

#sharing_our_passion

A close-up photograph of a hand sprinkling salt. The hand is positioned in the upper left, and a fine stream of white salt crystals falls towards the bottom right. The background is a soft, out-of-focus gradient of red and purple. The text 'WHAT'S COOKING' is overlaid in large white letters at the bottom of the image.

WHAT'S COOKING

An MCTC Magazine

- **Nutrition · Training · Wellbeing**
For Our People

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Credits

Contributors

Issue 01 – “What’s Cooking: An MCTC Magazine”

We are proud to present the first ever issue of our quarterly digital magazine, celebrating the people who bring MCTC’s mission to life. This publication was made possible by the collaborative effort of our passionate team members and partners. A sincere thank you to everyone who contributed their time, creativity and expertise.

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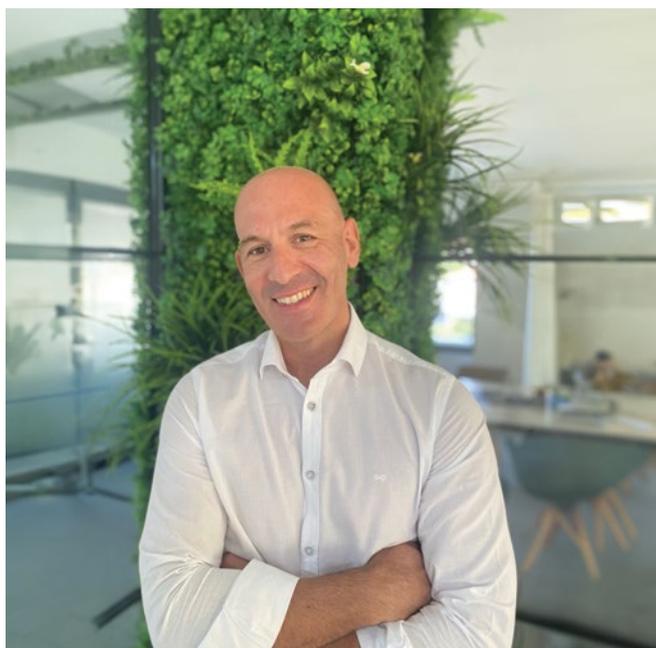
Have a story to tell, an idea to share, or a project worth highlighting? We’d love to hear from you.

This magazine is a platform for the entire **MCTC** community, and **Your Voice Matters**.

To contribute or learn more, contact us at marketing@mctconsultancy.com.

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Message from the CEO



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the very first edition of our MCTC Magazine - What's Cooking: An MCTC Magazine a new and expanded format that brings a fresh perspective to the way we share news, insights, and stories from across the MCTC community.

This magazine represents an exciting evolution from our monthly newsletters, designed to offer a richer, more in-depth look into our latest activities, initiatives, and collaborations. It is a space where we bring together the voices of our team, our clients, and our global partners as we continue striving for excellence in maritime catering, nutrition, training, and, most importantly, crew wellbeing.

Thank you for being part of our journey.

Warm Regards,
Christian Ioannou
CEO

02

**Message from
the Editorial
Team**



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first issue of "What's Cooking: An MCTC Magazine". We are so happy to have you here and excited to share our latest news and developments with you.

This magazine was created with one goal in mind, to bring the MCTC Community even closer together. Whether you are a crew member at sea, a colleague in the office, a partner or a collaborator, "What's Cooking" is for you. It's our new way of telling stories, celebrating milestones, and spotlighting the people and ideas that shape MCTC.

We've always believed that food is more than just fuel, it's a connection. A connection to culture, to care and to one another. This same spirit is what drives this magazine. Through these pages we hope you will feel informed, inspired and part of our broader MCTC Community.

Thank you for joining us on this new journey. We welcome you to be part of our magazine and share your story with us one issue at a time.

Warm Regards,
The Editorial Team



HOME: A Journey from the Kitchen to Purpose

**How one culinary professional found connection,
community, & calling at sea - without ever leaving home.**

Dominique Beato Kampitan,
Culinary Training Manager, MCTC Philippines

“

At a young age, the reason I enjoyed cooking was to make people happy. Today, I cook with purpose.



“HOME, A word that translates to comfort. Not usually used to describe your place of work. For me, it came as a surprise.”

From Pastries to Purpose

It was September 2022 when my journey with MCTC began. At the time, I was running a small pastry business from home, a full-time baker navigating the tail end of the pandemic. Then came the invitation from a familiar face: Chef Faysal Sonmez, a former colleague and then Culinary Training Consultant.

The role? Someone who supports galley crew aboard merchant vessels with cooking tips and culinary advice. It sounded intriguing. Flexible hours, working from home, and a chance to still manage my business. But something unexpected happened.

From the very first conversation with Tonia Drousiotou, our Culinary Training Supervisor, I felt a connection. It wasn't just professional, it was personal. Talking to her felt like reconnecting with an old friend. It was my first clue that MCTC was something different.

Shipping Wasn't the Dream - Until It Was

My career had always revolved around hotels, resorts, and restaurants. The Shipping Industry? It was just background noise, something my husband and many others I knew worked in. But I never imagined I could be part of it.

Then I told my father-in-law about my new role. A former seafarer himself, he shared stories of eating fried fish and rice for days on end, with little choice or variation. That's when it hit me: we're changing lives here. We're offering nourishment, variety, and dignity in places where there once was none.

“Experience and listening are the best teachers. Everyone, no matter their rank, just wants empathy.”

Real Impact

As I got more involved, from chatting with Culinary Consultants like Costas Georgakoudes to volunteering for 365 Healthy Days, the sense of belonging deepened. Even meeting the Cyprus team and our COO Kyriacos felt like catching up with family.

That gut feeling wouldn't go away: I can do more.

So, in early 2023, I became a Culinary Training Officer, supporting galley crew with menus and consultations. Transitioning felt natural, but it came with new challenges: public speaking in a new context, learning the intricacies of ship life, and making sure I was truly helping.

The secret weapon? Empathy. Listening became my greatest tool. I learned the ropes, not from manuals, but from people.

Teaching: A Calling Rediscovered

Then came the On Shore Courses in Manila, trade tests, the MCDP course, and face-to-face teaching. That's where I got bit by the “teaching bug.” It wasn't just a job anymore. It was a calling.

I even spoke at Peter Dohle's Crew Conference, supported by people like Fleet Supervisor Marina Kroupenidou, who guided me through the purchasing side. I leaned into public speaking again, a forgotten love, blending it with my culinary knowledge and deepening commitment to crew well-being.

“I remembered my father-in-law eating fried fish and rice every day. Now, I get to be part of the change.”

Culmination: A New Chapter Begins

By late 2024, a new door opened: Culinary Training Manager. I asked myself: Can I do this? But everything in my story pointed here.

I remembered why I started: to make people happy through food. To speak, to teach, to connect. And now, I can do all of that while shaping how seafarers across the world are nourished, physically and emotionally.

From conversations in kitchens to conferences in Manila and China, I get to impact lives. I get to spark passion in our cooks. And above all, I get to offer what they need most: Empathy.

“I did not see this coming. But I'm fulfilling my dream, to make people happy and to teach. All because I'm finally, truly... HOME.”



Chicken Adobo

A Filipino Classic of Bold Flavor and Deep Roots

Gil Carlos Gatus,
Culinary Training Consultant, MCTC Philippines



The Dish That Tells a Story

Chicken adobo is more than a meal - it's a piece of Philippines history on a plate. Its origins date back to pre-colonial times, when indigenous Filipinos preserved meat by stewing it in vinegar and salt. The name "adobo" came later, introduced by Spanish colonizers, yet the Filipino version remained distinct - deeply rooted in local techniques and enriched over time by Chinese soy sauce, native bay leaves, and bold aromatics.

With countless regional adaptations, chicken adobo is now considered the unofficial national dish of the Philippines - loved for its simplicity, versatility, and uniquely savory-sour taste.

Ingredients (Serves 1)

- 150 g Chicken thigh or drumstick (bone-in, skin-on)
- 15 mL (1 tbsp) Soy sauce
- 10 mL (2 tsp) Cane vinegar or white vinegar
- 30 mL (2 tbsp) Water
- 2 cloves Garlic, crushed
- 1 small Bay leaf
- ¼ tsp Whole black peppercorns (5-6 pieces)
- 5 mL (1 tsp) Cooking oil

Step-by-Step Preparation

1. Cut & Prepare the Chicken

- Chop the chicken into smaller portions for even cooking and better marinade absorption.
- Bone-in pieces like thighs and drumsticks are ideal for their flavor and texture.

2. Marinate

- In a bowl, combine chicken with soy sauce, garlic, peppercorns, and bay leaf.
- Coat thoroughly, cover, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour (overnight preferred for deeper flavor).

3. Sear the Chicken

- Heat oil in a deep pan over medium heat.
- Remove excess marinade and sear the chicken until lightly browned on all sides.

4. Add Marinade & Vinegar

- Pour in the remaining marinade (with garlic and spices).
- Add vinegar without stirring. Let it come to a boil - this cooks off the raw acidity.
- Once boiling, stir gently and reduce to low heat.

5. Simmer & Reduce

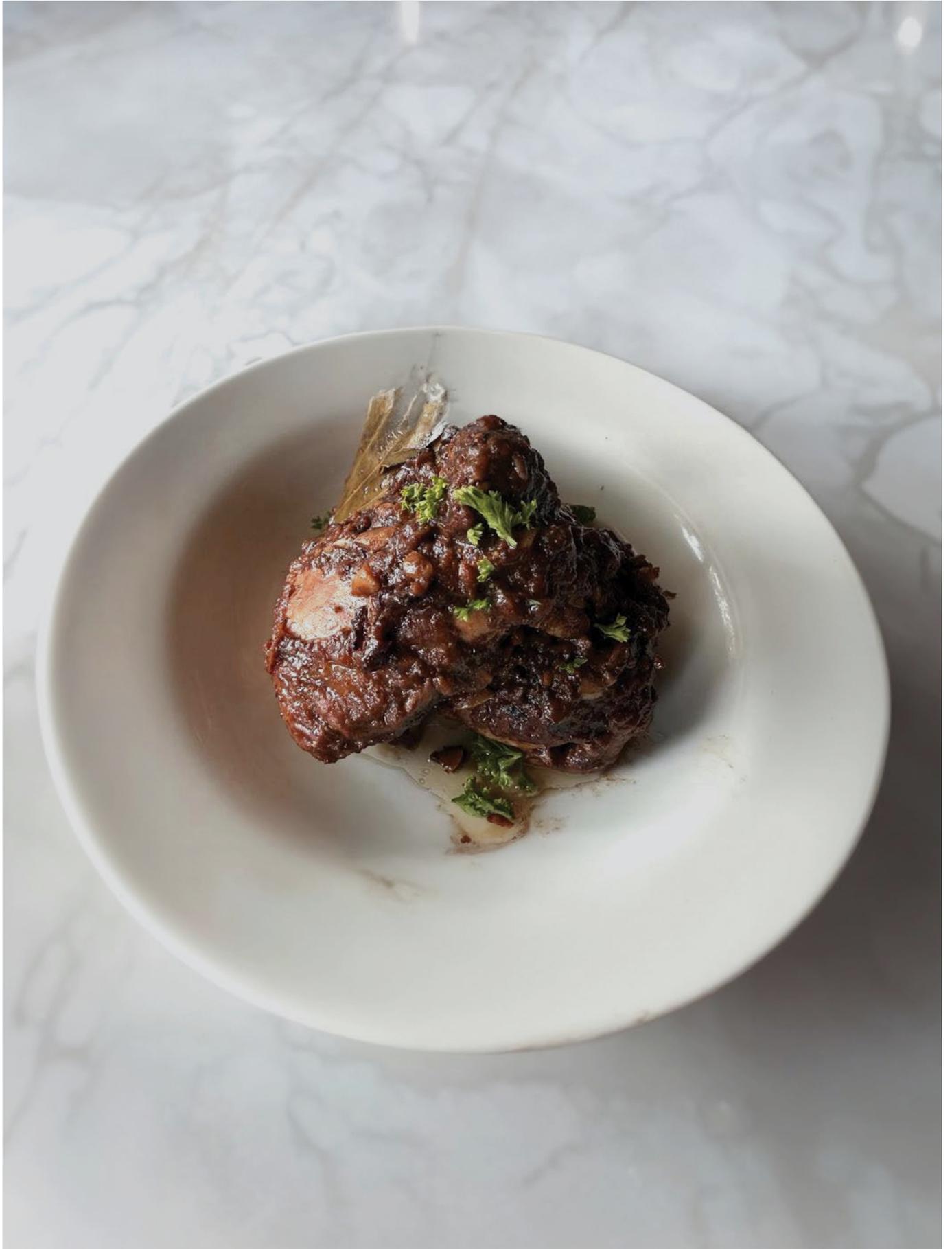
- Let the chicken simmer for 30-40 minutes, allowing the sauce to reduce and thicken.
- Adjust seasoning to taste - a splash of water can lighten it, or a pinch of sugar can balance sharpness.
- Optional: pan-fry the chicken after simmering for a crisp finish, then return it to the sauce.

6. Serve

- Place the chicken with generous ladles of sauce over steamed white rice.
- The rice absorbs the rich, tangy flavors - making each bite deeply satisfying.

A Taste of Home, Anywhere at Sea

Whether served in a family kitchen or aboard a ship far from home, chicken adobo brings warmth, history, and comfort. It's a dish that tells a story - and invites everyone to the table.





Rooted in Responsibility

How Local Sourcing and Smart Choices Are Reshaping the Future of Food at Sea and Beyond

| Eleni Kyriacou, Sustainability Officer &
| Costas Georgakoudes, Supplier Relations Officer

The way we source our food has never mattered more. In a world where environmental concerns grow alongside the demand for transparency in our meals, a quiet revolution is taking place, one that connects us back to the land, the people who cultivate it, and the future we want to build. Something that unfortunately, during the last decades was lost. Sustainable food sourcing isn't just about what we eat; it's about redefining our relationship with food itself.

