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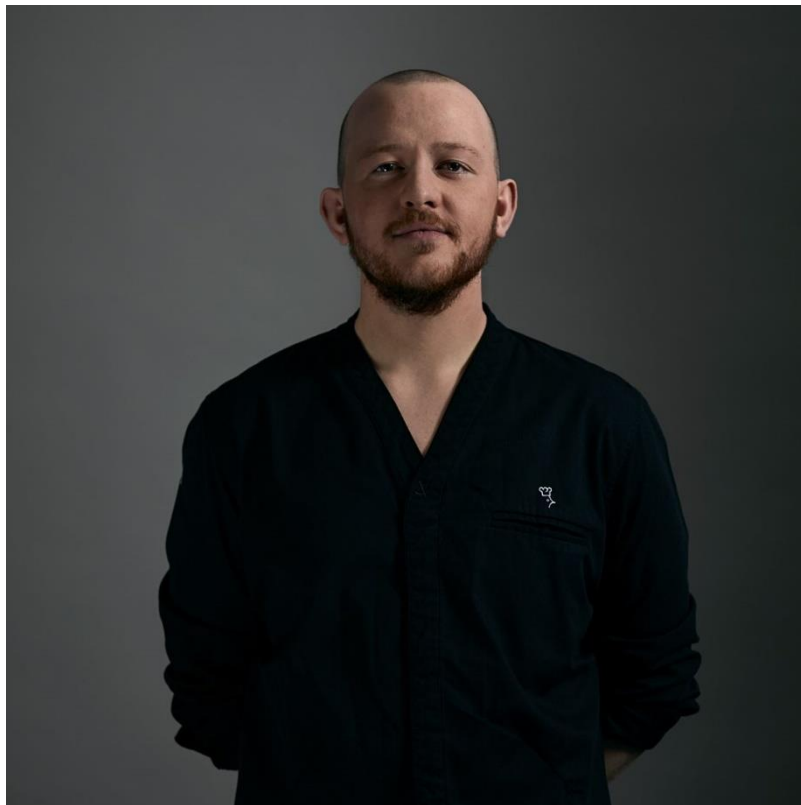
Coda Dessert Dining - Rene Frank



INTRODUCTION

With great pleasure, I present to you my Uccelin story. I heard about the foundation through a past Uccelin who highly recommended it and all the incredible opportunities it had to offer. After finishing a summer season and not knowing what came next in my culinary journey I decided to apply. To my surprise, two months after applying I received an e-mail and to my disbelief, I had secured a place in the foundation. With this acceptance also came a little fear, but huge excitement that I could travel the world learning different styles of cuisine, meeting new inspiring people while sharing my love and passion for food and pastry.

Portrait made by Irina Garcia



SCHLOSS SCHAUENSTEIN

ANDREAS CAMINADA

I. On Tuesday the 11th of April I arrived in Fürstenau ready to begin my first day of my Uccelin programme. Full of nerves but bursting with energy and excitement, I decided to take a walk in the beautiful surrounding forest before I started, to clear my mind.

When I arrived at the castle, I met with Anthea. She gave me a detailed tour of the grounds, casa Caminada, wine cellar, bakery, Oz, coffee roastery and luxury rooms offered by Schloss Schauenstein. Once the tour was finished, I met with Head chef Marcel, who showed me around the kitchen and introduced me to all staff who welcome me with open arms.

I started directly, hands on in the pastry with Vanessa and Martina. Where I was intrusted with all daily preparations and could also part take in plating during the service.

During my stage I could try all the pastry dishes offered on the menu. where I could learn a lot, by identifying all flavours and textures in each dish to help further my knowledge and adapt my palate too new combinations. Each dish giving freshness and acidity followed by an elegant plating style, with the use of self-picked herbs gathered from the garden and surrounding forest.

