

EXECUTIVE CHEF

Oakmont Kitchen & Bar + Olive & Oak Deli
Downtown Visalia, California
Full-Time | Salaried Culinary Leadership Position

Position Overview

We are looking for an experienced and creative Executive Chef to lead the culinary development and opening of Oakmont Kitchen & Bar and Olive & Oak Deli, two new restaurant concepts located together in Downtown Visalia.

This is an opportunity for a chef who wants more than simply executing someone else's menu.

The Executive Chef will work directly with ownership to develop the culinary identity of both concepts and will have meaningful ownership of the menu, product, kitchen systems and culinary team from the beginning.

Oakmont Kitchen & Bar will be an elevated, dinner-focused restaurant featuring steaks, fresh pastas, seafood and modern American dishes built around quality ingredients and thoughtful execution.

Olive & Oak Deli will be a fast-casual Italian-inspired deli focused on exceptional sandwiches, fresh ingredients, efficient production and consistent execution.

The Executive Chef will oversee culinary operations for both concepts while developing systems that allow each to maintain its own identity and service style.

Key Responsibilities

Menu & Culinary Development

- Lead menu development for Oakmont Kitchen & Bar and Olive & Oak Deli in collaboration with ownership.
- Develop recipes, specifications, plating standards and production procedures.
- Create food that is distinctive, approachable and appropriate for each concept.
- Build menus that balance creativity with operational execution and profitability.
- Conduct recipe costing and maintain appropriate food-cost targets.
- Develop seasonal menu changes, specials and new products.
- Participate in tastings and menu-development sessions with ownership.
- Establish clear standards for ingredient quality, preparation, presentation and consistency.
- Help establish the culinary identity of both brands.

Pre-Opening & Kitchen Development

- Participate in the final development of both kitchen operations.

- Review equipment, smallwares and production needs.
- Assist with kitchen workflow and station organization.
- Establish vendor relationships and product specifications.
- Build ordering, receiving, inventory and storage systems.
- Develop prep systems, production pars and kitchen opening/closing procedures.
- Recruit and build the opening culinary team.
- Create and lead BOH training prior to opening.
- Lead kitchen execution during mock services, previews and soft opening.

Culinary Leadership

- Recruit, hire, train and develop the culinary team.
- Directly lead and develop the Sous Chef/Kitchen Manager and other BOH leaders.
- Establish a professional kitchen culture built around accountability, urgency, respect, cleanliness and consistency.
- Maintain a strong presence on the line and in production.
- Coach employees in real time and address performance issues promptly.
- Build systems that allow the kitchen to perform consistently regardless of who is working.
- Identify and develop future culinary leaders.

Food Quality & Execution

- Maintain responsibility for the quality and consistency of all food served.
- Establish and enforce recipes, portion standards and presentation expectations.
- Ensure appropriate ticket times and production flow.
- Maintain strong communication between culinary and service teams.
- Regularly evaluate food quality and make adjustments when standards are not being met.
- Maintain proper preparation, storage, rotation and handling of products.

Financial & Cost Management

- Take ownership of food cost and kitchen labor performance.
- Develop recipe and plate costing for menu items.
- Establish inventory and purchasing controls.
- Monitor waste, yields, portions and production levels.
- Conduct and oversee regular inventory counts.
- Maintain appropriate staffing levels based on projected business.
- Review financial results with the General Manager and ownership.
- Identify opportunities to improve profitability without sacrificing product quality.

Vendor & Product Management

- Develop productive relationships with food and equipment vendors.
- Source products appropriate to each concept and its price point.
- Establish product specifications and approved substitutions.

- Review pricing and purchasing opportunities regularly.
- Ensure receiving procedures protect both product quality and company assets.

Food Safety & Compliance

- Maintain exceptional kitchen cleanliness and organization.
- Ensure compliance with applicable health and food-safety regulations.
- Maintain appropriate food-safety certifications.
- Establish proper temperature, labeling, storage and sanitation procedures.
- Ensure employees are trained in and consistently follow food-safety standards.

What We're Looking For

- 5+ years of progressive culinary leadership experience preferred.
- Previous Executive Chef, Chef de Cuisine or senior kitchen leadership experience strongly preferred.
- Experience opening a restaurant or developing a new culinary concept is highly desirable.
- Strong foundation in scratch cooking and high-quality ingredients.
- Experience with elevated full-service dining.
- Knowledge of steaks, seafood, sauces and fresh pasta is highly desirable.
- Experience with high-volume or fast-casual production is a plus.
- Strong understanding of recipe costing, inventory, purchasing and food-cost management.
- Proven ability to recruit, train and lead kitchen teams.
- Strong organizational and communication skills.
- Ability to balance creativity with consistency, efficiency and profitability.
- California food-safety certification as required.

The Right Person

We want a chef who cares deeply about the product but understands that a successful restaurant requires more than great food.

The right Executive Chef is creative without being impractical, demanding without losing the team and confident enough to take ownership while still being collaborative.

We want someone who walks into an empty kitchen and sees what it can become.

This chef should be excited by the opportunity to create menus, develop people, establish systems and ultimately be able to look at these restaurants and know they helped build them.

Relationship With the General Manager

The Executive Chef and General Manager will operate as peer senior leaders of the restaurants.

The Executive Chef will have primary responsibility for culinary product, BOH operations, food cost and kitchen team development. The General Manager will have primary responsibility for overall restaurant operations, guest experience, FOH leadership and restaurant financial performance.

Both positions will work closely together and directly with ownership. Neither side of the restaurant succeeds without the other.

Schedule

This is a full-time salaried leadership position. The schedule will vary based on business needs and will include evenings, weekends and holidays. Significant hands-on involvement will be required during development, opening and the first several months of operation.

Compensation

Competitive salary commensurate with experience, with benefits and additional compensation opportunities to be discussed during the hiring process.

About the Project

Oakmont Kitchen & Bar and Olive & Oak Deli are part of a new hospitality project in Downtown Visalia being developed by an experienced local ownership and operating team.

We're looking for a chef who wants to join the project early enough to leave their fingerprints on it — from the first menu tasting to the first night of service and beyond.

For the right chef, this is an opportunity to help create two new restaurants rather than simply inherit them.

Equal Opportunity Employer

We are committed to creating an inclusive workplace and consider qualified applicants without regard to characteristics protected by applicable law.