Locally Produced - A big difference

When food travels shorter distances, the benefits ripple outward. Locally sourced produce arrives fresher, packed with nutrients, many of which are often lost in long-haul shipments. But the impact goes beyond the plate.

Food production and transportation are major contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions. When food is flown or shipped long distances, it increases carbon dioxide emissions, particularly if refrigeration or rapid delivery is required. Sourcing food locally or seasonally reduces these emissions significantly.

Shorter supply chains also minimise the need for energy intensive storage and excessive packaging, both of which create additional waste and strain on ecosystems. Just as importantly, they create a direct link between farmers and consumers, one where fair wages, ethical farming, and community resilience thrive.

Small-scale farms, often overshadowed by industrial agriculture, are the backbone of this shift. Many struggle with surplus food going to waste simply because they lack consistent market access.

The Domino Effect of our Choices

Every cent spent locally doesn't simply buy a product, it sustains jobs, preserves farmland, and keeps money circulating within communities. Seasonal eating amplifies this effect, reducing reliance on energy-intensive imports while celebrating the natural rhythms of regional harvests.

Health, too, is integrated into this system. Fresher ingredients mean better flavour, more nutrients, and meals that nourish in ways processed foods can't match. When food is grown with care, free from excessive chemicals and handled with minimal processing, it becomes a foundation for well-being, which is something we all long for.

Small Changes that Matter

Adopting sustainable habits doesn't require overhauling your life. Start small:

- Choose providers who prioritize local sources like subscription services that connect you directly with nearby farms.
- Reduce waste by planning meals and storing food thoughtfully.
- Embrace seasonality, let nature's calendar guide your menu.
- Advocate and educate; share the value of local food with others, whether through community groups or everyday conversations.

MCTC's Sustainable Food Journey

At MCTC, sustainable food sourcing plays a vital role in supporting our broader environmental goals, including our commitment to carbon neutrality. One of our most important tools in this effort is our carbon footprint database, which assigns a CO₂ value to every food product on our requisition list. By calculating a weighted global average based on origin and supply volume, we can realistically estimate the emissions of each product. This allows our procurement and sustainability teams to identify high-impact items, compare alternatives, and guide both internal decisions and client choices toward lower-emission options.

Local and seasonal sourcing is not just a guiding principle, it is a data-driven strategy that helps us track progress, reduce our environmental impact, and ensure our actions contribute meaningfully to global climate objectives.

Collaboration between departments

This shift would not be possible without close collaboration between our procurement and sustainability teams. Together, we engage with suppliers, host knowledge-sharing webinars, and assess procurement options not just for cost, but by their environmental and social impact. It's a joint effort to ensure that every sourcing decision reflects our values as a company and supports our long-term sustainability goals.

What does the future hold?

The future of food is being reshaped by innovation, as urban farms, regenerative agriculture, and plant-based alternatives open new possibilities for more sustainable and resilient food systems. But technology alone won't fix broken systems; people will. By aligning our choices with our values, we can turn sustainability from an ideal into everyday practice.

This isn't just about eating better. It's about stewardship, honouring the land, the labour, and the legacy we leave behind. When we invest in local food systems, we're not just feeding ourselves; we're cultivating a healthier, more equitable world.



Leftover Magic: Turning Kitchen Scraps into Culinary Gold

Andreas Spyrou, Purchasing Officer,
(ex. Culinary Training Consultant)

Smart, delicious, and waste-free ideas to help you stretch your ingredients, save money, and eat better every day. We've all been there, you've made a big meal, but now you have leftovers that you're not sure what to do with. Instead of letting food go to waste, why not get creative and turn those scraps into something amazing? From chicken bones to nearly expired produce, there are so many ways to reuse what's left in your fridge and pantry. Not only will you save money, but you'll also reduce waste and enjoy some delicious meals along the way. Let's dive into some fun and easy ways to turn your leftovers into new dishes!

1. Fried Rice:

Fried rice is a lifesaver when it comes to using up leftovers. It's easy to throw together, and you can use whatever you have on hand. Here's how:

- **Leftover Meat:** Any leftover meat works perfectly. Chicken, beef, pork, or even tofu - shred it up and toss it in.
- **Veggies:** If your veggies are starting to wilt or look a little sad, don't throw them out! Cooked carrots, peas, spinach, or even old mushrooms can all go into your fried rice.
- **Rice:** The key to great fried rice is using leftover rice. It's less sticky and absorbs all those delicious flavours much better than freshly made rice.
- **Eggs:** Got eggs that are nearing their expiration date? Scramble them into the rice for an extra bit of protein.

Pro Tip: Add a little soy sauce, sesame oil, or vinegar to bring out the flavours. You can even throw in some leftover seafood or a handful of nuts to give it that extra flair.

2. Soup from Chicken Bones:

Don't toss your chicken bones. Turning leftover bones into a rich, hearty broth is one of the easiest and most flavourful things you can do with what's left over.

- **Start with the Bones:** After cooking your chicken, toss the bones into a pot with water, some onions, garlic, carrots, and celery. Let it simmer for a few hours, and you'll have a rich, flavourful broth.
- **Veggies That Are Past Their Time:** If you've got vegetables that are starting to wilt, throw them in the pot too. Old celery, soft carrots, and even wrinkled tomatoes can still add great flavour to your broth.
- **Noodles or Rice:** Want to make it more of a meal? Add in any leftover rice or noodles for a satisfying bowl of soup.
- **Shred Leftover Meat:** If you've got any leftover chicken from your meal, shred it and stir it into the soup for added texture and protein.

Bonus Idea: If you've got a lot of time, simmer those bones for a long time to create bone broth. It's full of nutrients like collagen and minerals, and it makes for an excellent base for soups, stews, or even sipping on its own.

3. Smoothies: A Sweet Way to Use Up Overripe Fruit

Bananas turning brown? Berries starting to get mushy? Don't toss them! Overripe fruit is perfect for smoothies. They're naturally sweeter, and they blend easily. Here's how to use them:

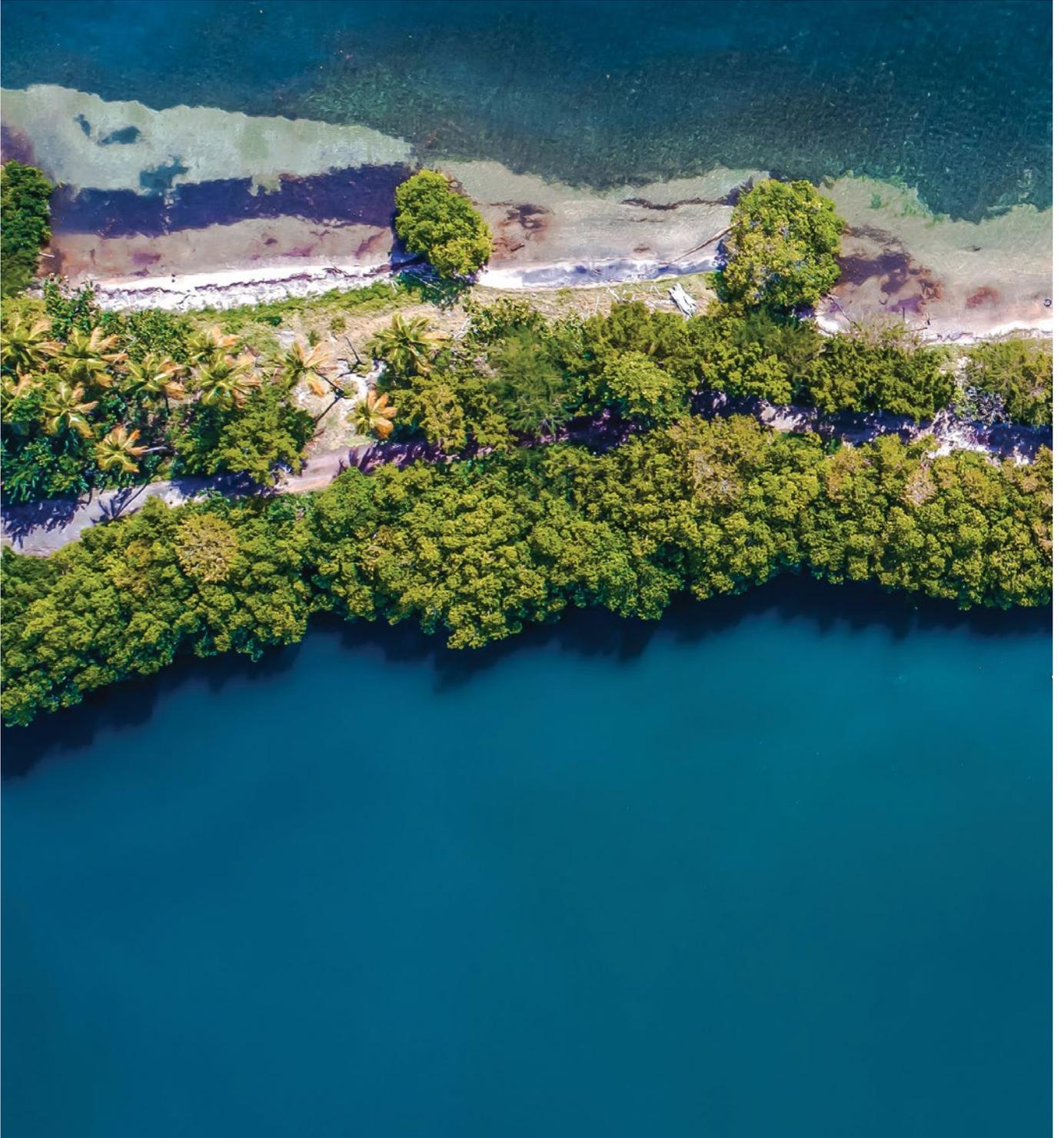
- **Overripe Fruit:** Bananas, mangoes, peaches, almost any overripe fruit is smoothie gold. They'll add natural sweetness and creaminess to your drink.
- **Frozen Veggies:** If your spinach or kale is getting old, freeze it and use it in your smoothies. It'll still hold onto its nutrients, and you won't even taste it!
- **Dairy or Non-Dairy Milk:** Got milk or yogurt that's about to expire? Perfect! Use it in your smoothie. Plant-based milks (like almond or oat milk) are also great options.
- **Extra Add-ins:** Nearly expired nuts, seeds, or protein powder are great add-ins. They'll boost the nutritional value and help keep you full.

Tip: Try combinations like banana and peanut butter, berries and spinach, or a tropical mix with mango and coconut water. You can even freeze leftover smoothies into popsicles for a refreshing treat later!

4. Repurposing Nearly Expired Items: Saving the Day

Before you toss that food that's nearing its expiration date, think about how you can repurpose it. Here are a few clever ideas to help you use what's almost past its prime:

- **Old Bread:** Stale bread is perfect for making breadcrumbs or croutons. Simply toast slices, cut them into cubes, season them, and bake until they're golden and crispy. Use them to top soups or salads.
- **Dairy:** If milk or yogurt is getting close to its "use by" date, don't throw it away! Use it in smoothies, pancakes, muffins, or creamy sauces and soups.
- **Soft Veggies:** Wilted greens or overripe tomatoes can still be used in soups, sauces, or roasted dishes. They may not look great raw, but they're full of flavour once cooked.
- **Eggs:** Nearing their expiration? Use them in frittatas, scrambled eggs, or baked goods. They can be the star of any meal.



Beyond the Bottle: Sustainable Solutions for a Cleaner Maritime Future

How smart packaging, water filtration, and crew empowerment are reshaping environmental responsibility at sea. The maritime sector is one of the world's most powerful industries, critical to global trade, yet a major generator of waste. From plastic packaging to single-use water bottles and food scraps, the waste produced at sea presents a growing threat to our oceans and marine ecosystems. Plastic pollution has reached critical levels, breaking down into microplastics that harm sea life and threaten human health.

At MCTC, we recognise our responsibility to help turn the tide. Through targeted initiatives and strong collaboration with our supply chain, we are working to reduce our environmental footprint and lead by example in maritime catering sustainability.

Smart Packaging: Rethinking the Wrap

Packaging waste is one of the largest contributors to marine plastic pollution. To tackle this, we launched a dedicated survey across our supplier network to assess current practices and identify eco-friendly alternatives to single-use plastic pallet wrap.

Suppliers using alternatives such as biodegradable films, reusable pallet covers, insulated containers, sleeve packs, and jumbo bags were asked to submit documentation and visuals to validate their claims. Others shared the obstacles they face in making the transition, giving us a clearer picture of the industry's evolving landscape.

Some suppliers now also share data on how much plastic is saved per supply per vessel, giving us measurable insights into the impact of sustainable packaging.

Educating the Supply Chain

To support this shift, we launched a series of quarterly sustainability webinars focused on real-world solutions. Topics have included:

- "Breaking Free from Single-Use Plastics" (December 2024)
- "Rethinking Pallet Wrap" (March 2025)

These sessions equip suppliers with practical tools and alternatives, encouraging widespread adoption of circular packaging solutions.

Filtering Out Waste: A Better Way to Drink Water

Another major plastic waste culprit onboard vessels are the single-use water bottle. In response, MCTC has initiated the installation of reverse osmosis water filtration systems on vessels. These systems offer a sustainable, long-term solution by delivering clean, high-quality drinking water without the need for plastic.

A digital reporting system tracks plastic water bottle orders and filtration system installations across the fleet.

This allows us to:

- Measure reductions in plastic bottle use
- Track how many vessels are equipped with filters
- Quantify litres of water delivered in plastic bottles
- Generate graphs and reports for data-driven decision-making

We also conducted a follow-up survey among suppliers to explore alternatives to plastic water bottles. The results were encouraging, with responses including water packaged in aluminium cans, cartons, and glass bottles.

Training for Impact: Reducing Waste from the Galley Out Sustainability doesn't stop at packaging. Through onshore training programs, MCTC works directly with galley crews to promote food efficiency and waste reduction.

