



SOUTH AFRICAN
CHEFS ASSOCIATION
EST. 1974

Limpopo Chef's Academy Graduation 2025

President's Address

Friday 28 February 2025
Meropa Sun Convention Centre

Chef Coo Pillay



Distinguished guests, esteemed staff and faculty, proud families, and most importantly, the graduating class of the Limpopo Chefs Academy.

Good morning,

It is both a privilege and an honor to stand before you today as the President of the South African Chefs Association (SA Chefs). Today is a day of celebration, reflection, and anticipation for the bright futures that lie ahead for all of you, the graduates of this prestigious academy.

Graduating from the Limpopo Chefs Academy is no small achievement. It represents years of hard work, determination, and the mastery of your craft. As you stand here today, I want to commend each and every one of you for your commitment to excellence and for having the courage to pursue this noble and rewarding profession.

Graduates, today marks not just the completion of a program, but the beginning of an exciting new chapter in your lives. You have worked tirelessly to hone your skills and refine your knowledge, and now you are ready to step into the world as professional chefs—ready to contribute to the ever-evolving culinary landscape.

The culinary world is a unique one. It requires more than just technical skills. It demands passion, creativity, innovation, and the ability to handle the intense pressures that come with working in a fast-paced environment. But more than that, it's about creating connections—through flavors, through experiences, and through the magic you create in the kitchen. As chefs, you are responsible for making the ordinary extraordinary. You are in the business of transforming simple ingredients into memorable experiences that delight and nourish people.

I would like to take a moment to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the lecturers and the entire team at both campuses of the Limpopo Chefs Academy. Your unwavering dedication, passion, and commitment to shaping the next generation of chefs is truly commendable. You have not only taught technical skills but have also instilled values of discipline, creativity, and professionalism in these graduates. The impact of your mentorship extends far beyond the classroom and will be carried by each graduate into their future careers. Thank you for your tireless efforts in nurturing and guiding these talented individuals.

The South African Chefs Association stands behind you as you embark on this journey. We are a community of culinary professionals, and we are committed to supporting your growth, providing mentorship, and creating opportunities to help you succeed. You are now part of a larger family, one that is dedicated to elevating the standards of our industry and ensuring that South Africa's culinary reputation continues to grow both locally and globally.



As you step into the next stage of your careers, I urge you to continue pushing boundaries, to stay curious, and to never stop learning. The culinary world is constantly evolving, and there will always be new techniques, new trends, and new challenges to navigate. Embrace those opportunities and remain adaptable. But never forget the importance of your roots. Stay true to your unique culinary voice and the passion that first brought you into the kitchen.

Remember, your journey is your own. While there will be many influences along the way, it is your creativity, your determination, and your resilience that will ultimately define your success. Be bold, be brave, and most importantly, be kind to yourself along the way. Success is not only about the end result but about the journey and the lessons learned along the way.

To the families and loved ones who have supported these graduates—thank you. Your encouragement and unwavering belief in their potential have played an essential role in their success. Today is as much a celebration of your dedication as it is of the graduates' achievements.

Graduates, I am confident that each of you will leave a lasting mark on the culinary world. Whether you choose to work in a bustling restaurant kitchen, pursue entrepreneurial ventures, or become leaders within the culinary community, the future is yours. You are well-prepared for the challenges ahead, and I look forward to seeing the remarkable contributions you will make.

Once again, congratulations to each and every one of you. You have worked hard, and today is a testament to your efforts. Enjoy the celebrations, you have earned it! The journey ahead is full of endless possibilities, and I can't wait to see all that you will accomplish.

Thank you.

Chef Coo Pillay