It was great to see a huge Supply of locally sourced produce being used and prepared with precision. I also had the opportunity to work with Martial at John Baker's Bakery, which was a huge treat for me. I finished work in the kitchen at 7:00 PM so I could get some rest before the 2:00 AM start in the bakery. But with my excitement didn't get any sleep.



First job was heating the stove, but not until we had our coffee. The timing is very important when working with a wood stove, the bread must be formed, proofed ready to bake by the time the oven reaches temperature. This process is done twice per night. I obtained great wisdom from Martial about the processing of different doughs. Schloss Schauenstein was a great experience where I got to meet great people and see interesting practices and techniques.



BLACK AND BLAZE

My first day at Black and Blaze started at Schmück to Go coffee window where I



was greeted by the head barista Anise. She was full of energy, with excitement to teach me. We enjoyed a coffee together while she showed me around and explained to me the everyday tasks of the business.

Anais is a very passionate person and loves to make coffee. This made it so interesting learning from her. With every question I asked, I got a detailed response which was so satisfying. The most interesting fact for me was learning that no matter how amazing the coffee beans you work with. If the process is not executed correctly the result will always be substandard, for example when the ground of the coffee is too coarse, the extraction time will be too short, therefore producing a sour result. Whereas when the course is too fine or over tamped. In the filter basket, the result will be an undesirable bitter coffee because the extraction time will be too long. I never thought making a cappuccino could be so technical as it is. Baristas always make it look so effortless. I had the chance to make several, but never achieved the perfect result. I've never drank so many cappuccinos in one day. When creating the best latte or cappuccino it's all about the milk. Using cold milk fill the Stainless-steel Jug to the bottom of the spout and place the steam wand just below the surface of the milk and turn steam on full. It is important not to incorporate too much air. After approximately 5 seconds, move the wand halfway into the jug, with an inclination to the side to create a Whirlpool effect. This incorporates the foamed

milk with the steamed milk. when the jug starts to be too hot to hold the milk is ready, (65°C). Next tap the jug on a hard surface to remove the air bubbles and swirl the jug until the milk turns shiny.

The second day I was at the Black and Blaze Roastery where I learned all about the coffee roasting process from Pascal. During the roasting process the coffee beans get vacuumed into the hopper where the coffee stays until the oven reaches desired temperature. Once you drop the coffee into the oven it can take anywhere between six to eighteen minutes depending on the recipe and desired roast. when the temperature is between 195°-196°C we should be able to hear the First Crack, this is when the maillard reaction takes place and the coffee produces its characteristics. When the coffee is roasted, it gets dropped into the cooler to stop the roasting. Then it gets passed through a de stoning machine to ensure the beans are clean with no stones inside. Lastly the beans are packaged and stored. Learning about how to develop a roast profile and how to measure the quality of the roast along with so much more was an amazing experience. I will never again see coffee in the same way.

Pictures made by photographer Irina Garcia



SWISS PASTRY DESIGN

ROLF MÜRNER

Sunday, the 30th of May, I set off from Zurich to my next stop, Swiss pastry design in the beautiful village of Rüeggisberg, where I stayed in a wonderful pension called Bären.

Started my first day on Monday with nerves flying high, knowing Swiss pastry design is one of the best Pastries in Switzerland. I was greeted at the door by Matthias, a former Uccelin and introduced to everyone which had a warm welcome for me. After a quick chat and a tour of the production it was straight to work. Having never worked in a pastry shop, I was most curious of the organisation.

It was amazing to see the large assortment they had, in addition to producing for Läderach and holding large dessert buffets out of house. With a young energetic team, which made the learning process very enjoyable.

Working closely alongside Matthias who is Rolf's right hand man, who overlooks the everyday production and Michelle who oversees the production of all things chocolate. I got a great insight into the everyday production and techniques used.

Thursday, we had a large event in Bern catering for 150 people, where I could join Rolf and Cornelia. Given the large assortment, we needed two hours to set up the buffet. From the beginning on, all guests were eager to try the eye-catching pastries. As the buffet went on the more amazing compliments we received.