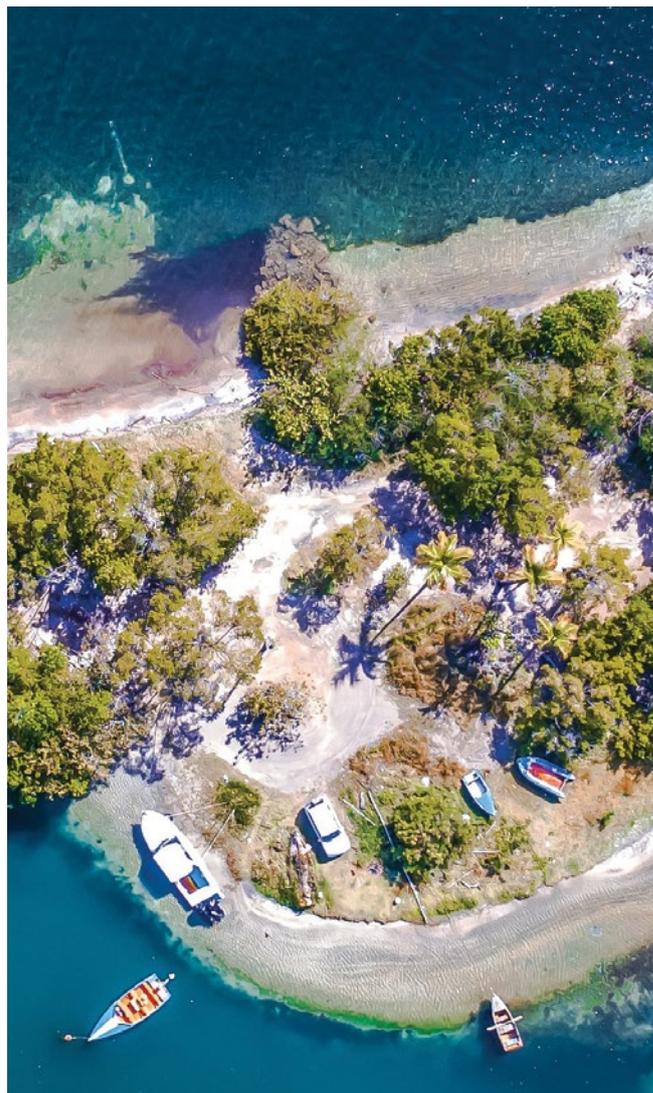
Our courses cover:

- Portion control
- Proper food storage
- Responsible menu planning

By improving food quality and minimising waste, these skills empower crew members to make smarter, more sustainable decisions daily. Over time, this builds a culture of environmental awareness and long-term efficiency onboard.

A Greener Galley, A Cleaner Future

From rethinking packaging and installing water filtration systems to educating crew and suppliers, MCTC is advancing sustainability across the maritime catering chain. These efforts demonstrate that responsible operations go far beyond the plate, they reach into every container, every meal, and every vessel. Through smart partnerships, education, and measurable data, we continue to prove that a cleaner future for the maritime industry is not only possible, but also already happening.





Cooking in a Storm

Feeding the Front Line at Sea - How Galley Crews Brave the Worst to Keep Crews Strong

John Richard Demark,
Culinary Training Consultant

Cooking in a storm sounds like something from a movie.

Yet, for many vessels crossing the world's oceans, transporting 80% to 90% of global goods, it's a daily reality. Behind the scenes of global commerce is a determined galley crew ensuring the onboard team is nourished, healthy, and fit for duty, regardless of weather conditions.

Catering at sea may seem similar to cooking on land, but it becomes an entirely different challenge when Mother Nature unleashes her fury. In stormy weather and high seas, even simple tasks like boiling water or storing provisions carry significant risk. Nevertheless, crews must eat. Sustenance is not just a comfort, it's a critical component of survival and operational effectiveness at sea.

The High Stakes of Storm Galley Work

Cooking during severe weather is not advised unless absolutely necessary. The safety of the crew and vessel must always come first. However, life at sea continues, and so must meal preparation. Energy needs rise during storms as the body compensates for motion, stress, and instability, meaning the galley's role becomes even more vital.

Severe weather amplifies every potential risk: from man-overboard situations to fires, flooding, capsizing, or even piracy. In such scenarios, teamwork is the key to survival. A well-coordinated crew that communicates effectively during routine operations is more likely to respond quickly and safely in emergencies. Everyone deserves to return home safely. The galley crew helps make that possible.

The Galley: Heart of the Ship

For many seafarers, the galley is more than just a kitchen, it's the heart of the vessel. It offers comfort, warmth, and a sense of normalcy. Meals break up long, grueling shifts and provide physical & mental rejuvenation. Never underestimate the morale-boosting power of a hot, familiar meal shared among colleagues.

Experienced Chief Cooks and Messmen know this all too well. Come storms or high seas, they remain committed to delivering nutritious meals. The need for food doesn't pause for weather, and neither do they.

Challenges of Cooking in Rough Seas

Storms transform the galley into a hazardous environment. Tasks taken for granted on land, lifting pots, slicing ingredients, or carrying hot liquids, become dangerous. Slips, burns, falling pans, and spilled oil can all lead to injury or fire.

Key safety precautions include:

- Lockable drawers and shelving bars to prevent flying utensils or plates.
- Stove racking and pan lids to keep items secure.
- Reduced fill levels in pots to avoid sloshing & spillage.

- Secured galley knives and glassware during heavy seas.
- Chocks in ovens to prevent sliding trays.

Menus should also reflect sea conditions. A three-course banquet in gale-force winds? Not advisable. Simple, nourishing options like stews, pastries, sandwiches, and farinaceous dishes offer fewer hazards and reliable nutrition. Hot drinks should be served only in lidded, spill-proof containers.

Preparation and Precaution

Modern shipping benefits from accurate weather forecasting, allowing crews to prepare in advance. Severity ratings (typically on a 1-10 scale) help determine when normal cooking must pause or adapt.

Before storms hit, galley teams should:

- Secure all loose items.
- Minimize equipment in use.
- Plan achievable menus.
- Maintain clear communication with bridge and engineering departments.

These preparations are not just best practice, they're essential when staffing is minimal and roles are critical. On many vessels, the Chief Cook is the sole food service leader onboard. Injury or downtime could severely impact the crew's ability to function.

More Than Just a Cook

The title "Chief" means more at sea. Like the Chief Engineer or Chief Mate, the Chief Cook manages a department: ordering provisions, supervising sanitation and food safety, leading celebrations, and supporting crew welfare.

Working months at a time, far from home, seafarers build deep resilience. Galley crews are no exception. They face long days, relentless movement, and high expectations, and still serve meals with care, professionalism, and pride.

Final Word: A Toast to the Galley Crew

The galley team embodies the very spirit of the sea: resilient, resourceful, and relentless. In the face of crashing waves, high winds, and unpredictable challenges, they show that true leadership and bravery often come from the least expected places, like the kitchen.

As the saying goes:

"Good weather doesn't make for a good sailor. Sailors are only made in storms, the sun shines brightest after the darkest moments."

"The strongest storms make the best sailors."

And the toughest seas make the finest cooks.



A Gastronomic Journey: From the Himalayas to the Fjords

Konstantina Iakovou,
Culinary Training Officer

Two Stops. Two Stories. One Love for Food.

Embark on a culinary adventure that bridges continents and cultures through the language of food. This edition of Food Choices takes you to the vibrant spice markets of Kashmir and the misty meadows of Norway. Discover the warmth of tradition and the essence of home through two deeply rooted national dishes that celebrate family, heritage, and the seasonality of ingredients.

Stop 1: India - Rogan Josh

A Symphony of Spices from the Valleys of Kashmir
Bold, aromatic, and rich in history, Rogan Josh is a dish that carries the legacy of royal banquets and heartfelt gatherings. It's the soul of Kashmiri Wazwan, where cooking is an art and every meal a celebration.

Rogan Josh is a traditional Kashmiri dish introduced by the Mughals. It represents the deep Persian and Central Asian influence on northern Indian cuisine. It's symbolic of Kashmiri hospitality and is a main feature in "Wazwan" - the traditional Kashmiri feast with multiple dishes, often served at weddings.

Ingredients

- 500g lamb or mutton, cut into pieces
- 1 cup yogurt
- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1-inch ginger, grated
- 2 tbsp ghee or oil
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 2 tsp Kashmiri red chili powder
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1 tsp ground fennel
- Salt to taste
- Whole spices (2 cardamoms, 1 cinnamon stick, 2 cloves)

Instructions

1. Heat ghee in a pot, add whole spices and let them sizzle.
2. Add onions and sauté until golden brown.
3. Stir in ginger and garlic, cook for a minute.
4. Add mutton and sear on high heat.
5. Lower the heat and add turmeric, chili powder, salt, and fennel powder.
6. Add yogurt gradually, stirring well to avoid curdling.
7. Cover and simmer for 1-1.5 hours until tender.
8. Sprinkle garam masala before serving.
9. Serve with steamed rice or naan.

Stop 2: Norway - Fårikål

A Rustic Embrace from the Nordic Countryside

Simple yet deeply satisfying, Fårikål is more than a meal, it's a seasonal tradition, a taste of autumn, and a dish that warms both body and heart. Passed down through generations, it's a symbol of Norway's love for clean flavors and local fare.

Fårikål is Norway's national dish, typically served in autumn when lamb is at its best. It celebrates simplicity, seasonality, and the close relationship Norwegians have with nature and farming. Many families pass the recipe down generations, making it a comforting symbol of home and heritage.

Ingredients

- 1.5 kg lamb (with bone, in chunks)
- 1.5 kg cabbage, cut into wedges
- 2 tsp whole black peppercorns
- Salt to taste
- 2-3 cups water

Instructions

1. In a large pot, layer meat and cabbage alternately.
2. Sprinkle salt and whole peppercorns between the layers.
3. Pour in water just to barely cover the bottom.
4. Cover and simmer gently for about 2 hours until tender.
5. Serve with boiled potatoes.

Food That Tells a Story

Wherever you are in the world, food connects us, to our past, our people, and our place. Let your senses travel with every bite.





Galley Without Borders: The True Taste of Life at Sea

Triantafyllos Tekidis,
Culinary Training Consultant

Culinary Fusion at Sea: A Daily Reality, Not Just a Trend

In today's maritime landscape, fusion cuisine isn't a luxury, it's a reality served three times a day. Onboard commercial vessels, a multicultural crew is not the exception, but the rule. Within the same galley, a Filipino Messman may assist an Indian Chief Cook preparing a Ukrainian stew, while a Chinese seafarer requests his favourite fried egg with soy and sesame. This convergence of culinary backgrounds forms the beating heart of a truly global kitchen at sea.

The galley, often overlooked in operations, becomes a daily theatre of cultural exchange. One vessel we recently visited featured a team of five nationalities working in sync. The result? Meals shaped by spontaneous dialogue and respect: turmeric-scented cabbage rolls, sinigang with a dash of paprika, or biryani that includes carrots pickled the Eastern European way. These dishes aren't drawn from cookbooks; they're shaped by circumstance, taste memory, and camaraderie. During cultural celebrations like Eid, Diwali, Easter, or Ramadan, this blend becomes even more visible, menus stretch to accommodate tradition, and cooks take pride in sharing a dish from home with their shipmates. These everyday dishes tell stories of collaboration. They speak of cooks respecting each other's ingredients, exchanging ideas during the lunch rush, and celebrating diverse traditions with equal care. What we've witnessed through our vessel visits is not just recipe evolution, it's a morale boost. Fusion food builds unity and appreciation.

Yet, to support this cultural alchemy, tools and training must also be in place. Through MCTC's Safe Food Handling & Nutrition course, cooks are guided to apply food safety protocols while adapting to multicultural cooking environments. Our consultants' onboard visits further support Chief Cooks by offering hands-on collaboration in the galley, introducing flexible meal planning, techniques for portion control, and ways to adapt menus based on crew feedback and available provisions on board.

Culinary fusion at sea is not about chasing trends. It's about recognizing that a galley serving four to six nationalities should reflect them. This diversity should be celebrated, not just through food, but through mindset.

After all, when the galley reflects the people who sail, it becomes more than a kitchen, it becomes a shared home.





MyBALANCE

Fueling Crew Health
- From the Inside Out -



My Mind



My Body



My Soul



A Day in the Life of a Training Consultant

From the Classroom to the Galley-Instilling Discipline, Precision, and Passion in Every Future Chef

Vinod Radhakrishnan,
Culinary Training Consultant



Jose Andres

"I have been a cook all my life, but I am still learning to be a good chef. I'm always learning new techniques and improving beyond my own knowledge because there is always something new to learn and new horizons to discover."

Vinod Radhakrishnan

"In my current role as a Culinary Training Consultant, each day offers an opportunity to shape not just skills, but mindsets. I emphasize real-world application, bringing the energy and rigor of the galley into every training session."

The Foundation: Hygiene & Personal Discipline

One of the most overlooked but essential traits of a skilled cook is impeccable hygiene—both personal and kitchen-related. I always tell my trainees: personal grooming standards must exceed those of the kitchen. A clean cook reflects an organized mind.

In every theory session, I simplify complex hygiene concepts into practical, relatable habits. I encourage awareness of one's environment and instill the core rule I live by: "Clean as you go." It's a discipline that defines not just cleanliness, but one's approach to cooking.

The Heart of Kitchen Success: Mise-en-Place

Before we sauté, sear, or simmer, I always return to the basics: mise-en-place. It's not just a culinary term—it's the bedrock of a cook's efficiency and confidence. In my first session of every training cycle, I drive this home:

"Get your basics right, and everything else will follow."

A cook who lacks control over their setup will inevitably struggle. But one who begins with clear organization sets the tone for a smoother, more successful kitchen experience.

