraine Bennett, Chief Executive Officer, Tasmanian Baking Industry Association
- Anne Ripper, Executive Manager, Tasmanian Skills Institute (Tourism and Hospitality)

## Organisations Impacted by the Fellowship

### Australian Government

- Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism
- Federal Minister for Tourism
- Tourism Australia

### State Governments

- Department of Economic Development
- Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE)
- Northern Territory Tourist Commission
- South Australian Tourist Commission
- Tasmanian Minister for Tourism
- Tourism New South Wales
- Tourism Queensland
- Tourism Tasmania
- Tourism Victoria
- Western Australian Tourism Commission

### Industry

- AgriFood Skills Australia
- Brand Tasmania
- Council for the Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education
- Northern Tasmanian Development
- Tasmanian Flour Mills
- Terroir Wines



# Acknowledgements

- The Australian Hotels Association
- The Baking Industry of Tasmania (BIAT)
- The Bread Manufacturing Industry Association of Australia (BMIAA)
- Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania
- Quill Australia

## **Professional Associations**

- Artisan Baker Association
- Australian Culinary Federation
- Restaurant and Caterers Association (Tasmanian Division)
- Restaurant and Catering Australia

## **Education and Training**

- Australian TAFE Tourism and Hospitality Teachers Association (ATTHEA)
- Canberra Institute of Technology
- Challenger TAFE Western Australia
- Chisholm Institute (TAFE)
- Gold Coast Institute of TAFE
- Gordon Institute of TAFE
- Holmesglen Institute of TAFE
- Hunter Institute NSW
- Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE
- Regency TAFE South Australia
- Service Skills Australia
- Tasmanian Skills Institute and Tasmanian Polytechnic
- Tasmanian Skills Institute
- Tasmanian Skills Institute
- William Angliss Institute (TAFE)
- Wodonga Institute of TAFE

## **Community**

- Festivale
- Savour Tasmania
- Melbourne Wine and Food Festival
- The Taste Festival committee – Hobart, Tasmania
- Tasting Australia

# Acknowledgements

## Other

- Australian Business Baking Magazine
- ABC Delicious Magazine
- Australian Gourmet Traveller
- Launceston City Council
- Leading Edge Bakery Magazine
- Open House Food Service Magazine
- The French Laundry
- Vogue Entertaining + Travel

# About the Fellow

**Name:** Paul Herbig

## **Employment**

- Teacher (Cookery and Patisserie), Tasmanian Skills Institute
- Consultant Pastry Chef, Tant Pour Tant Fine Cakes, Breads and Pastries

## **Qualifications**

- Bachelor of Adult and Vocational Education, University of Tasmania, 1996
- Diploma of Adult and Vocational Education University of Tasmania, 1995
- Trade Certificate in Pastry Cooking, Tasmanian State Training Authority, 1991
- Trade Certificate in Cookery, Victorian Apprenticeship Commission, 1984

## **Memberships**

- Past President/Member of the Chefs Association of Tasmania, 1999–2002
- Member of the Australian Culinary Federation, 1999–2001
- Member of the Australian judging committee for Bocuse d'Or National

The Fellow is a qualified teacher, workplace trainer and assessor with extensive experience in project management and customised workplace training programs in cookery and patisserie.

He is also an accomplished food demonstrator with extensive knowledge of market trends and regional food developments. The Fellow also trains apprentices and chefs participating in culinary competitions and has judged numerous cooking and baking competitions.

In 2001, the Fellow was a consultant in developing a regional food program for Festivale, Tasmania's major food and wine event held annually in Launceston. In 2002 the Fellow co-authored a book on Tasmanian regional food, the proceeds of which went to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

The Fellow is a strong advocate for the continuous improvement in the culinary arts and has established strong industry networks to help ensure the high standards required of artisan practices.

# Aims of the Fellowship Program

The aim of the overseas travel component of the Fellowship was to gain first-hand experience with an internationally recognised practitioner in artisan baking with sophisticated regional produce supply chain networks.

There is increasing interest locally in artisan-style baking, particularly artisan breads and associated products utilising regional produce and the opportunity to share new skills and insights that will benefit current and future students, as well as professional chefs, bakers and pastry chefs.

The skills and knowledge gained will be incorporated into teaching courses and workshops conducted by the Fellow with the objective of helping to create a fresh mindset among industry artisan craftsman as well as inspiring new entrants into the industry.

Of more immediate commercial value will be the transfer of new skill sets for the increasing number of restaurant kitchens that are now producing their own breads and pastry items.