After my week I was feeling refreshed with new knowledge learnt and having met yet again another interesting fun team.



FELCHLIN

With a mind full of pastry and train ride from Brunnen the programme continued. All Uccelins met over dinner and shared our experiences. We all arrived together the next morning, full of excitement and ready to dive into the world of Chocolate, where we were welcomed with a smile from Erich Keller.

Before we started our day, we enjoyed coffee and Croissant's together. We started our programme with a sensory training and after Erich explained to us the history of the company. The sensory training was new to nearly all of us, which was incredibly interesting. We had to identify the flavours which presented themselves during the tasting, which often differed within the group.

After a delicious lunch, we were guided by Erich through the production, but first a detailed briefing of the strict health and safety standards that must be met. Once we gowned up and were disinfected, we could start the tour. It was truly expiring to see the process from start to finish, from the roasting, The Couching, all the way to the end product, packed and ready to be dispatched.

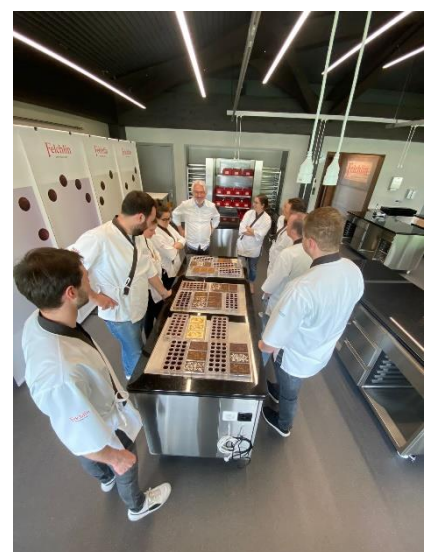
Thursday it was time for more theory, followed by an afternoon of practical. Learning all techniques about tempering, but more importantly identifying the many problems that can arise in the process such as false storage and poor tempering methods.

After lunch we had a demonstration about chocolate tempering and went on to temper our own chocolate and produce pralines, chocolate bars and Ganache. We also had a crash course about all types of sugar, which was really mind blowing for me.

I could never have imagined the depth of knowledge that I would obtain from Felchlin, identifying mistakes I have always made, not realising there are better



and more efficient ways of making certain products. The experiences and techniques I learned at Felchlin I will use for the rest of my career.



BIOTISCH FOFFA & RIEDI

Teusday directly after my chocolate experience, I set off to Rietberg where I would spend my next three days at Biotisch Foffa. I chose Biotisch because as a chef, I think it is so important to understand the process and complications that is involved with growing organic produce along with the hard work and care that is taken before it reaches any kitchen.

Wednesday morning, ready to get my hands dirty I met with Marcel, he explained to me what they did there and gave me a tour of the vegetable farm. With the introduction over I dived straight into work helping Janine spreading the hay in the greenhouse and planting seedlings. Around the seedlings we put an organic coconut mesh to prevent production of weeds.

After lunch I drove with Marcel to another plot of land where we have harvested asparagus and salad for the shop. In summer, asparagus can grow up to 25 centimetres in a 24-hour period, therefore it was very important to check them every day.

Thursday morning, we weeded the seedlings while I asked 1000 questions to Janine. When Marcel returned, we went to start the harvest of carrots, fennel, broccoli, asparagus and salad for the weekend Market in chur.

Friday consisted mainly of the washing and packaging of all produce. In this time, I could connect with the other workers and ask more questions about the whole production.

Every two, three weeks 3500 new seedlings are planted ensuring a constant supply of produce throughout the season with a variety of 60 different species. The plot is changed every time a new crop is planted. Crop rotation is very important to always have nutrient rich soil. All organic waste is kept and mixed



into the soil once it has broken down to naturally fertilize. They also grow small plots of wheat which gives nitrogen when used as green mist. Having a thriving biodiversity ensures a healthy ecosystem.