My Daily Routine in the Training Kitchen

Every day begins with a briefing—a structured overview of the tasks ahead. We discuss activities such as ingredient processing, bread preparation, stock-making, and more. This briefing is more than just a schedule; it's a mindset calibration. From there, the trainees move into action. They begin with grooming checks, handwashing, and equipment setup—following proper protocols down to the smallest detail. These rituals are critical. They prepare the trainee not just physically, but mentally, for the day ahead.

Then comes the heart of the training: execution. Cooking or baking follows the plan laid out earlier, all underpinned by organoleptic awareness, training their senses to guide their process. They don't just cook by instruction, they learn to observe, taste, and understand what they're doing.

Once the dishes are complete, feedback and reflection take center stage. Each trainee presents their creation, and I provide thorough feedback—covering flavor, presentation, creativity, and potential improvements. This feedback is not just about critique; it's about opportunity. We talk through alternatives, innovation, and how to overcome limitations with the resources available.

Finally, the cooks taste their own dishes, reflect on the feedback, and grow from the process. It's a full-circle experience, designed to build both skill and self-awareness.

Marco Pierre White

"Cooking is a philosophy; it is not a recipe."

This quote speaks deeply to my approach. As a training consultant, I don't just teach recipes, I teach a way of thinking. Every step, every session, is part of a larger philosophy: that with discipline, awareness, and passion, anyone can grow from a cook into a chef, and from a chef into a mentor.



Onboard Visits

An MCTC Culinary Training Consultant joins the vessel to:

- Support the crew with menus, recipes, and food safety
- Address galley challenges like food waste and inventory
- Provide a report and feedback summary after each visit



Minimizing Food Waste at Sea: Our Commitment to a More Sustainable Future

Charis Agathangelou,
Fleet Supervisor

As part of our ongoing mission to promote sustainability, reduce environmental impact, and support healthier onboard operations, MCTC has launched the “Minimizing Food Waste Campaign” across the vessels in collaboration with our valued Customers.

This campaign is a proactive step toward identifying and improving food management practices onboard, helping our vessels take meaningful action to reduce food waste—an issue that not only impacts operational efficiency but also has significant environmental and economic consequences.

The Purpose Behind the Campaign

Food waste happens at every stage of the supply chain—from production and distribution, all the way to preparation and consumption. Onboard vessels, this can result from spoilage due to improper storage, over-preparation, poor inventory planning, or simply unused leftovers.

Our campaign is designed to:

- Enhance awareness among galley crew and officers
- Identify challenges in daily food handling
- Provide practical solutions for improvement
- Encourage sustainable practices that benefit both the vessel and the environment

How It Works: A Data-Driven, Support-Oriented Approach

To begin, we reached out to all vessels with a message introducing the campaign and shared a clear explanation of the objectives and expected outcomes. We also issued two dedicated questionnaires:

- One for the Master, to assess overall operations and storage handling
- One for the Chief Cook, focusing on galley routines, food preparation, and leftover management

These questionnaires are the foundation of our personalized support. Once completed, our Culinary Training Consultants review the feedback to provide vessel-specific guidance. They identify strengths, flag areas for improvement, and share best practices tailored to the actual needs of each vessel.

Key areas of focus include:

- Proper mise-en-place (prep work) to minimize waste during cooking
- Creative use of trimmings and leftovers
- Improved portion control
- Effective inventory management and food rotation

Real Impact, Real Results

The campaign has already yielded positive outcomes and engagement from crews who are eager to adopt better practices. Some of the impactful changes observed include:

- Making sauces and stocks from scratch to avoid reliance on processed items
- Using proper storage techniques to prolong shelf life
- Implementing 4-Week Cycle Menus to reduce over-ordering
- Applying inventory checks to align ordering with actual consumption
- Repurposing ingredients to create delicious, waste-free meals

These practices not only reduce waste but also improve food quality, preserve nutritional value, and contribute to better budgeting and morale onboard.

Why This Matters: The Bigger Picture

By minimizing waste onboard, we:

- Improve supply chain efficiency
- Promote a culture of care, responsibility, and respect for resources

This campaign reinforces MCTC’s commitment to sustainable maritime operations, and we firmly believe that small changes in daily routines can lead to big results.

Everyone’s Involvement Is Key

We encourage all crew members to actively participate, complete the questionnaires, and engage with the feedback provided. Together, we can create an even stronger culture of sustainability onboard.

Charting Careers Through the Galley

How hands-on training and values-based education are preparing the next generation of maritime culinary professionals.



A Trainee's Journey with MCTC

***"They molded me to become not just a cook or seafarer, but a better individual, ready to face challenges at sea with integrity and resilience."*, Charl Jazzel R. Clemente**

I can confidently say that MCTC is one of the best training centers for aspiring maritime professionals, especially in catering and onboard meal preparation.

Before joining the training center, I had little direction and limited knowledge about the maritime industry. However, through MCTC's well-structured programs, experienced instructors, and hands-on training, I developed the skills, discipline, and confidence necessary to thrive in this career. MCTC didn't just teach me the technical knowledge required onboard. It instilled core values such as professionalism, responsibility, and perseverance. The center shaped me into more than a cook or seafarer, it helped me grow into a resilient and principled individual, prepared to handle the challenges of life at sea.

Thanks to their support and guidance, I secured a position onboard a vessel and officially began my journey in the maritime field. I will always be proud to be a product of this institution, and I am forever grateful for the strong foundation MCTC has built for my career.



My Soul

- Stress Management
- Community Building



Mental Health at Sea

Nichole Stylianou,
Health & Wellbeing Consultant, Dietitian - Nutritionist

Mental health at sea is as important as physical health, especially for crew members who spend extended periods away from home. The life of seafarers is marked in isolation, long hours and difficult conditions. These elements impact their mental health and their overall wellbeing. Many challenges at sea come in the way of staying connected with family, lack of connectivity often leads to mental health struggles. Many recent studies show signs of depression, suicide, stress and burnout among seafarers. Seafarers often fear job loss if they open up about their mental health. This fear is combined with the challenges they face and underline the need for prioritizing crew welfare and implementing effective mental health policies.

Nutrients that support mood are:

- **Omega-3 fatty acids:** Support brain function and reduce anxiety you can find them in fish, flaxseeds and nuts).
- **Complex Carbohydrates:** Help in maintaining stable blood sugar levels and aim in preventing mood swings and fatigue. You can find them in whole grains and legumes.
- **Magnesium rich foods:** Aid in relaxation and stress relief. You can find them in spinach, almonds, bananas.

For better cognitive function and alertness focus on adequate consumption of healthy protein that contains amino acids that help produce neurotransmitters, improving concentration and memory. Healthy protein options are fish, chicken, turkey, legumes, lentils, eggs and nuts). Additionally, antioxidants from fruits and vegetables protect brain cells from damage and help maintain good cognitive function.

Sleep quality and advanced recovery can be boosted by adequate intake of tryptophan like turkey, dairy and nuts. Tryptophan supports melatonin production and promotion of better sleep. Herbal teas and proper hydration help prevent disruption of sleep patterns, and they are essential for recovery alertness.

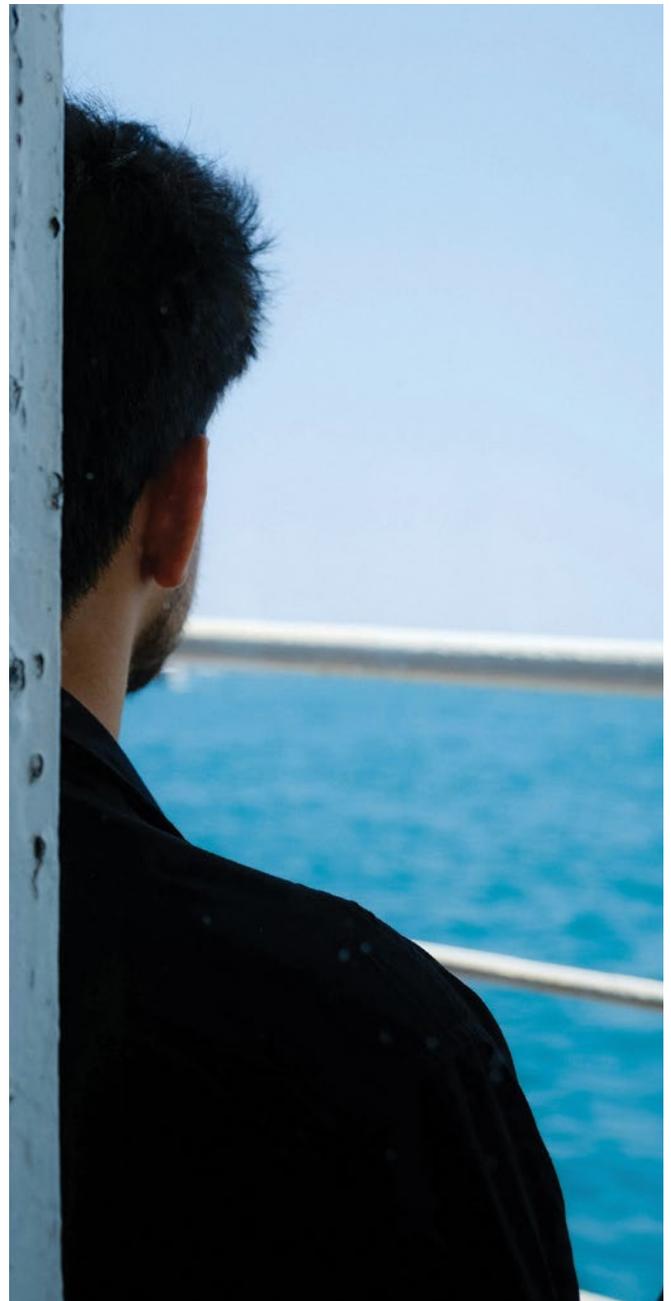
Strong gut-brain connection supports emotional wellbeing. A diet rich in antibiotics like yogurt or fermented vegetables and fibre which is found in whole grains and vegetable greens can improve digestion and emotional stability. A balanced gut microbiome is connected to lower rates of depression and anxiety.

Iron rich foods like red meat (consumed in moderation), beans and spinach prevent fatigue and exhaustion.

Remember the following guidelines:

- Prioritizing fresh, whole foods and avoid processed meals.
- Ensure regular intake of balance meals to maintain metabolic balance.
- Adequate intake of nutritious snacks onboard for sustained energy and focus.

A well-balanced diet on board is required having both physical and mental health. It is a vital component of mental balance and emotional stability.





My Mind

- Webinars
- Health & Nutrition Conference
- Crew & Client onshore staff nutrition consultation
- CalmWaves Podcast



Guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Lilian Valanidou,
Quality Assurance Manager

At MCTC, sustainability is at the heart of our long-term strategy to create meaningful and lasting impact for people, the planet, and the maritime industry. From enhancing the health and well-being of seafarers to minimizing our environmental footprint and fostering responsible practices throughout our global supply chain, our efforts are closely aligned with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer a comprehensive and globally recognized framework for tackling the most urgent environmental, social, and economic challenges of our time. Launched in 2015 and adopted by all UN Member States, this ambitious initiative provides a collective roadmap for building a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable future.

Our commitment to the SDGs is rooted in two core areas: education and supply chain ethics. Through these, we promote sustainability, ethical sourcing, and foster a more responsible maritime catering industry.

Our Environmental Contributions



SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

We've installed photovoltaic (solar) systems at our office facilities to generate renewable electricity, reduce reliance on conventional energy, and lower carbon emissions. These efforts are supported by continuous energy usage monitoring and energy-saving training, promoting sustainable energy practices across our operations.



SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

We promote responsible food consumption and waste reduction through onboard campaigns and culinary training for galley staff. These efforts are supported by waste monitoring and recycling practices in our offices. To expand our impact, we engage suppliers and clients via surveys and webinars, while tracking plastic reduction through eco-friendly packaging alternatives.



SDG 13: Climate Action

We've developed a Carbon Footprint Database to track emissions linked to food products and integrated this data into our ordering system to support low-carbon decisions while maintaining nutritional value. Our roadmap to carbon neutrality aligns with the EU Green Deal and the Paris Agreement. Sustainability influences our strategies, including supplier selection, packaging, and training. We raise awareness on climate impacts, responsible consumption, and waste reduction through staff and crew training, and promote remote working to reduce commuting emissions.



SDG 14: Life Below Water

Reduced single-use plastics onboard and in offices to help prevent marine pollution. Our waste policies focus on proper disposal, recycling, and staff training in eco-friendly practices. We also took part in a local beach cleanup to support ocean health.

Our Social and Health Contributions



SDG 1: No Poverty

We support economic empowerment by creating job opportunities, offering internships, and investing in ongoing employee development. Our fair labour practices, inclusive hiring, and educational support help improve livelihoods within our team and the wider community.



SDG 4: Quality Education

We offer seafarers and employees access to accredited training, including ISO certifications and job-specific courses. By fostering continuous learning, we support career growth, boost performance, and build a skilled, resilient workforce.



SDG 5: Gender Equality

We foster an inclusive work environment that values diversity and ensures fair representation. Our hiring practices promote equal opportunities, and we actively support women's participation in both operational and sustainability roles.



SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

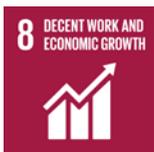
We embrace diversity and ensure equal opportunities across our multicultural team. We promote fair treatment, professional growth, and inclusivity-both ashore and onboard-through practices like culturally respectful menu planning that reflect the needs of diverse crews.



SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

We maintain high ethical standards and strict compliance across our operations and supply chain. With anti-bribery policies, ISO certifications, and transparent procedures, we promote integrity, accountability, and continuous improvement throughout our organisation and supplier network.

Our Economic and Innovation Contributions



SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

We promote decent work and equal opportunities for all, supporting youth employment through internships and job opportunities for young professionals. With job-specific training, certifications, and a focus on continuous learning, we ensure long-term employability. Aligned with the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC 2006), we maintain a safe and supportive work environment for all staff.



SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

We invest in sustainable infrastructure and digital innovation to reduce our environmental footprint and improve efficiency. Key initiatives include transitioning to a paperless office, implementing digital reporting systems for environmental performance, and developing tailored software to streamline procurement, compliance, and sustainability data management.



SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

We actively engage with diverse stakeholders to advance sustainability goals across the maritime sector. Through initiatives like webinars, supplier surveys, and joint environmental efforts, we promote knowledge-sharing and shared responsibility. Our partnerships focus on reducing single-use plastics, improving packaging sustainability, and measuring environmental impact. We also support social initiatives such as tree planting, beach clean-ups, and well-being campaigns, covering nutrition, mental health, emotional intelligence, and responsible food consumption, reinforcing our holistic approach to sustainability. Through our commitment to these SDGs, MCTC is dedicated to fostering sustainability within the maritime catering industry, with a focus on education and ethics that shape a responsible and sustainable future. Sustainability is a continuous journey. By aligning with the UN SDGs, MCTC is driving responsible growth and helping shape a more ethical and sustainable maritime industry.



Sustainable Cooking at Sea

Sumit Ashok Daryanani,
Culinary Training Consultant

Limited storage, rough weather conditions, fuel efficiency and the need to reduce waste are some of the common challenges that are faced when cooking at sea. In an attempt to improve the overall galley operations as well as do our part in helping the environment, we must try to embrace Sustainable Cooking Practices.

Let's emphasize on some indispensable cooking methods that solely focusses towards promoting sustainability:

1. **One-Pot Meals** - meals prepared in a single pot is a smart and sustainable cooking method. This is an ideal method of preparation when facing rough weather conditions or especially when the galley crew is short staffed. It requires less fuel, less water and minimum cleaning efforts and dishes like stews, soups, rice dishes and pasta bakes can be readily made without much hassle. One key factor of employing this method is that it helps in controlling portion sizes, reducing food waste and simplify serving.
2. **Reshuffling Leftovers** - this technique is one of the most practical approaches to minimize food wastage. By reshuffling leftovers into new meals, we can reduce disposal of unnecessary food while keeping the menu innovative. Previous meals which are clean and safe are transformed into fresh dishes - roasted vegetable can become soup, curry can turn into stuffing for pastries or boiled rice can be reused for fried rice.
3. **Batch Cooking** - bulk cooking essentially aims at saving time, energy and resources. It is also seen useful during port days or heavy workload periods. Cooking large quantities of curry, sauces, and storing them properly to be used later often reduces daily preparation time and effort, also helps in preventing ingredient spoilage.
4. **Use of Seasonal & Frozen Ingredients** - employing this technique of using frozen and seasonal ingredients whenever feasible, helps in reducing food spillage. We can store frozen items for a longer period of time and can be used when required or in quantity as desired, meanwhile seasonal products (when available during port calls) are often fresh and cost effective. in this manner we can reduce dependency on imported and perishable products.
5. **Minimal Use of Frying Oil** - if we emphasize more on baking, grilling, boiling and steaming, we end up reducing grease waste. This in turn is easier on the galley equipment and mostly lowers the risk of oil-related accidents in the kitchen. By limiting deep frying and promoting less oil usage, we are encouraging healthier meals and more sustainable cooking.
6. **Menu Planning to Avoid Overproduction** - We should analyze crew preferences and consumption patterns in order to plan the menu's smartly and in advance, ensuring that the right quantity of food is prepared and meanwhile preventing excessive leftovers and wastage. Eventually cooks also avoids making too much food. Ingredients can be selected in a way that, if needed we may be able to safely reshuffle into next days meal.
7. **Composting Organic Waste** (Where Permitted) - in managing kitchen waste responsibly we need to segregate biodegradable waste for composting (where permitted by MARPOL and vessel policies). Ensuring better waste management on board through proper segregation, even when composting isn't an option.
8. **Energy-Efficient Equipment Use** - equipment's like pressure cookers, induction stoves and cooking during low-usage hours often seems to significantly reduce consumption of energy. We must try to plan cooking tasks in advance so that we can maximize the use of heated equipment (e.g. baking bread after baking a cake) and effectively conserving fuel and time.
9. **Promoting Self Made Products** - we must try to reduce our dependence on packaged or processed food by preparing fresh items like breads, cakes, doughnuts and snacks on board. By practicing this we are trying to lower packaging waste and ensuring fresh food for the crew, meanwhile also focusing enough to support better nutrition.

Sustainability at sea starts with small and consistent steps that lead to bigger changes in the coming future. We must try to inculcate the above-mentioned sustainable cooking methods to significantly reduce the environmental impact while maintaining high quality nutritious meals.



Sourcing Smart: Strengthening Sustainability Through Local Partnerships

How MCTC's global supplier network supports fresher food, reduced emissions, and stronger communities, port by port.

Lilian Valanidou,
Quality Assurance Manager

In the ever-evolving maritime industry, sustainable practices are no longer just a preference, they are a necessity. At MCTC, our commitment to sustainability extends to how and where we source our provisions. A key part of this effort is our focus on working closely with local suppliers around the world, an approach that delivers mutual benefits to our vessels, the environment, and the communities we serve.

We maintain a large database of approved suppliers globally, allowing us to secure reliable support in almost every port, including remote areas. Specifically in Europe, we collaborate with a wide network of trusted suppliers across key ports in Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Greece, and Italy, as well as in less frequently used locations where ship traffic is lower but reliable provisioning remains essential. These partners are well-established in the maritime supply chain and consistently meet our standards for quality, food safety, and timely delivery. Their regional expertise and proximity enable us to provide fresh, locally sourced products to vessels while also supporting local economies and reducing our environmental impact.

A prime example of the benefits of local ship chandler partnerships can be seen in our collaboration with multiple ship chandlers in Barcelona, Spain. These trusted partners provide a wide range of provisions. By sourcing locally through them, we've streamlined our supply chain, reduced transportation distances, and lowered fuel consumption. These relationships have enabled us to deliver fresher provisions to our vessels, ensuring that crews receive higher-quality food and supplies. Additionally, our partners' deep knowledge of local markets allows them to offer tailored, timely solutions, even in areas with lower vessel traffic.

Reducing Our Environmental Impact

Local sourcing naturally reduces transport distances, which lowers fuel consumption and minimizes the carbon footprint associated with long-haul logistics and cold chain transportation. This not only cuts emissions but also enables faster deliveries and ensures fresher ingredients on board.

It also reduces the need for excessive packaging and refrigeration. These small adjustments result in a significant reduction in our overall environmental footprint, supporting a more sustainable catering operation.

Enhancing Food Quality and Crew Wellbeing

Quality is another major advantage. Local producers are more responsive to seasonal availability and their proximity allows for stricter quality control. As a result, crews benefit from fresher, better-tasting, and more nutritious meals, contributing to morale and overall well-being at sea.

Building Relationships That Matter

Our partnerships with local suppliers go beyond simple transactions. We actively seek out reliable, ethically operated ship chandlers who share our values around food safety, transparency, and quality. These relationships help strengthen local economies and support responsible production practices.

Beyond operational benefits, these partnerships foster stronger ties with the communities that support maritime logistics. Supporting small-scale and regional suppliers aligns with our corporate social responsibility goals and promotes resilient food systems in the regions we serve.

At MCTC, local supplier partnerships are a key pillar of our sustainable provisioning strategy, one that brings lasting value to our clients, our partners, and the planet.



CALM WAVES
mctc PODCAST



The Calm Waves Podcast dives into the heart of the maritime world, exploring:

- Innovation shaping the industry
- Key topics on sustainability at sea
- Conversations on crew wellbeing and health
- Expert insights, stories, and trends from life onboard



MCTC Graduate Corner

Real Stories. Real Growth. Real Impact.



At MCTC, we believe success isn't just measured in skills, it's reflected in the journeys of our graduates. Our mission goes beyond training: we aim to uplift seafarers, empowering them both onboard and ashore, and fostering a sense of community, confidence, and career readiness.

Here are some voices from the field, seafarers who've grown through MCTC's programs and are now making waves in their maritime careers.

Chief Cook Upgrading Course

Participant: Chief Cook King Marohom
Trainer: Gil Carlos Gatus, Culinary Training Consultant

"My five-day training at MCTC exceeded my expectations. The facility was exceptionally clean, and all the cooking materials were complete and well-organized. The instructor delivered the lessons in a clear, practical way that made learning enjoyable and effective. The staff were warm and approachable, and I'm confident the skills I gained will be a great asset to my career moving forward."



**We don't just train cooks;
we help shape futures.**

Messman Upgrading Course

Participant: MSM Reneir Renz Arbues
Trainer: Perry Mason Arzadon, Culinary Training Consultant

"Completing the Messman Upgrading Course was a turning point in my career. The hands-on instruction in food safety, inventory management, and culinary techniques gave me both the practical skills and confidence needed to thrive in high-pressure environments. The trainers genuinely cared about our growth and helped us understand everything from menu planning to service flow. I now feel ready to take on leadership roles, and highly recommend MCTC to anyone serious about their career."

Maritime Culinary Development Program - Batch 13

Participant: Godwin Beroy Quilicot
"MCTC transformed my career. The hands-on training, expert instructors, and real-world simulations gave me the knowledge and confidence I needed to succeed. Today, I serve as a Chief Cook at Briese Schiffahrt, proudly delivering high-quality meals onboard. The program's focus on maritime-specific culinary challenges prepared me for life at sea, and I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to pursue my passion."

Participant: Charl Jazzel R. Clemente

"I can confidently say that MCTC is one of the best training centers for maritime professionals, especially in onboard catering. Before joining, I had little direction, but their structured programs, experienced trainers, and hands-on learning built not only my skills but also my professionalism and resilience. MCTC shaped me into a confident seafarer, and thanks to their support, I was able to secure my first position on a ship. I'm proud to be a product of this institution."

The Impact Continues

Every course, every conversation, every cooking session, it all contributes to the MCTC experience. Whether it's an upgrade program or an intensive training batch, the goal remains the same: to equip maritime professionals with the skills, mindset, and confidence they need to succeed.



Estia

Learn, Track, Deliver – with MCTC's Digital Platform

Under the Learning Management System (LMS) tab, galley crew can:

- Enrol in the Safe Food Handling and Nutrition course
- Track learning progress with ease
- Receive feedback from culinary training consultants
- View completed course history – both



Boosting Crew Morale and Performance

How MCTC's global supplier network supports fresher food, reduced emissions, and stronger communities, port by port.

Arjay Ravindran,
Fleet Supervisor & Business Development Manager



Life at Sea: More Than Just Work

Life at sea demands a unique kind of resilience, both physical and mental. Seafarers endure long stretches away from home, intense work schedules, and limited social interaction. In this environment, morale isn't just a nice - to - have, it's a vital part of ensuring health, safety, and optimal performance on board.

That's why companies are investing in programs that put people first. Through a variety of engaging and thoughtfully designed initiatives, we're seeing firsthand how wellness-focused efforts are transforming life at sea.

Fitness That Fits Onboard

Among the most impactful of these programs are onboard fitness challenges. Whether it's step counts, circuit workouts, or push-up competitions, these activities keep the crew active and energized.

Physical movement is proven to elevate mood, sharpen focus, and boost energy, all of which are essential for maintaining performance in the maritime environment. These fitness routines not only support healthy lifestyles but also serve as a powerful stress reliever and morale booster.

Cooking Up Camaraderie

Wellness doesn't stop with workouts. Events like cooking competitions have added flavor to life onboard. Designed to spotlight the talent of our galley crew, these challenges go beyond the kitchen. They spark pride, creativity, and community.

By showcasing culinary skills, crews build bonds and enjoy shared experiences. And to show our appreciation, MCTC rewards top participants across the fleet with special gifts, reinforcing the message that their effort is seen and valued.

Recognition Matters

Beyond physical activity and fun, one of the most important drivers of crew morale is recognition. Team-building exercises and meaningful moments of appreciation support mental health and help fight feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and fatigue.

Creating opportunities to celebrate wins, foster teamwork, and share laughter transforms the ship into more than just a workplace, it becomes a community.

Why It All Matters

A crew that feels valued, connected, and supported is a crew that performs at its best. According to the Mission to Seafarers Happiness Index (Q4 2023), morale and mental health remain major concerns across the industry. Average happiness scores drop when seafarers feel isolated or miss shore leave, but those with access to wellness programs report a 15 to 20 percent boost in overall well-being.

The International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) reinforces this point. Their data shows that good mental health support and morale-boosting programs help reduce fatigue-related incidents, improve retention, and strengthen teamwork, benefits that directly impact safety and operational efficiency.

Looking Ahead

Mental health is no longer a silent subject in the maritime world. It's a priority. Investing in our crew's holistic well-being is not just a moral obligation, it's a strategic one. These morale-boosting initiatives are more than programs, they are lifelines.

They shape a high-performing, motivated crew that sails with strength, spirit, and a shared sense of purpose.





Digitalisation in Maritime Catering: How Estia Simplifies Life at Sea

Empowering crews, streamlining operations, the future of galley management is here

Kyriacos Georgiou,
Group COO and Managing Director, MCTC Greece



Navigating the Challenges of Life at Sea

Managing catering operations onboard vessels is a complex and demanding task. From meal planning and inventory control to nutritional compliance and seamless coordination between sea and shore, every detail matters. At MCTC, we believe that digitalisation should simplify, not complicate. That's the vision behind Estia, our purpose-built maritime catering platform.

Meet Estia: A Smarter Way to Manage Maritime Catering

Estia was developed specifically for the unique demands of maritime operations. It serves as a centralised hub that connects galley crews, procurement teams, crewing departments, and shore-based managers, keeping everyone aligned and informed.

Key Features of Estia:

- **Real-time Inventory Tracking**
Structured monthly reports for better stock control.
- **Requisition Management**
Seamlessly aligned with vessel operations and port schedules.
- **Smart Menu Planning**
Ensures nutritional standards while reflecting crew preferences.
- **Integrated Training Tools**
Built-in Learning Management System (LMS) accessible both onboard and ashore.