# The Australian Context

The commercial cookery, patisserie and baking sectors of the Australian hospitality industry have grown significantly over the last 20 years. Quality standards have generally kept pace with this growth path through the adoption of European trends in relation to food preparation and presentation. As the industry moves forward those employed in the cookery, patisserie and baking sectors need to have ready access to the latest world-best-practice skill sets and knowledge.

There is now a move away from mandatory off-the-job vocational education and training to a work-based model. Workplace trainers and educators must be equipped with the latest food preparation and presentation skills to pass on to new entrants in these sectors. As this trend continues it is important that artisan methods and practices are not overrun by workplace training programs that concentrate solely on the teaching of basic skills.

There is a current deficiency of skills and knowledge in the application of food preparation and presentation techniques that reflects contemporary and current food trends. While different workplaces in these particular sectors present differing food styles and applications, there are significant gaps in whole-of-sector quality standards. Yet, by contrast, Australian consumers are increasingly demanding high quality innovative products that reflect international taste and presentation trends. The explosion in television cooking programs is exposing more and more consumers to new products and cooking techniques.

## SWOT Analysis

A SWOT Analysis provides a useful avenue for exploring new developments in the areas of artisan baking and the use of regional produce. Exploring strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats provides an effective means of 'mapping' the current situation and identifying opportunities for future developments.

### Strengths

- An increase and expanded knowledge and skill base provided to the Fellow by undertaking the overseas Fellowship opportunity.
- An increased opportunity for the Australian Baking Industry to be provided with new knowledge and skills through training opportunities provided by the Fellow after the completion of the overseas study period.
- An opportunity for Tasmanian-based chefs to undertake a scholarship/work placement program with the Thomas Keller restaurant group.
- An educational opportunity for TAFE and other training providers to utilise knowledge gained by the Fellow to include in units of competence associated with the current Tourism and Hospitality training package.
- An opportunity to fill a demand for specialised skills reflecting artisan baking techniques within Australia and Tasmania.
- Exposure to current international trends and products that reflect best practice and would benefit the hospitality and baking industries in Australia.
- An opportunity for regional food growers and producers to benefit from findings through research conducted by the Fellow.

# The Australian Context

## **Weaknesses**

- Industry reluctance to take up training opportunities made available arising from the Fellowship.
- Reluctance from the Australian baking industry to support the growth of the artisan baking principles and practices through a reluctance to change.
- Lack of funding made available by government to support recommendations by the Fellow following the completion of the Fellowship

## **Opportunities**

- The opportunity to develop new strategies in marketing regional products and services within a regional tourism environment.
- The Fellowship will assist in defining and measuring existing market requirements and expectations against an international approach cited as delivering best practice.
- An enhancement of the existing skills base within the industry sectors of commercial cookery, patisserie and baking.
- Will provide regional food producers with tools for increasing their market and consumer base.

## **Threats**

- A lack of support from individuals and organisations may inhibit the scope of the report from the Fellowship opportunity.

# Identifying the Skills Deficiencies

The Fellow identified the following skill deficiencies in Australia:

- Food aesthetics for fine dining restaurants that cannot currently be translated effectively into relevant training courses.
- Inefficiencies in the use of regional produce by restaurant and baking businesses in regional areas of Australia.
- A lack of awareness in the Australian Hospitality Industry of the commercial benefits in utilising regional food supply chains and establishing relationships with regional suppliers.

# The International Experience

The Fellow studied the business model and work practices of the Thomas Keller Restaurant Group (TKRG) in New York City and the Napa Valley, California. TKRG is a world leader in the culinary arts. New baking techniques such as dough development, moulding and shaping, proving, and artisan bread and associated pastry baking were invaluable new learning experiences.

## New York City

### Per Se Restaurant<sup>2</sup> and Bouchon Bakery<sup>3</sup>

**Contact:** Richard Capazzi, Head Pastry Chef

Per Se is a Michelin two-star restaurant located in the Time Warner Centre. It offers high-end fine dining with a focus on strong plate presentation techniques. Bouchon Bakery is also located in the Time Warner Centre. It is a popular lunchtime takeaway outlet and café that caters to clientele from nearby offices and tourists. Bouchon Bakery is a recognised market leader in artisan baking.

The Fellow was shown the production facilities and observed preparation and decoration, garnishing and finishing techniques. Neither outlet compromises on quality and their strong and consistent clientele provide clear evidence of a consumer market segment always willing to pay premium prices for quality product.