There are many challenges that vegetable producers must face such as weather conditions, weed management, unwanted insects and snails, Fungus (mehltau) and many more.

Working with Marcel and Mathias was a great pleasure and truly an invaluable lesson of knowledge which got me already planning my own garden for next year.



GERANIUM

RASMUS KOFOED

Arriving in Copenhagen on the 14th of May three days before my stage at Geranium gave me time to settle in and enjoy the intriguing city of Copenhagen.

Every morning started with team breakfast followed by a briefing for the day. The first week I got an experience of the main kitchen which is divided into four sections. Every section using a huge variety of freshly foraged herbs from surrounding forests and parks.

I enjoyed seeing the simplistic cooking style, meaning with less components receiving maximum flavours, through the usage of preservatives, fresh herbs, produce, cooking methods and techniques.

Giving that service preparation takes quite some time due to the selection of fresh herbs, that are prepared for every dish before each service meant the organisation and time management of every section must be carefully planned.

After seeing the main operation of the kitchen, I moved on to the pastry section where I spent the remaining duration of my stage.

I have always had a big interest in Nordic cuisine so finally having the chance to dive into the Nordic dessert seen really interested me.

I got a great insight into all kinds of tuilles such as mushroom and carrot tuilles along with different methods and recipes which are less susceptible to moisture.



During service one person stayed in the pastry to produce for the following day. While two people went to the service kitchen and two went to the production kitchen. In the main kitchen we sent the pine and yogurt pre-dessert and one of the main desserts which was a mushroom mousse, tuille, powder and caramel all made from ceps with a poached pear on the bottom. Giving a perfect delivery of textures and flavours, it was my favourite.



The main kitchen was responsible for sending the first dessert which was carrot, sea buckthorn and pumpkinseed oil and the petit fours. The petit fours consisted of marzipan cake, pralines and a flower tuille dusted with spices.

Geranium is most certainly a unique kitchen comprised of great flavours and techniques but most important an incredible working environment and family feel.



HOTEL DE VILLE

FRANCK GIOVANNINI



After a long day of travelling from Copenhagen to Lausanne on Monday I arrived at my new accommodation where I met with Carmen house owner and personal assistant of Franck Giovannini at Hotel de Ville and two other chefs also living there.

Tuesday morning on arrival to the restaurant I was greeted by Nicolas the head pastry chef and his team and got the tour and basic overview of the kitchen and its organisation.

Getting straight to work I helped them weighing out many different recipes while they prepared for the first lunch service of the week. During the service, to my surprise I could help plating all dishes.

Every day it was my job to make sure all tuilles and biscuits were enough for the service. Working as fast as possible so that I could help with other tasks and prepare all recipes and learn as many techniques as I could.

Feeling great to be back in a traditional French kitchen and being able to refresh my knowledge of the classics. Giving that every chef has their own methods and theory's about how a recipe should be made it's a never-ending interesting learning process.

Together with Nicolas I made inverted puff pastry which was a first for me. This is when you start with the butter on the outside. It was quite tricky giving that outside was very hot and the butter tended to melt when you don't work fast enough. I also learned from Nicolas how to make the perfect eclairs.



As time went on, I could get involved in all tasks such as tempering of chocolate, making of all creams, pate de fruits and shortcrust's.

I really enjoyed my time at Hotel de Ville and all they had to offer. The language wasn't as big a problem as I imagined.

Every morning and evening all chefs greeted each other with a handshake which is very important in the kitchen. A big highlight of my stage was the delicious staff food at lunch and dinner.

