



**Barry Tonks, Executive Chef at Sanderson Hotel in London**, has an incredibly impressive CV. From starting his professional career at the Dorchester, to working in the kitchen of multiple AA Rosette awarded restaurant and holding various positions at three different Michelin Star restaurants, before earning his own Michelin Star and 3 AA Rosettes at the McClements Restaurant in Twickenham.

Barry's talents have let him travel the world, working as Executive Head Chef at Hemingway's in Nairobi from its opening, leading a brigade of 40 chefs to establish the restaurant as one of Nairobi's newest top dining destinations.

In his previous role as Executive Chef at the Gherkin, Barry was responsible for overseeing kitchens on four floors of a multi-outlet operation, including events, private dining, a members' club and a restaurant and bar. He manages a brigade of 30 chefs and is responsible for the day-to-day running of a very busy and successful operation – implementing all food concepts, menus, recipes, training, kitchen manuals and systems, purchasing, recruitment... the list goes on.

Now working at the prestigious Sanderson Hotel, it's safe to say that Barry is at the top of his game. But where did his extremely successful career as a chef begin? **North East Scotland College**.

Barry attended the College (then Aberdeen College) between 1992 and 1994, gaining a GSVQ level 2 and 3 in hospitality.

"It had a huge impact on my career," he said of his time there. "I met Brian Mutch, a part time lecturer who gave me a job at the weekends whilst studying at Aberdeen College. It was Brian that got me into competitions and sent me to The Dorchester for a 3-month work placement during the summer holidays."

Barry's first job post-College was at the world-famous Dorchester in London. He believes that opportunities presented to him during his time studying in Aberdeen helped him to secure the position of commis chef in their kitchens.

"At College I entered the Nestle Toque D'or competition. Having reached the finals in London at The Dorchester was amazing and it pretty much secured me my first position as Commis Chef there."

From there, Barry's career took off, and yours could too.

"You really have to want to do it," Barry said. "It's not just a job! It's a life style; it's who you are and who you will become. You need passion, determination and lots of energy."

A Professional Cookery qualification at NESCol could be the first step on your journey to culinary success, and Barry has some words of advice for anyone hoping to follow in his footsteps:

"Get your head down; get your qualifications; do competitions; work hard; don't get complacent; challenge yourself; be loyal, be confident; be respectful; work for the right chefs; learn and absorb as much as you can, and the rest will follow. It's a marathon not a sprint. But most of all **enjoy your journey – it's a fantastic industry to be in!**"