Both restaurant and bakery work practices and logistics were closely observed including receipt and storage of goods, maintenance of production schedules, supplier relationship management, health regulations, quality control standards, product packaging and food transport across the two establishments. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) standards, food safety protocols and the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems in operation were very similar to those practiced in Australia.

Work shifts for bakery staff are aligned with Per Se restaurant's peak sittings so that breads and pastries can be supplied direct from the ovens. Australia's more rigid staffing and shift arrangements often means there is a significant time lapse between baking and the product being served at a restaurant table or over the counter. This obviously impacts on the freshness of the bread and pastries once served. Bouchon's staff work in pairs in the preparation areas.

The Fellow's time at Per Se and Bouchon Bakery was an invaluable foundation in developing a professional relationship that will be built upon with a goal of establishing an apprenticeship exchange program with the TKRG in commercial cookery, bakery and patisserie.

---

<sup>2</sup> [www.perseny.com](http://www.perseny.com)

<sup>3</sup> [www.bouchonbakery.com](http://www.bouchonbakery.com)



# The International Experience

## Yountville, Napa Valley

Yountville is a small Napa Valley town of some 3000 people situated approximately 110 kilometres north of San Francisco. The Napa Valley is America's premier wine growing region as well as being a major national and international tourism destination.

TKRG has four establishments in Yountville: The French Laundry, Bouchon Bistro, Bouchon Bakery and Ad Hoc.

Thomas Keller is the owner and founder of TKRG. His decision to establish The French Laundry in Yountville was driven by his vision of providing a restaurant experience that is linked intrinsically with Napa Valley produce. The subsequent development of three further TKRG eating establishments arose out of the need to cater for other segments of the market demanding alternative food services to that offered by a formal dining restaurant.

Kristine Keefer manages public relations for TKRG. The French Laundry and other TKRG establishments do not use paid advertising. Instead, over many years, TKRG has forged a formidable word-of-mouth international reputation through the promotional efforts of Thomas Keller.

### The French Laundry<sup>4</sup>

**Contact:** Carey Snowden: Culinary Assistant

The French Laundry is located in a 1600 square foot building constructed in the early 1900s from Napa Valley river rock and timber. At different times the building has been a residence, a steam laundry, a saloon and a brothel. The French Laundry is TKRG's flagship restaurant and the first business Thomas Keller established in the Napa Valley.

The French Laundry has a three-star Michelin rating and is part of the prestigious Relais & Châteaux collection of gourmet restaurants.<sup>5</sup> It enjoys an international reputation for excellence in high-end regionally inspired food and wine.

On arrival, Culinary Assistant, Carey Snowden, gave the Fellow an extensive tour of the restaurant. The relatively small kitchen operates with 35 staff working in shifts seven days a week. The clever design of the kitchen; however, enables smooth workflows with minimum congestion.

The kitchen staffing hierarchy broadly follows the traditional European model. Stage staff are recent graduates from culinary schools embarking on their careers. Above them are Commis chefs who have recently completed formal culinary training or are still undergoing training. The Commis chefs work under the direction of the Chef de Partie who is in charge of a particular section of the kitchen. The Chef de Parties, in turn, work under the Sous Chef who is second in charge, and who works under the Chef De Cuisine. The Chef De Cuisine has overall responsibility for the running of the kitchen.

The French Laundry has well established protocols designed to ensure quality control in all aspects of the kitchen's operations.

---

<sup>4</sup> [www.frenchlaundry.com](http://www.frenchlaundry.com)

<sup>5</sup> Relais & Châteaux is an exclusive collection of 475 of the finest hotels and gourmet restaurants in 55 countries. Established in France in 1954, the Association's mission is to spread its unique art de vivre across the globe by selecting outstanding properties with a truly unique character.

## The International Experience

These include the delivery of stock, storage protocols, distribution of ingredients to different sections of the kitchen, food preparation procedures and customer service. Strong leadership, clear lines of communication and a highly motivated kitchen staff are the hallmarks of The French Laundry and all TKRG establishments.

All produce arriving at the kitchen is checked by a Chef de Partie or Sous Chef prior to storage. No raw foodstuffs are left in the delivery containers. Fruit and vegetables are pre-washed, stored in deep covered plastic bins and labelled according to product name, date received and the individual who checked the consignment when it arrived.



*French Laundry kitchens*



*French Laundry kitchens*

While the quality-assurance protocols used at The French Laundry provide a benchmark for all kitchens regardless of size and staff numbers, the Fellow has, unfortunately, witnessed too many instances in Australian commercial kitchens where produce has not been handled and processed correctly.

