

## Tan Wen Yao

### Technical Diploma in Culinary Arts

ITE College West



## Savouring the Fruit of Success

After his 'O' level examinations, Tan Wen Yao took the unconventional choice of taking a gap year to figure out what he wanted to study next. For a year, he worked part-time in areas like event management and banquet service. He eventually made up his mind to learn culinary skills.

Wen Yao applied for both the full-time and traineeship Western Culinary Arts courses at ITE. He was offered a place in the traineeship course, and he took it up without hesitation. Every week, he worked five days at Goodwood Park Hotel, and attended classes at ITE for an additional day. Wen Yao revelled in the intensive schedule and chose to deepen his skills further via the Technical Diploma (TD) in Culinary Arts course as he wanted to learn French cooking techniques.

He took the TD in unprecedented times during the pandemic and saw how restaurants adapted to changing dining regulations. He also savoured the opportunity to learn the different aspects of running a business. Wen Yao excelled and emerged as the valedictorian for the TD course this year.

### Cooking from the Heart

*"I have always found it important to find out what I love to do and to do what I love. This is the reason for having a gap year. I did not want to rush to study and start work without clarity. I wanted to make sure I was on the right path for myself. Cooking is special to me. Food brings people together and I often cook to gather my family over meal. I want to cook for a career, and I hope to learn to cook even more cuisines on top of western cooking."*

### After ITE

Wen Yao is currently a Demi Chef De Partie at Le Bistrot Du Sommelier.

### Top Achievements

- As part of his entrepreneurship project, Wen Yao and his team set up a stall at Timbre+. They took care of all aspects of the business, from the concept and finances to the menu. The changing dining regulations presented challenges, but the team managed to cover costs and bring in a profit.
- For his final-year project, Wen Yao and his course mates developed a vegetarian restaurant concept that incorporated sustainable practices. Their project won praise from a chef of a Michelin-starred restaurant.
- Wen Yao's internship was at a three-Michelin starred restaurant, Odette. Three months into his attachment, the 'Circuit Breaker' restrictions kicked in. He personally saw how Odette responded to the changes and it has exposed him to how businesses can overcome such challenges.