Why It Matters: Clarity, Consistency, and Control

By centralising critical functions, Estia enhances transparency and streamlines daily operations. Every team, from the galley to the head office, works from a single source of truth, promoting faster decisions and more consistent performance. Moreover, Estia isn't just a tool, it's a platform for continuous improvement. Our experts leverage its data to provide coaching, spot trends, and tailor support for each vessel. Crew members benefit from ongoing training opportunities that grow their skills and confidence.

Next Horizon: Estia II

We're already developing Estia II, a next-generation platform offering enhanced features, deeper integrations, and an even more intuitive user experience. This reflects our commitment to long-term innovation in maritime catering.

Digitalisation with a Human Touch

At MCTC, we don't see digitalisation as replacing people, we see it as empowering them. Estia embodies that philosophy: a smart, dependable system that enhances efficiency, supports crews, and delivers real value, every day, at sea.



Managing Dietary Restrictions Onboard

Nichole Stylianou,
Health & Wellbeing Consultant, Dietitian - Nutritionist



Managing dietary restrictions onboard is essential for maintaining crew health and performance efficiency. Health and Safety are key factors in avoiding food allergies, intolerances and special medical condition requirements. Providing safe and suitable options ensures that all crew members receive the nutrients they need without risking their health. Balanced nutrition directly impacts energy levels, concentration and physical endurance that are mandatory for such demanding work environments. Nutrition support prevents digestive discomfort, ensuring crew members remain focused and productive.

When crew members feel their dietary needs are acknowledged, they feel satisfied and connected within the team.

Operational efficiency is a key factor in ensuring crew wellbeing. A structured approach to meal planning helps avoid food waste and ensures proper stock management. Understanding crew dietary needs minimizes disruptions and leads to a smooth meal service. Following guidelines ensures commitment to health and safety standards on board. Menus based on different nationalities offer balanced meals with various ingredient choices to suit multiple diets. Clear labelling ensure allergens are marked to avoid accidental consumption and finally regular feedback allows the crew to provide input on meals for continuous improvement. Managing dietary restrictions is not only about avoiding complications, but also about providing a supportive, healthy and efficient onboard environment.

Below are the most common dietary restrictions:

Lifestyle-Based Dietary Restrictions

When planning meals for lifestyle-based diets, incorporating plant-based proteins is highly recommended. Focus on nutrient-rich sources such as:

- Legumes: beans, peas, chickpeas, and lentils
- Whole grains: quinoa, brown rice, oats
- Soy-based products: tofu, tempeh
- Other plant-derived foods: fruits, vegetables, nuts, & seeds

These ingredients help ensure a balanced, satisfying, and inclusive menu.

Examples of lifestyle-based dietary choices include:

- **Vegetarian:** Excludes meat, poultry, and seafood. Depending on the type, it may include dairy and eggs.
- **Lacto-Vegetarian:** Excludes meat and eggs but includes dairy products such as milk, cheese, and yogurt.
- **Vegan:** Excludes all animal products, including meat, dairy, eggs, gelatin, whey, fish-based products, and honey. Focuses entirely on plant-based foods.
- **Plant-Based Diet:** Emphasizes whole, minimally processed plant foods such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and seeds. Occasionally includes animal products, though it often overlaps with veganism.
- **Pescatarian:** Excludes meat and poultry but includes fish, seafood, and plant-based foods.
- **Rastafarian:** Typically vegetarian, centered on natural, unprocessed foods. Often includes fish (excluding shellfish) and avoids highly processed items.
- **Keto:** A high-fat, moderate-protein, low-carbohydrate diet.
- **Paleo:** Avoids processed foods, dairy, grains, and legumes. Focuses on foods believed to have been consumed during the Paleolithic era-such as lean meats, fish, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds.
- **Other Common Dietary Restrictions:** In addition to lifestyle choices, some restrictions stem from medical needs, religious beliefs, or allergies:

Medical or sensitivity-based restrictions

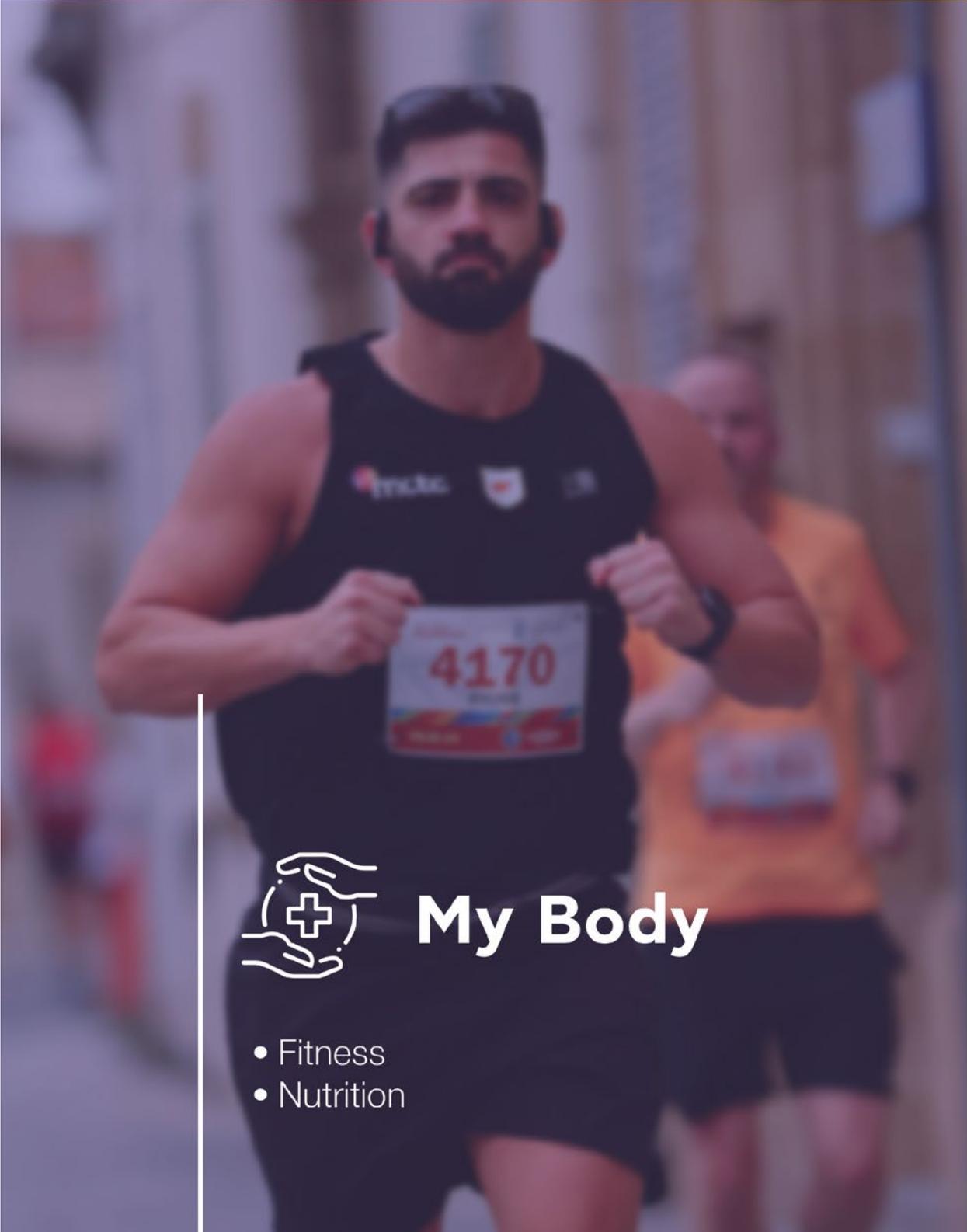
Examples: gluten-free, lactose/dairy-free, diabetic-friendly diets

- **Religious dietary laws**
Examples: halal, kosher, fasting practices
- **Food allergies or intolerances**
Common allergens: nuts, shellfish, eggs, dairy, gluten, soy
- Best Practices for Catering to Dietary Restrictions

To successfully accommodate these needs, consider the following:

- Offer a variety of inclusive options
- Establish a clear communication and support channel (e.g., allergy charts, menu notes)
- Clearly label all dishes with ingredients and possible allergens
- Show respect for all dietary preferences and needs
- Minimize the risk of cross-contamination
- Provide suitable alternatives for common allergens and restricted items
- Ensure staff are informed and have access to updated dietary guidelines

By planning ahead and maintaining flexibility, we can ensure that everyone feels welcomed and well-nourished, regardless of their dietary requirements.



My Body

- Fitness
- Nutrition



Beyond the Galley: Crafting Culinary Excellence at Sea

Inspiring the Next Wave of Seafaring Chefs through Passion, Patience, and Purpose

| Interview with Culinary Training Consultant,
Perry Mason Arzadon

Behind every well-fed crew is a dedicated trainer shaping future maritime chefs with skill and heart. Meet Mr. Perry Mason L. Arzadon, a Culinary Training Consultant at MCTC whose journey from restaurant kitchens to training classrooms is fueled by a lifelong passion for food and mentorship.

With a warm, adaptable teaching style and a firm belief that learning is a personal journey, Mr. Arzadon goes beyond recipes—he equips seafarers with the confidence, skills, and support they need to thrive on board. In this exclusive interview, he shares his story, his insights, and what it truly means to train with purpose.

1. Can you tell us a bit about your background and what inspired you to become a trainer at MCTC?

Cooking has always been a deep passion of mine, even from a young age. This passion guided me to pursue a culinary degree in college, where I eventually graduated and began my professional journey in the food industry. Over the years, I gained valuable experience working in various restaurants and hotels. My last role was as a restaurant manager, where I oversaw both kitchen operations and front-of-house services. It was during this time that I discovered my natural ability to mentor and train others. I found fulfillment in guiding new team members, watching them grow, and sharing knowledge that would improve their skills and confidence in the kitchen. I was later invited by Ms. Nikki—my former colleague from the hotel and now MCTC’s Culinary Training Manager—to join the training team. What inspired me to become a trainer was my belief that every person learns differently. As a trainer, I know I must be patient and flexible. Some trainees learn fast, while others need more time, and it’s my responsibility to ensure each one of them receives the support they need to succeed. My goal is to prepare them not just for the course, but for the real challenges they will face in their careers at sea.

2. What do you enjoy most about teaching and mentoring seafarers?

What I enjoy most is seeing the progress of each trainee—from their first day in the classroom or kitchen to the moment they gain confidence and apply their knowledge with pride. It brings me joy when I see them fully engaged, asking questions, and enjoying the practical sessions. Knowing that the skills they’re learning will be used on board gives my work real purpose. I also make it a point to stay connected with them through social media even after the training ends. That way, they can reach out if they need help, whether it’s a recipe, advice, or clarification. For me, mentorship doesn’t stop at the end of the course—it continues as a form of after-service support, and they appreciate knowing someone is there for them.

3. How has the MCTC training curriculum evolved since you joined?

Since I joined MCTC, I’ve witnessed significant improvements in the training curriculum. The course topics have become more structured, relevant, and practical for seafarers. Presentations are now well-designed and comprehensive, which helps both trainees and trainers. Chief cooks and messmen can easily follow the discussions, and for us trainers, the updated materials allow us to explain concepts more clearly and efficiently. These developments reflect MCTC’s commitment to continually upgrading its standards to match the evolving needs of the maritime catering industry.

4. What are some of the most rewarding moments you’ve experienced while working with trainees?

The most rewarding moments come when I see the trainees genuinely enjoying what they’re doing—especially during cooking sessions. There’s a special kind of satisfaction when they smile, show excitement, and express appreciation for the lessons. It confirms that what we’re teaching matters and makes a real impact on their careers. I also feel proud when

former trainees message me from onboard, sharing how the training helped them in their daily duties. These moments remind me why I chose this path.

5. How do you adapt your teaching approach for diverse nationalities and experience levels?

Adapting to a diverse group of trainees starts with understanding their cultural backgrounds, especially when it comes to food restrictions due to religion or customs. I take time to learn what is acceptable and what’s not for each group, and I adjust recipes or practices accordingly. I also assess their prior knowledge—some may have years of experience, while others may be just starting out. I balance my approach to ensure that everyone, regardless of experience level, learns at their own pace. My goal is to make sure no one gets left behind and everyone feels respected and supported.

6. Can you share a memorable experience from your time at sea that shaped your training style?

Although I haven’t worked on board a ship, I had a valuable experience working as a Territory Manager for a dental distribution company. In that role, I was responsible for training people about various products and technologies, and it taught me the importance of clear communication, patience, and precision. It also strengthened my ability to engage with different learning styles. In addition, my time in the kitchen—leading teams and training new staff—helped shape my practical teaching style. I always make sure that when someone new joins, they receive guidance and encouragement, because I believe that when people grow together, the whole team becomes stronger.

7. In what ways do you think MCTC training is preparing seafarers for the future of maritime catering?

MCTC is fully committed to preparing seafarers for the modern demands of maritime catering. Through specialized courses such as the Chief Cook Upgrading Course, Messman Upgrading Course, and the Maritime Catering Training Development Program, we equip trainees with up-to-date knowledge and practical skills. Chief cooks learn how to prepare a variety of international dishes and improve their kitchen management, while messmen are trained in proper hygiene, service, and how to assist their chief cook effectively. For fresh HRM graduates, we offer a comprehensive three-month program to get them ready for life onboard. This shows how seriously MCTC takes the role of training in shaping competent, confident, and professional maritime catering personnel.

8. What advice would you give to someone considering a career as a trainer or instructor at sea?

My advice is simple: love what you do. Love cooking, love teaching, and love learning. Never be afraid to share your knowledge and experiences. Be patient, because trainees come from all walks of life and each one has a different pace of learning. When you approach your work with passion and sincerity, you don’t just teach—you inspire. And that’s what makes a great trainer.



Meal Planning for Crew Nutrition

Nichole Stylianou,
Health & Wellbeing Consultant, Dietitian - Nutritionist



In a demanding work environment such as maritime, meal planning plays a critical role in ensuring increased energy levels, avoiding deficiencies and maintaining overall health. For crew members operating under physically and mentally intense conditions, structured nutrition ensures they remain alert, productive and strong.