Compromising quality-assurance processes invariably leads to poor-quality food being delivered to the plate and unnecessary food wastage. It is imperative that when training apprentices, whether in-house or in the classroom priority be given to procedures relating to correct storage, accurate identification and the proper vacuum packaging of produce.

The restaurant emphasises sous vide or the vacuum packing of food. For example, at first blush, bananas sealed in a bag with vanilla, sugar and ascorbic acid to prevent oxidation may not seem exciting. The end result, however, is an extraordinary flavour base for sorbets, mousse, ice cream or parfaits. Vacuum packing has important applications in adding value to artisan baking techniques and outcomes.

# The International Experience

A recipe bank is fundamental to ensuring food quality and consistency. The Chef de Cuisine, Corey Lee, outlined the key principles that must be adhered to in The French Laundry kitchen so as to deliver a fine-dining experience: first, work closely with regional growers and producers at each stage of menu development; second, conduct dish trials to validate the recipes proposed for a menu; third, construct alternative presentations to choose the best version; and fourth, prior to a dish being included in the recipe bank, seek feedback from staff on any issues associated with the execution of the dish. Kitchen staff are encouraged to experiment with new ingredients and techniques when developing recipes for inclusion on the menu.



*French Laundry kitchens*



*French Laundry kitchens*



*French Laundry kitchens*

# The International Experience



*French laundry Pastry kitchen*



*French Laundry dish*

Immediately on arrival in Yountville, the Fellow commenced work in the restaurant's pastry section. Under the direction of Wendy Sherwood, the Fellow immersed himself in preparing plated desserts, petit fours and chocolates. The French Laundry produces an extensive range of signature chocolates, some of which contain unique ingredients such as chillies and salted peanut caramels.

The excellent relationships between The French Laundry and its local suppliers ensure fresh produce is always available in a timely manner. For example, the Jacobsen farm located close to the restaurant has been supplying soft berry varieties and other fruits for many years. These supplier relationships also bring with it the added value of growers being able and willing to respond to The French Laundry's requirements for specific—sometimes exotic—produce.



*French Laundry dish*



*French Laundry dish*



# The International Experience



*French Laundry dish*



*French Laundry dish*

As part of its supply chain, the restaurant and other TKRG food outlets also have access to a TKRG-owned garden located directly across the road from The French Laundry. Under the management of Tucker Taylor, the garden's organic produce supplies around a quarter of the vegetable, herb and edible flower requirements of TKRG businesses. The TKRG garden boasts hot houses and a state-of-the-art irrigation system. It also welcomes visitors who are able stroll around on grassed pathways.

Taylor works closely with chefs across all four TKRG outlets to ensure their differing produce requirements are met. For example, while The French Laundry uses significant quantities of baby vegetables, the menu requirements for Ad Hoc restaurant demand vegetables further into their growth cycle. The garden can adjust to meet differing TKRG restaurant needs.

## **Bouchon Bistro**<sup>6</sup>

**Contact:** Phillip Tessier, Chef de Cuisine

Bouchon Bistro is located near The French Laundry and is immediately adjacent to Bouchon Bakery in Yountville. As a one-star Michelin restaurant, it offers a French bistro-inspired menu at reasonable prices. The bistro is open seven days a week from 11.30 am to 12.30 am. While the kitchen has a different layout to The French Laundry, it operates a similar early-morning early-afternoon shift system with a team of 12 chefs under the direction of Chef De Cuisine, Phillip Tessier, who has worked previously at Per Se in New York.

---

<sup>6</sup> [www.bouchonbistro.com](http://www.bouchonbistro.com)

## The International Experience



*Outside Bouchon Bistro*

The kitchen set up, workload and the style of food has similarities to mainstream Australian dining experiences.

Nevertheless, the hands-on experience gained in the bistro kitchen enabled the Fellow to develop new skills in food preparation and sous vide cookery, food storage techniques and plate presentation. The range of innovative ideas and food styles arising from the bistro experience are directly transferrable to Australian culinary professionals and students.

# The International Experience

## Bouchon Bakery<sup>7</sup>

**Contact:** Matt McDonnell, Head Baker

Bouchon Bakery is another TKRG seven-day-a-week operation. This small, busy retail bakery outlet produces a range of artisan style breads, cakes and pastries.



