

# RISING STARS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

*In this regular interview, we speak to the under-30s who represent the future of foodservice*

## MARTA DZIECHCIARZ

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Sous chef, Grazing Catering  
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MARIA DZIECHCIARZ

### **What is your current role and what does it entail?**

I am responsible for supervising the kitchen team, as well as planning and directing food production to ensure that the final product is the very best. I work directly with the head chef and executive chef to make sure we are producing high quality food for a very broad range of customers.

We have a flexible food offer here as our clients are all very diverse and have differing requirements. It really keeps things interesting as no two clients are the same.

### **Why did you want to work in foodservice?**

I was always interested in food and cooking; I loved to help my mum out as a child.

Before Grazing I had some experience in a pub kitchen but nothing extensive.

I initially started with Grazing as a general assistant. I expressed an interest in learning more about the kitchen and was fortunate to be invited in to take a look. I was then offered the opportunity to work in the kitchen for one day a week. A few months later I started full-time as a commis chef! I like the challenge and fast pace of working in the kitchen; every day is a new adventure.

### **What education, training and competitions have you undertaken to get this far?**

I don't actually have any formal education in catering. This is the beauty of this industry – if you have a passion for what you do and are prepared to work for it, you can create a brilliant career for yourself. I've worked hard to learn about the industry as well as reading a lot of cookbooks. YouTube is also a great source for information if you want to find it.

I was very fortunate to find a brilliant mentor in Robbie Lorraine, the exec chef at Grazing. I've learned a lot from him, he's got loads of experience and loves to share it. It's great to work in such an environment as you know you have so much support, opportunity and experience to do well and learn.

### **What do you enjoy about the industry?**

Every day is different and it's always a challenge. I've so much to learn. I love working with food, seeing the finished product and knowing people love it is a great feeling, especially after all the hours and effort that go into it.

### **How do you think the industry could improve?**

I think we need to see more female chefs coming through. Our customer base is incredibly diverse in the industry, so it's important that the chefs in the kitchen reflect that too.

I also have a real passion for championing sustainability and reducing food waste. It's very much on the agenda now but there is a lot more that we can all be doing.

### **What are your favourite/least favourite dishes?**

I can't name a single dish but I love anything with Asian flavours – sushi, ramen, beef rendang are some of my favourites. If I had to choose a 'least' favourite, I'd say I'm not too keen on leeks or celery.

### **How do you like to unwind away from work?**

I love to travel; it's fantastic as it gives you so much food inspiration. I really enjoyed a trip to Japan where I learnt so much about how they like to prepare and cook their food. I hope some of this learning is reflected in my attitude towards the food I prepare.

I also really like to camp. Having a few days away from the city with no internet connection – that's my favourite way to recharge.

### **What is your biggest ambition?**

I really just want to continue to grow my skills and knowledge at Grazing and become the best I can at what I do. I think this will help me develop my career and create lots of opportunities for me.

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