To ensure that crews meet their dietary needs it is required to promote balanced meals on board that provide the following:

- Sustained energy:** Complex carbohydrates for long-lasting energy.
- Muscle recovery:** Proteins to support muscle function & repair.
- Mental Alertness:** Healthy fats and essential micronutrients for cognitive performance.
- Hydration:** Proper fluid intake to combat fatigue & dehydration.

At MCTC we ensure that crew members are offered adequate amounts of all the essential macro-nutrients:

- Protein:** Lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, tofu, dairy for muscle repair and endurance.
- Carbohydrates:** Whole grains, fruits, vegetables, fibre-rich foods for sustained energy.
- Fats:** Nuts, seeds, avocados, olive oil to support brain function and joint health.

In addition, meal timing and frequency play a crucial role. It's important to plan for regular, balanced meals, ideally 3 to 4 per day, to help prevent energy crashes. A nutritious pre-shift meal, such as a high-protein, fiber-rich breakfast, can support focus and concentration. Mid-shift snacks like nuts, yogurt, or fruit help sustain energy levels, while post-shift meals rich in protein aid in muscle recovery.

Proper hydration is as important as proper nutrition. Dehydration can impair concentration and physical performance. Encouraging regular water intake and electrolyte balance is key, especially in environments with high temperatures or intense physical activity.

Practical meal preparation tips for crew include incorporating nutritious snacks such as protein bars, trail mix, and dried fruits, while reducing dependence on processed foods. Opting for grilled instead of fried foods and choosing whole grains over refined carbohydrates can significantly enhance the overall nutritional value of meals.

Special considerations on dietary preferences and restrictions must be taken into account.

- Allergies and intolerances:** Ensuring additional options are available for those with dietary restrictions.
- Vegetarian / Vegan Choices:** Ensuring plant-based proteins like lentils and chickpeas that provide essential nutrients.
- Cultural preferences:** Incorporating diverse meal options respects individual tastes and promotes inclusivity.

Investing in balanced nutrition for crew leads in improved health and wellbeing, boosts productivity and performance and builds a stronger team morale that offers a better overall job satisfaction and teamwork.

Meal planning for crew nutrition goes beyond just food, it's about optimizing performance, supporting overall wellbeing, and promoting sustainability in demanding work environments. A well-structured approach to nutrition empowers the team to perform at their best while promoting long-term health and resilience.



Estia

Plan, Cook, Manage - with MCTC's Digital Platform

Under the Galley Management System (GMS) tab, galley crew can:

- Create and manage requisitions
- Access assigned weekly menus
- Find detailed recipes with ease
- Use tools to streamline day-to-day galley operations



MCTC Philippines: A Second Home for Galley Crews

**Where culinary passion is reignited, skills are refined,
and cooks are truly heard.**

Kimberly Ngan - Operations Manager, MCTC Philippines & Dominique Beato Kampitan - Culinary Training Manager, MCTC Philippines



Training at the Core of MCTC

Long before the term “Catering Management” took center stage, MCTC’s foundation was built on one powerful idea: supporting the galley crew. More than ten years ago, our founder and CEO, Christian Ioannou, envisioned a future where maritime cooks received the guidance they deserved, not just at sea, but also during their time ashore. That vision became reality with the establishment of MCTC Philippines, now a vital hub for culinary training and creativity.

A Creative Culinary Haven in Manila

Unlike traditional training centers, MCTC Philippines offers more than instruction, it offers inspiration. Our philosophy is simple: give space for creativity and trust in each cook’s potential. Every trainee is encouraged to experiment, express themselves, and rediscover their passion for cooking, a passion that can sometimes dim after years of routine onboard.

“Ignite the passion”, our guiding motto, reflects our belief that great food starts with inspired cooks.

Why Food Matters at Sea

At sea, food is more than sustenance. It’s comfort, connection, and cultural identity. It marks milestones, lifts morale, and bridges the emotional distance between home and ship. Yet behind every dish is a galley team working tirelessly under pressure, often underappreciated, but always essential.



We don’t just build skills, we build confidence, connection, and community.

Galley Life: The Heartbeat of the Vessel

Cooks and messmen wear many hats. They must:

- Craft nutritious, culturally sensitive meals
- Work within tight budgets without compromising quality
- Manage provisions across ports and reduce waste
- Balance efficiency with high standards, every single day

“Every day is Monday in the galley”, a reality that makes our training and support more vital.

Training That Listens First, Teaches Second

At MCTC Philippines, we don’t just train, we listen. During their shore leave, cooks share onboard experiences, challenges, and uncertainties. We use these insights to tailor our training, refreshing their knowledge, sharpening their techniques, and addressing real-life scenarios from their vessels.

We also foster creative exploration, encouraging trainees to test new dishes, experiment with presentation, and enjoy the process. Our training sessions are relaxed, positive, and highly interactive, especially on the ever-popular Pizza and Cake Decorating Day, a crew favorite.

Impact You Can Taste, and Feel

The results speak for themselves:

- Messmen and catering trainees promoted and confident in new roles
- Lifelong connections formed, where office visits feel like reunions
- An environment of growth that builds not only skills but camaraderie

A Second Home for Maritime Cooks

Our Manila training center has become more than a facility, it’s a second home. A place to create, learn, and reconnect. Our goal is always the same: that every crew member leaves with a smile, a sense of pride, and excitement to return.



Fueling Health at Sea: Expert Nutrition Tips for Seafarers

How a balanced diet, hydration, and mental wellness routines can keep seafarers strong, focused, and resilient, wherever the journey takes them.

Nichole Stylianou,
Health & Wellbeing Consultant, Dietitian - Nutritionist



Maintaining health at sea isn't just about what's on your plate, it's about daily discipline, mental resilience, and smart choices that support long-term well-being. With expert advice from Nichole Stylianou, crew members can take actionable steps to stay energized, focused, and healthy, no matter how rough the waters get.

It is highly important to support the dietary needs of all crew members as the quality of food directly affects health, performance and the overall well-being. Following a specific eating pattern it is recommended to sustain health at sea due to the rough working conditions. Seafarers travel all around the world following different routes every time. The body must adjust and compromise to work efficiently under difficult circumstances. Having strong physical and mental health can help to overcome these constant changes.

Below are some health & wellbeing recommendations:

- Balanced meals that include food from all food groups (protein, complex carbohydrates and healthy fats) to maintain energy levels.
- Aim for fresh and whole foods, when available, and frozen fruits and vegetables if fresh is difficult to find.
- Adequate hydration is as important as eating healthy. Never forget to drink plenty of water to combat dehydration and fatigue. Limit caffeine and sugary drinks.
- Portion control is the secret for healthy weight management. Avoid overeating and limit the consumption of processed foods.
- Probiotics support gut health and therefore support both mental and physical health.
- Regular exercise helps maintain physical endurance. Go for strength training, stretching, cardiovascular workouts.
- Stick to a structured sleep schedule, limit screen time before bed and try to have restful sleeping environments if possible.
- Stress management is as important as eating healthy, practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing, reading, journaling, mindfulness.
- Social connection is vital, try to keep good relationships onboard through shared activities to reduce isolation.
- Routine and discipline help to maintain motivation and structure during long voyages.

To avoid fatigue, illness and boost your immune system:

- Avoid processed and high sugar foods as they cause energy crashes.
- Take regular breaks from physical demanding tasks to prevent exhaustion.
- Stay mentally engaged through reading, skill-building and creative activities on your free time.

Maintaining health at sea requires consistency and mindful choices. Small daily efforts can lead to better physical and mental health.





RECIPE CORNER

One Pot Wonders from the High Seas

1. Khichdi - Indian Lentil & Rice Comfort Pot

Tonia Drousiotou,
Culinary Training Supervisor

A warm, lightly spiced blend of rice and lentils. Comforting, wholesome, and wonderfully simple.

Quick Facts

Prep: 10 min | Cook: 25 min | Serves: 2

Ingredients

- 100 g moong dal (split yellow lentils, skinless)
- 100 g rice (any kind)
- 950 ml water (adjust to achieve desired consistency)
- 15-30 ml ghee or oil (1 to 2 tablespoons)
- 3-4 g cumin seeds (¼ to 1 teaspoon)
- 4-5 g grated ginger or ginger paste (1 inch piece)
- 1 g turmeric powder (¼ teaspoon)
- 2 g salt, or to taste (½ teaspoon)
- 90-100 g finely chopped or pureed tomatoes (about 1 medium tomato)
- 30 g finely chopped onion (1 very small onion)
- 1 green chili (slit) or ½ teaspoon red chili powder
- 1 bay leaf or 1 sprig curry leaves
- 1 pinch asafoetida (hing)
- 8 g ghee for topping (½ tablespoon)

Instructions

- Rinse the rice and lentils thoroughly 3 times under running water, then drain. If not using a pressure cooker, soak for 30-40 minutes to help them cook faster.
- Heat the ghee or oil in a pot or pressure cooker over medium heat. Once hot, add cumin seeds and the bay leaf or curry leaves if using.
- When the seeds begin to sizzle, stir in the grated ginger and sauté for 30-60 seconds until aromatic. Add a pinch of asafoetida if using.
- Add onions and green chili. Cook until the onions turn lightly golden and lose their raw aroma.
- Mix in the tomatoes, carrots, potato, beans, turmeric, and salt. Sauté for 3-4 minutes to soften slightly.
- Add the rinsed rice and lentils to the pot and stir for another 3-4 minutes.
- Pour in 950 ml of water for a soupy consistency or 700 ml if you prefer it thicker. Mix well and taste the liquid; adjust salt if needed.
- 125-180 ml of boiling water and simmer for a minute or two until bubbling again. Adjust salt if needed.
- Serve hot, topped with a small spoon of ghee. Pairs well with pickles or papad.

Note

- Soaking speeds up cooking: Soaking the dal and rice for 30-40 minutes helps reduce stovetop cooking time.
- Use powdered spices if fresh isn't available: Substitute fresh ginger with ginger powder (use about ¼ tsp) and skip green chilies or use chili flakes.
- No fresh veggies? Use frozen or canned: Frozen peas, carrots, or spinach can easily be mixed in. Add them toward the end to avoid overcooking.
- Ghee vs. oil: If ghee is unavailable, use neutral oil and finish with a small drizzle of butter for richness.
- Water management: Start with less water and add gradually to reach your desired consistency-important when cooking in unpredictable galley conditions.



2. Ginisang Monggo - Filipino Mung Bean Stew

Tonia Drousiotou,
Culinary Training Supervisor

A hearty, protein-rich stew often enjoyed during Lent. Fragrant, flavorful, and filling.

Quick Facts

Prep: 20 min | Cook: 1 hr 20 min | Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 30 ml vegetable oil
- 680 g tomatoes, seeds removed and chopped
- 150 g onion, diced
- 25 g ginger, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 jalapeño, thinly sliced (optional)
- 8 cloves garlic, minced
- 1.5 L Vegetable or Chicken Stock
- 6 g salt, plus more to taste (1 teaspoon)
- 2 g freshly cracked black pepper, plus more to taste (1 teaspoon)
- 285 g dried mung beans, rinsed (1½ cups)
- 400 ml full-fat coconut milk (1 can)
- 30 ml soy sauce (2 tablespoons)
- 30 ml fish sauce (2 tablespoons)
- 180 g spinach
- Optional: steamed white rice for serving

Instructions

1. Heat the oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat.
2. Add chopped tomatoes, diced onion, sliced ginger, and jalapeño if using.
3. Season with the bouillon paste, salt, pepper, and MSG (if using). Stir frequently and cook for 8-10 minutes, or until the tomatoes soften and onions become translucent.
4. Stir in the minced garlic and cook for another 1-2 minutes.
5. Add the rinsed mung beans and 1.5 litres of stock. Stir to combine.
6. Increase heat to bring the stew to a gentle boil. Then reduce to low, cover, and simmer for about 1 hour (or 30 minutes if using split mung beans), until tender.
7. Remove the lid and pour in the coconut milk, soy sauce, fish sauce, and 125-500 ml additional water depending on your preferred consistency. (Start with 125 ml for a thick stew, and increase as needed.)
8. Mix well until the coconut milk is fully combined. Gradually stir in the spinach and cook for 1-2 minutes until just wilted.
9. Taste and adjust seasoning, and serve hot with rice.

Note

- Split mung beans cook faster: If time is limited, opt for split mung beans—they reduce cooking time by nearly half.
- Bulk spinach swap: If fresh spinach isn't available, use frozen or canned greens like malunggay, kangkong.
- Easy protein add-on: For added protein, top with pan-fried canned fish, tofu, or chopped boiled egg if tofu is not on hand.





3. Bigos - Polish Sauerkraut & Meat Stew

Tonia Drousiotou,
Culinary Training Supervisor

**A rustic classic with a slight tang and rich depth of flavor.
Perfect for make-ahead meals.**

Quick Facts

Prep: 20 min | Cook: 1 hr 20 min | Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 500 g sauerkraut, drained and chopped
- 300 g white cabbage, chopped
- 4 chicken thighs (or 500-600 g dark meat like pork shoulder or ribs)
- 400 g Polish smoked sausage (kielbasa), diced
- 7 g mushrooms (about one small handful)
- 8-10 prunes, pitted and halved
- 150 g onion, finely chopped
- ¼ tsp caraway seeds
- ¼ tsp dried marjoram
- ¼ tsp paprika
- 3 whole allspice berries
- 3 juniper berries
- 1-2 bay leaves
- 25 g tomato purée (1½ tbsp)
- 75 ml vegetable (5 tbsp)
- 350-500 ml water
- Black pepper to taste (no salt needed-see note below)

Instructions

1. In a large pot, heat 45 ml (3 tablespoons) of oil over medium heat. Add the caraway seeds, allspice and juniper berries, bay leaf, and chopped onion. Sauté gently for 3 minutes, stirring often.
2. Push the onion mixture to one side of the pot and place the chicken thighs directly on the base. Brown them for 2 minutes per side.
3. Add the sauerkraut, cabbage, prunes, tomato purée, mushrooms, marjoram, paprika, and black pepper. Pour in about 200-250 ml of water, stir to combine, cover, and bring to a gentle boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Add more water if the stew begins to stick.
4. In a separate pan, heat the remaining 30 ml (2 tablespoons) of oil and fry the diced sausage until golden and slightly crisp. Then transfer the sausage into the stew.
5. Continue simmering the stew uncovered or partially covered for another 60-90 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the remaining water gradually as needed to maintain moisture (it should be stewy, not soupy).
6. Once the stew is ready, remove the chicken thighs, take the meat off the bones, and return it to the pot. Discard the bones.
7. Serve hot with boiled or mashed potatoes, or rye/pumpernickel bread.