*Production at Bouchon Bakery*



*Production at Bouchon Bakery*



*Production at Bouchon Bakery*

---

<sup>7</sup> [www.bouchonbakery.com](http://www.bouchonbakery.com)

# The International Experience

The kitchen is divided into two production areas: bread and cakes/pastries. The ten kitchen staff bake using artisan principles and only top quality ingredients. Bouchon Bakery's artisan sour dough bread is produced with natural sour dough cultures (levain) used for the fermentation process. The bakery has the full complement of modern equipment including dough sheeters, bread and cake mixers and ovens.

Although the bakery does not offer dining facilities, it does provide outdoor tables for customers to use. In addition to producing all dessert items for the Bouchon Bistro and specialty breads for The French Laundry, the bakery also produces a range of breads for other cafes and restaurants in Yountville.



*Products at Bouchon Bakery*



*Different breads at Bouchon Bakery*



*Bakers oven at Bouchon Bakery*



# The International Experience



*Products at Bouchon Bakery retail store*



*Products at Bouchon Bakery retail store*

# The International Experience



Products at Bouchon Bakery retail store



Products at Bouchon Bakery retail store

## The International Experience

The opportunity provided to work alongside Head Baker, Matt McDonnell, greatly enhanced the Fellow's knowledge of wild yeast breads such as sour dough. In particular, the Fellow developed a deeper understanding of dough development using selected flours, the importance of correct dough temperature within the bread-making process, dough-mixing techniques, dough pre-shaping and final shaping methods and proving of the dough.

Dough mixing was an area the Fellow found extremely valuable. There are differences in the breads produced at Bouchon Bakery compared to breads produced by the Fellow elsewhere. Breads produced using wild yeast can be proved for much longer periods, and do not collapse as readily as bread made using commercial yeast. The recovery of the dough was remarkable. Dough that collapses during a proving stage will generally not recover during baking. However, dough produced using natural occurring yeasts actually benefit from being almost over-proved to the point of collapse.

### St Helena, Napa Valley

#### The Culinary Institute of America (CIA)<sup>8</sup>

**Contact:** Stephen Durfee, Pastry Instructor

The CIA is located in Greystone, a town south of St Helena, Napa Valley, California. Stephen Durfee, a CIA Pastry Instructor, gave the Fellow a comprehensive tour of the campus. The Institute offers a range of culinary educational programs including hospitality certificate and degree courses. It also runs classes, cooking demonstrations and workshops for amateur food and wine enthusiasts. These courses are updated regularly to ensure participants can have innovative food experiences. The campus also has a restaurant and is a popular venue for weddings and private functions.

Students have access to a state-of-the-art kitchen for their cookery, baking and pastry training. The CIA is an important linkage mechanism between culinary education and local producers.



*The CIA, Greystone campus*

---

<sup>8</sup> [www.ciachef.edu/](http://www.ciachef.edu/)



## The International Experience



*The CIA kitchen*

Like what is being done by the CIA in the Napa Valley, regional culinary and hospitality training organisations throughout Australia need to become more active in promoting and nurturing regional produce. Furthermore, Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and the hospitality industry need to collaborate in produce and delivering regional food competency units for inclusion in the current Hospitality Training Package.



*The CIA kitchen*



*The CIA kitchen*

# The International Experience



*Equipment at the CIA*



*Equipment at the CIA*

## **St Helena Farmers Market<sup>9</sup>**

**Contact:** Tucker Taylor, Head Gardner, The French Laundry

St Helena is a 30-minute drive north of Yountville. For the past 24 years the St Helena Farmers Market has been running every Friday morning between May and October. The market has a wide variety of stalls ranging from fruit and vegetables to artisan cheese. The market is a magnet for Napa Valley chefs keen to access farm gate produce at competitive prices. It is also a popular meeting place on Friday mornings for local growers and producers as well as local and visiting food buffs. Students from the St Helena campus of the CIA have a stall at the market where they sell herbs, flowers and food they have prepared.



*St Helena Farmers Market*

---

<sup>9</sup> [www.sthelenafarmersmkt.org/](http://www.sthelenafarmersmkt.org/)

# The International Experience



*St Helena Farmers Market*



*St Helena Farmers Market*

Farmers markets such as St Helena offer low price fresh produce that may not be readily available in local supermarkets and retail stores. They are also a valuable community activity. Farmers markets are an excellent showcase for local and regional food industries.

The St Helena visit has further inspired the Fellow to seek support from State Governments, regional local councils and business groups to develop regional food activity programs ranging from food festivals to region-specific education workshops where locally grown produce has star billing.

