The chef in society: Origins and development.

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Abstract
In his discourse - The Chef In Society: Origins And Development - Marcel R. Escoffier, Graduate Student, School of Hospitality Management at Florida International University, initially offers: “The role of the modern professional chef has its origins in ancient Greece. The author traces that history and looks at the evolution of the executive chef as a manager and administrator.”

“Chefs, as tradespersons, can trace their origins to ancient Greece,” the author offers with citation. “Most were slaves…” he also informs you.

Even at that low estate in life, the chef was master of the slave: in close hand in the environment in which they worked. “In Athens, a cook was the master of all the household slaves…” says Escoffier.

As Athenian influence wanes and Roman civilization picks-up and increase their status as important tradesmen in society. “In ancient Rome and later, societies of cooks were formed, almost a hierarchy,” Escoffier reports. “It was in Rome that cooks established their first academy: Colleqium Coquorum,” he further reports.

Chefs, again, increase their significance during the following Italian Renaissance as the scope of their influence widens.
“...it is an historical fact that the marriage of Henry IV and Catherine de Medici introduced France to the culinary wonders of the Italian Renaissance,” Escoffier enlightens you. “Certainly the professional chef in France became more sophisticated and more highly regarded by society after the introduction of concepts.”

The author wants you to know that by this time cookbooks are already making important inroads and contributing to the history of cooking above and beyond their obvious informational status.

Outside of the apparent European influences in cooking, Escoffier also mentions the development of Chinese and Indian chefs. “It is interesting to note that the Chinese, held by at least one theory as the progenitors of most of the culinary heritage, never developed a high esteem for the position of chef,” Escoffier maintains the historical tack.

“It was not until the middle 18th Century that the first professional chef went public. Until that time, only the great houses of the nobility could afford to maintain a chef,” Escoffier notes. This private-to-public transition, in conjunction with culinary writing are benchmarks for the profession. Chefs now establish authority.

The remainder of the article devotes itself to the development especially the melding of two seminal figures in the culinary arts; Cesar Ritz and August Escoffier. The works of Frederick Taylor are also highlighted.

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