Mathias (17) learned from Michelin-chef Vincent Crepel:- an experience for life

https://www.namdalsavisa.no/mathias-17-fikk-lare-av-michelin-kokken-vincent-crepel-en-opplevelse-for-livet/s/5-121-1491123 , by Martine Torstad Arnø

Such and experience: - Not many can say they have worked with and learned from Michelin-chefs. And we're not only talking about one star, there are two stars. This is so great, says Mathias Westvik Johansen with a smile. Here together with Michelin-chef Vincent Crepel who runs the Terre Restaurant I Cork, Ireland.

High international competence meets local joy for food when the Erasmus+ project "Taste4Skills" met at YNVS this week. This gave the students the chance to work alongside a two-star Michelin-chef.

Rørvik:- There aren't many people who can say they have worked with a two-star Michelin-chef. It is so great, says Mathias Westvik Hoansen proudly.

For the 17-year old this was an unforgettable start of the week when he had the opportunity to learn from some of the best chefs in the world. As part of the Erasmus+

project “Taste4Skills” he worked side by side with Benoit DeWitte and Vincent Crepel, an experience he describes as “Supercool” and “once in a lifetime”.

The project is a cooperation between Ytre Namdal Videregående Skole and Val skoler, who are hosting teachers and students from the well-known Hotelschool Ter Duinen in Belgium, one of Europe’s most prestigious schools in restaurant-and hotel-studies.

- The goal is to highlight underutilized marine resources and how they can be transformed to exciting dishes, explains Håvard Tangvik from the Trøndelag European Office.

Combined products: students at YNVS contributed to the cooking, where they presented and combined local, Norwegian products with Belgian ingredients in dished that were served to the invited guests.

Impressed by the local resources

The initiative was started by Trøndelag European Office in Brussels, who are actively working to connect Trøndelag with European partners and emphasize the regions unique resources and competence internationally.

Through this work they have made connections with the Michelin-chefs.

- The chefs have been so positive throughout the day, saying how good the food is and how available everything is. One can walk into the fjord and catch fish and scallops, Tangvik says.

Important cooperation: Håvard Tangvik from the Trøndelag European Office who, together with project-advisor Hilde Myrvold, have been central in connecting with the Michelin-chefs. He tells us the foreign guests were ecstatic about the access to fresh seafood.

He believes the students, who might want to go out and experience the world, will benefit from seeing the interest in their home country as well, showing they have something to be proud of. At the same time, they can build a network and use it later in life.

Teacher at YNVS, Heidi Hernes, highlight the project as an important tool for recruitment as it emphasize the vocation training and creates excitement among the students.

- It creates excitement, and I think it contributed to the students talking together about these experiences, which is important to put ourselves on the map when they are going to apply for jobs later.

Former student contributed: The project has been dependent on solid support from local actors. At the same time they have retrieved prior students to the project, among others Andreas Anker Hansen, who contributed with his competence when he took the trip from Leka to serve lunch at Risværet for the students and the project-group.

Hectic, but educational

The projectweek started already on Sunday for the hosts. Monday the students were connected, where they first took a trip to Risværet and had lunch served by a previous student at YNVS, Andreas Anker Hansen, before gathering at YNVS to prepare food with local produce together with the experienced chefs.

The students were introduced to a whole new way of working in the kitchen.

Student Mathias Westvik Johansen emphasize what he calls “tweezer-food”, a technique he learned from the Michelin-chef.

- There is a lot of focus on precision, everything has to be the same size. It should be equal, he explains, and describes the environment and the chefs routines as hectic, but educational.
- When Crepel came in, he gave orders right away. “You do this, and you do that”. Not in a strict way, but very professional and to the point. You do what you’re told, and make sure it is done.

Not strict, but professional: Vincent Crepel has two Michelin-stars, and it was therefore extra fun to have him as a guest at YNVS, even though it also meant a bit more professional approach.

The students from Belgium started they education already at 12 years old, which gives them a different base. Mathias tells us they noticed the difference in coordination and professionality, which he will bring with him aswell.

- Maybe I should be more coordinated as well, it has been so educational and an experience for life, he reflects.

Educational: Yana Dmytrivna Mozghova (17) dreams of becoming a star-chef, and think is was educational to meet both the Belgian students and the chefs.

Discipline meets local joy for food.

One of the Belgian students, Senne Peeters, confirms the contrast. He has been a student at Hotelschool Ter Duinen since he was 12 years old, where discipline is a crucial step of every-day-life.

- For us it is very military, and you do what you're told. Its discipline, discipline, discipline, he tells us.

Their school is a boarding school, where the students learn everything from making their bed to keeping their clothes clean, in addition to the culinary education.

Culinary experience: vice-County Mayor Pål Sæther Eiden and mayor Amund Hellesø were among the guests to enjoy the culinary experience. Here they are served by Senne Peeters (17), one of the seven courses.

Despite the strict background, Senne has appreciated the Norwegian approach, and tell us he is deeply impressed by the Norwegian food-culture and its anchoring, and highlights the Norwegian respect to the resources found in the ocean.

- I have learned that you really respect the value, climate and welfare of the ocean and its species. For us it is not as much in focus, even though we know where the food is coming from, Senne says, and adds “it is very nice to see”.