# Knowledge Transfer: Applying the Outcomes

The Fellow will be taking every available opportunity to share the experiences and knowledge gained from his time working with TKRG. Target audiences will include relevant RTOs, regional councils, national, state and regional tourism and hospitality industry organisations, as well as farming and horticultural industry associations.

Through a series of workshops the Fellow will outline the business model used by TKRG and their strategies promoting the use of regional produce as a principal element in their menu offerings.

As a starting point the Fellow will first pilot these workshops and other educational initiatives in Tasmania's Tamar Valley region. Financial and in-kind assistance for these workshops is being sought from the Tasmanian Skills Institute and Tourism Tasmania. In conjunction with the Tasmania Skills Institute, the Fellow will be conducting a series of practical workshops for cookery apprentices across Tasmania. These workshops are planned for the first half of 2010. These workshops will focus on the use of regional produce and demonstrations on contemporary presentation skills.

The development of an effective workshop series across the Tamar Valley will then be able to be utilised across other Australian regions that market themselves as tourism and hospitality locations. The best time and venues for such workshops will be in conjunction with regional food and wine festivals, agricultural field days and other high profile regional events.

The announcement of a scholarship opportunity for a Launceston/Tamar Valley Cookery apprentice or recently qualified trades person would also form part of the workshop agenda. This scholarship is to be developed in conjunction with the Launceston City Council sister-city relationship with the Napa Valley, TKRG and The Tasmania Skills Institute. It is the Fellow's intention to develop this scholarship as a tool to continually foster educational opportunities for individuals working in smaller, regional areas impacted by the implications of not keeping abreast of the importance of producing food derived from regional ingredients.

The current Tourism and Hospitality Training Package does not specifically include units of competence that correlate to educating future chefs within Australia to design a food experience primarily based on locally grown or produced ingredients. Thus, the Fellow is also developing a practical skills training program in artisan bread and pastry making for Tasmanian apprentices, trade qualified bakers and pastry cooks and chefs. This training program will introduce participants to innovative methods of bread production with an emphasis on naturally-leavened breads with slow fermentation periods to achieve a unique taste and structure. The program will be undertaken with the support of the Bakery Industry Association of Tasmania (BIAT) and the Tasmanian Skills Institute.



# Recommendations

## Government

### Recommendations

- That national, state and regional tourism departments and agencies give funding priority to Australia's food, wine and tourism regions being marketed to Australian and international tourists.
- That rural, regional and semi-urban Local Government encourages the establishment of regular farmers' and producers' markets and local community food events and festivals.
- That the Launceston City Council use its sister-city relationship with the Napa Valley Council to establish an annual scholarship opportunity for a locally engaged apprentice or young chef to gain work experience in the Napa Valley with an organisation such as TKRG.
- That the Launceston City Council fund the Fellow to conduct a workshop on artisan baking and the use of regional produce in conjunction with Festivale.

## Industry Networks and Professional Associations

### Recommendation

- That national, state and regional tourism authorities, the Restaurant and Catering Association of Australia and their state affiliates, The Australian Culinary Federation and the Bread Manufacturing Industry Association of Australia collaborate in sponsoring the Fellow to run an ongoing series of artisan baking practical workshops for apprentices and qualified chefs.

## Education and Training

### Recommendations

- That the TAFE Tourism and Hospitality Teachers Association, Service Skills Australia and representatives of the Australian hospitality industry work collaboratively to develop new competency units for inclusion in the Certificate III in Hospitality (Commercial Cookery SIT30807) qualification that focus on the skills and knowledge relating to regional produce.
- That the Tasmanian Skills Institute provide funding to enable selected members of its staff to visit the Culinary Institute of America to observe the focus given to regional cuisine training.

## ISS Institute

### Recommendation

- That the ISS Institute, AgriFood Skills Australia and the Bread Manufacturing Industry Association of Australia collaborate to further Fellowships in artisan baking.



# References

## Books

Keller, T 1999, *The French Laundry Cookbook*, Artisan, New York

Allam, P and Mcguinness, D, 2009, *Bourke Street Bakery, The Ultimate Baking Companion*, Murdoch Books, NSW

## Websites

[www.sthelenafarmersmkt.org/](http://www.sthelenafarmersmkt.org/)

[www.ciachef.edu/](http://www.ciachef.edu/)

[www.bouchonbakery.com](http://www.bouchonbakery.com)

[www.bouchonbistro.com](http://www.bouchonbistro.com)

[www.frenchlaundry.com](http://www.frenchlaundry.com)

[www.perseny.com](http://www.perseny.com)