

Report on the study visit to the Richemont Bakery School of Excellence

Sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Bakers

The aim of the bursaries is to further the knowledge and skills of young up and coming bakers in our industry, who have either just left college, university or have been trained on the job via the apprenticeship programme.

I have now hosted six of these courses and, in my view, this was the best one yet. The selection of candidates was good, without exception, they were all very focused and were so enthusiastic in all aspects of the course. On this point I think the selection process was very good and thanks should go to the members of the selection committee.

On a personal observation, I was pleased to see that some of the candidates had come up through the training programmes, some of which I had personally trained, I was completely taken by surprise at the airport when I met them.

The course content was excellent, two days were spent on confectionery and two days on bread and fermented products. On the confectionery section they made a very wide selection of confectionery including Fruits of the forest eclairs, Kirsch slice, Chocolate tonka patisserie and Avocado cake, which was very unusual and was a vegan verity. On the bread section they again made a selection of Swiss specialities including Spring brioche, which was a very nice vanilla cream filling and finished with boiled raspberry jam, Spelt bread and Spelt hazelnut wave just to name a few. All of the course consisted of short demonstrations followed by making the products hands on. On both sections it was very much hands on with a very full day starting with breakfast between 7.00am and 7.30 am starting the course at sharp on 8.00am with one hour for lunch followed by an afternoon session until 4.30 pm to 5.00pm. Each of the courses also had a session on the theory on confectionery covering chocolate, and on bread covering different grains and dough making processes.

We had breakfast, lunch and most evening meals in the school except for the first night and one evening where the school took us all out for a meal, which was served in the old hostelry for the ancient guilds of Lucerne.

It was interesting that in the evening when everyone was relaxing the talk was always about the course and the wider baking industry, exchanging ideas and experiences. This was very encouraging as it demonstrated how they were all committed to the baking industry.

In conclusion it is my believe that this was a very good investment in the Baking Industry by the Worshipful Company of Bakers, and I am sure we will see these candidates grow through the industry and see more of them in the future. At all times they were a credit to the Company and the baking world.

Liveryman Henry Jefferies