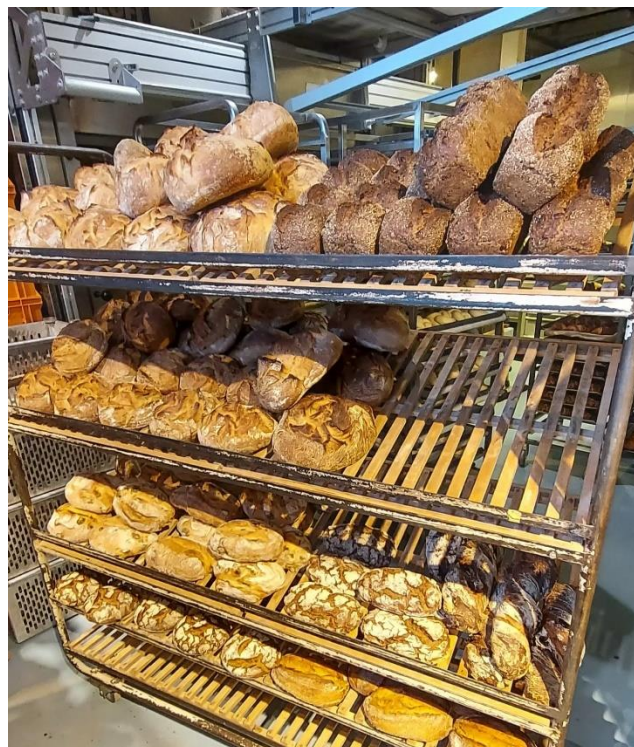


JOHN BAKER

My first two days at John Baker started at 5:00 am, where I joined Lukas the bakery manger with the production of all doughs. In this time, I got a great insight and a lot of tips about bread making from Lukas. I never knew that adding salt in the dough to early would destroy the structure.

On my last three days at John Baker, I started at 2 am which was great because I enjoy to work in the night. One person is on the oven while the other forms all the bread with help from the oven operator. All bread and Danish pastries needed to be ready for the opening of the shop at 7am and all deliveries prepared to send out which meant it was a fast-working pace. The first five hours flew.

Once all bread for the day was ready, we started to prepare all pastries for the next day, croissant, pain au chocolate, brioche etc.



CODA DESSERT DINING

RENE FRANK

For many years Coda was a huge inspiration for me and now my time had finally come to experience the amazing concept of Rene Frank.

I started Monday at 8:30 where I met with Alena. She showed me around the restaurant and then we started to produce for the following days ahead.

At Coda they have two different working shifts, the production team starts at 8:30 until 17:30 and the service team starts at 15:00 until finish. I spent 3 weeks on the early shift and one week on the late shift.

Being in the production team was most interesting for me because I got to see all processes and how every component of each dish was created. Seen as they use majority of reductions from sweet fibrous vegetables such as sweet potatoes, turnip, carrots, beetroot, tomatoes, and parsnip meant a lot of time juicing produce.

The flavour profiles of umami achieved in such processes as preservatives, reductions, semi dehydration was an incredible experience to witness, taste and be a part of.

Using maple sugar as a main sweetener which adds a lot of character to different produce. I also got an insight into their method of producing bean to bar chocolate. They use muscovado sugar in the production which gives a unique malt note.



I spent my last week in the service which was another world. Every component of every dish is scaled ensuring that every guest is delivered the same result. All guests arrive between 19:00 and 19:30 which gives a great pace for service.

After my second week I got invited to dine which was a truly unforgettable experience. Receiving a 16 course uniquely paired menu including snacks and drink pairing which for me was the best menu I have ever eaten. Coda was the highlight of my program.



FINAL WORDS

I could have never imagined the immense amount of knowledge and experience, I have gained from my Uccelin-journey. A huge respect and thank you to all producers and restaurants that gave me the opportunity to work with them in their amazing establishments and all the unforgettable kind people I had the pleasure to meet along my travels. But most of all a huge thank you to Anthea who organised my programme and made everything so easy to follow and was always available no matter what and a special thank you to Sarah and Andreas Caminada founders of the Uccelin programme who gave me the chance to take part in this once in a life time opportunity and to the board of trustees who make it all possible.