Note

- Do not add salt: the sauerkraut and sausage are already salty enough. Adjust only with pepper at the end.
- Use canned mushrooms if fresh are not available.
- Skip prunes if not available - a little raisin, apple, or jam can add sweetness.
- Watch the water - keep stew moist, not soupy. Add hot water only if needed.
- Tastes better the next day - great for batch cooking and reheating.



4. Rice Pudding - A Global Comfort Dessert

Tonia Drousiotou,
Culinary Training Supervisor

Creamy and satisfying, this timeless dessert transcends borders and pantry limitations.

Quick Facts

Prep: 20 min | Cook: 20-60 min | Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 200 g uncooked short- or long-grain white rice, or 3 cups cooked leftover rice
- 720-960 ml dairy or unsweetened non-dairy milk (see method)
- 65 g granulated sugar (1/3 cup), plus more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla paste or extract

Optional

- 15 g unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup raisins,
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon

Instructions

- Place the rice and milk in a large saucepan. Use 960 ml of milk for uncooked rice or 720 ml for cooked rice.
- Stir in the sugar and salt. Mix in raisins or cinnamon, if using.
- Heat the mixture over medium-high heat, stirring regularly and scraping the bottom to avoid sticking. Let it come to a steady simmer
- Lower the heat and cook uncovered at a low simmer

Stir occasionally

- Cook for 20-22 minutes if using uncooked rice
- Cook for 10-12 minutes if using pre-cooked rice
- The pudding is ready when the rice is tender, and the mixture is thick
- Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla extract and butter until fully melted. Taste and adjust sweetness as needed
- The pudding will thicken more as it cools. If needed, stir in a splash of warm milk before serving. Serve warm or chilled, as preferred

Note

- Use cooked rice to save time - perfect for repurposing leftover plain rice from meals.
- Shelf-stable ingredients - powdered milk (reconstituted), long-life UHT milk, and vanilla essence work well.
- Flexible flavours - raisins, cinnamon, or canned fruit (like pineapple or peaches) can be mixed in if available.
- Serve cold or warm - can be made ahead and chilled for the next day as a dessert or snack.

Ship-Friendly Cooking Tips

- Make use of pantry staples: Lentils, beans, rice, and canned goods are your best friends.
 - Stretch ingredients: One-pot meals make it easy to feed a crew with minimal waste.
 - Cook once, eat twice: Most of these dishes taste even better the next day.
 - Swap smartly: No fresh spinach? Use frozen. No meat? Try tofu or canned fish.
-





Invitation to Contribute Signature Recipe - Asian Dish

“Cultures have always found ways to connect through food.”

When I first encountered Paneer during my Erasmus studies in the UK, I was immediately reminded of Anari, a fresh Cypriot cheese we usually use in sweets. I still remember a Food Science practical where we made paneer from scratch. Instinctively, I drizzled mine with honey and sprinkled it with cinnamon—just like we do back home with Anari. My classmates and teacher were surprised by the twist, but they loved it. That moment stayed with me. It made me curious about how different cultures share similar ingredients and techniques, just expressed in their own unique ways. Since then, I've been passionate about exploring those connections—finding common threads and blending them into something new.

This dish is my version of that idea:

Tikka-Spiced Anari & Halloumi, with Crispy Chickpeas, Mint & Tzatziki Sauce, and Cyprus Pitta—a fusion of Indian, Greek, and Cypriot flavours, brought together in one vibrant, balanced plate. It's a celebration of spice, texture, and the joy of cultural crossover through food.

Tikka-Spiced Anari & Halloumi, With Crispy Chickpeas, Mint & Garlic-Lemon Yogurt Sauces, and Cyprus Pitta

A Greek-Cypriot and Indian fusion dish,
by Tonia Drousiotou

Quick Facts

Total Time: 1 hour 15 minutes (includes marination and roasting) | Serves: 2

Step 1: Prepare & Rest the Cyprus Pitta Dough

Ingredients

- 250 g all-purpose flour
- 3.5 g dry yeast (½ packet)
- 2.5 g sugar (½ tsp)
- 2.5 g salt (½ tsp)
- 125 ml lukewarm water
- 15 ml olive oil
- 1-2 g black anise seeds or nigella seeds

Instructions

- In a large bowl, mix flour, yeast, sugar, and salt.
- Add water and olive oil. Stir to combine and knead for 10 minutes until smooth.
- Cover and set aside in a warm place to rise (about 1 hour).

Step 2: Prepare Yogurt Sauces (Can Be Made Ahead)

A. Garlic-Lemon Yogurt Sauce

- 120 g Greek yogurt
- 15 ml lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- 2 g salt

Instructions

- Mix all ingredients in a small bowl and chill until serving.

B. Mint & Coriander Tzatziki

- 120 g Greek yogurt
- 15 g fresh coriander
- 5 g mint leaves
- ½ green chili (optional)
- 1 garlic clove
- 15 ml lime juice
- 2 g salt

Instructions

- Blend herbs, garlic, lime juice, chili, and salt into a paste.
- Stir into the yogurt and chill. Add 1–2 tbsp cold water for a looser consistency if desired.

Step 3: Marinate the Cheese & Veg

Ingredients

- 100 g Anari cheese, cubed
- 100 g Halloumi cheese, cubed
- 60 g green bell pepper, chopped
- 50 g red onion, in petals

Marinade

- 60 g Greek yogurt
- 15 ml lemon juice
- 8 g tikka masala spice mix* (check notes)
- 2 g paprika
- 5 g garlic paste
- 2–3 g salt

Instructions

- Mix marinade ingredients in a bowl.
- Add cheese and vegetables. Coat well.
- Marinate in the fridge for 30 minutes.



Step 4: Roast the Crispy Chickpeas

Ingredients

- 1 can (400 g) chickpeas, drained and well dried
- 15 ml olive oil
- 1 garlic clove
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 2 g salt

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 200 °C.
- Toss chickpeas with oil, garlic, lemon zest, and salt.
- Spread on a lined tray and roast for 25–30 minutes until golden and crisp.

Step 5: Shape & Bake the Pitta

- After dough has doubled, divide into 4 equal balls.
- Roll each into a ½ cm thick oval or circle.
- Sprinkle with black anise seeds and gently press them in.
- Bake at 220 °C for 6–8 minutes until puffed & lightly browned.
- Cover with a clean towel to keep soft.

Step 6: Grill the Tikka

- Heat a grill pan or skillet over medium heat.
- Remove cheese and vegetables from marinade.
- Grill for 8–10 minutes, turning to get a light char on all sides.
- Set aside.

Final Assembly & Plating

- Base: Spoon or swipe a little tikka masala sauce
- Center: Place grilled cheese and veggies in a cluster.
- Crunch: Add a spoonful of crispy chickpeas around the edge.
- Sauces: Add a dollop or swoosh of each yogurt sauce.
- Bread: Serve with warm pitta wedges.
- Finish: Drizzle olive oil and garnish with fresh coriander leaves.

Note

Planning & Prep

- Start with the pitta dough: It needs resting time, and you can prep the other elements while it rises.
- Make the sauces first: They benefit from chilling-flavours develop more after 30+ minutes in the fridge.
- Marinate ahead: If time allows, marinate the cheese and vegetables up to a day before for deeper flavour.

Grilling Tips

- Use medium-high heat so the cheese chars without melting too much. A non-stick or lightly oiled grill pan works best.
- Anari is softer than Halloumi: Cut it slightly larger and grill gently. If it's too crumbly, you can pan-sear it instead.

Flavour Balance

- Taste every component separately before final plating. The grilled elements bring salt and heat; the sauces add freshness and acidity-balance is key.
- Use lemon juice or chili sparingly-add gradually and taste as you go.
- Make-Ahead & Reuse
- Extra pitta can be frozen and reheated directly from frozen.
- Leftover sauces are fantastic with rice, grain bowls, or wraps.
- Crispy chickpeas can be stored in an airtight container for up to 3 days-also great as a snack.



Consultants Onboard

At the Heart of the Ship: A Consultant's Perspective

| Kleitos Kleitou, Culinary Training Consultant



Every vessel visit begins the same way, with a handshake and a smile.



These small, sincere gestures do more than break the ice; they lay the foundation for meaningful connection. As onboard consultants, we don't just step into the galley, we step into the pulse of the vessel.

Our role goes beyond checklists and compliance. We're not there simply to assess procedures, we're there to engage, support, and uplift.

Where Cultures Meet and the Galley Speaks

Each vessel is a world of its own, diverse backgrounds, unique personalities, and a rhythm that varies from ship to ship. Yet, no matter where I am, off the coast of Europe or docked in Southeast Asia, one truth remains:

"Food is the heart of life at sea."

A well-prepared meal doesn't just satisfy hunger, it builds morale, strengthens bonds, and offers comfort mid-voyage. The galley becomes a space where stories are shared, smiles exchanged, and cultures are celebrated.

Sharing Best Practices That Make a Real Impact

One of the most fulfilling parts of this role is sharing practical, usable knowledge—real-world best practices that stick. Whether it's a gentle reminder about hand hygiene, safer thawing techniques, or smart ways to repurpose leftovers, the crew is always receptive, especially when advice is offered as support, not supervision.

"Small changes can yield big results."

A better-organized fridge, for instance, can boost safety, improve efficiency, and give cooks more confidence.

Building Trust Through Cultural Connection

Some of the most powerful moments don't happen during inspections, but around the table.

Sharing a bowl of sinigang made with pride by a Filipino Chief Cook, or listening to a Greek officer recall his grandmother's moussaka, these are the interactions that build lasting trust.

"Through food, we connect. Through that connection, we teach, support, and inspire."

Sometimes the advice is technical. Other times, it's encouragement to a young messman that, with passion and dedication, he could one day lead a galley himself.

Mentorship in the Moment

Unlike online training or written manuals, onboard consultancy is real-time, hands-on mentoring.

I might demonstrate knife techniques during prep or help revise a menu to reduce waste while still honoring the crew's tastes. The feedback is immediate, the learning mutual.

"It's a true exchange of knowledge."

I've learned clever tricks from seasoned cooks, and in return, introduced new tools and techniques. Our presence on board says:

The company values not just the quality of the food, but the people preparing it.

A Role Built on Respect

In the end, success isn't measured solely by cleaner kitchens or improved portioning. It's seen in the trust we build, the stories we hear, and the pride we help reinforce.

"We become part of a global crew, united by a mission to nourish, support, and keep the heart of the ship beating strong."



ISO 14001 & ESG: Green Supply Chain

Eleni Kyriacou, Sustainability Officer

The rise of global green expectations

Now more than ever, the world is waking up to the environmental consequences of our actions. Climate change is no longer a distant threat, it is a present reality. We are witnessing more frequent extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and devastating floods. At the same time, the plastic pollution crisis has become highly visible, with plastic-choked oceans, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, and increasing concerns around microplastics. After decades of environmental damage, the cost of pollution is now impossible to ignore.

In response, governments and businesses across the globe are turning to internationally recognised sustainability frameworks and global green standards to bring structure, targets, and accountability to their operations. These frameworks are not only about reducing environmental impact, but they are also about laying the foundation to a more responsible and sustainable future.

Global Green Standards and ESG

Global green standards are structured systems that guide how organisations manage and report their environmental impact. These include:

- ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems)
- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)
- The Paris Agreement
- The European Green Deal
- The EU Climate Law

Alongside these standards, the ESG framework has emerged as a way to evaluate how companies perform in three critical areas: Environmental, Social, and Governance.

Our operations are guided by ESG criteria, which serve as the framework for shaping our sustainability goals, while Global Green standards provide the tools we use to achieve them.

Alignment of Maritime Catering with ESG Goals

By aligning with all three ESG pillars and applying internationally recognised standards, at MCTC we ensure our practices support industry expectations while addressing the growing need for accountability and sustainability in the maritime sector.

ESG Pillar: Environmental

Our environmental efforts begin internally, guided by our ISO 14001 certification, which shapes how we manage resources, minimise waste, and engage responsibly with our suppliers. We have cultivated a green office environment by eliminating single-use plastics, reducing paper consumption, tracking energy and water use, and installing water filtration systems, all while fostering environmental awareness among staff.

This internal mindset extends to our broader supply chain. We collaborate with suppliers to reduce plastic use, identify alternatives to plastic bottled water, such as aluminium cans, Tetra Pak, and glass bottles, and explore more sustainable pallet wrap solutions. Some suppliers now provide data on plastic savings per vessel per order, helping us monitor real impact.

To support these changes, we host quarterly environmental webinars that promote shared learning and practical solutions, such as "Breaking Free from Single-Use Plastics" and "Rethinking Pallet Wrap."

A key milestone in our environmental strategy was the launch of our carbon footprint database, which assigns CO₂

values to each food product based on a global weighted average. This approach empowers us and our clients to make informed, lower-impact choices and aligns our actions with global frameworks like the Paris Agreement, EU Climate Law, and the European Green Deal.

Together, these efforts support our roadmap to carbon neutrality and directly contribute to several UN Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production and SDG 13: Climate Action.

ESG Pillar: Social

Sustainability is not only about the environment; it is also about people. Our catering services prioritise the health and well-being of seafarers by providing nutritious, culturally diverse meals tailored to specific dietary needs. Through ongoing training, we empower galley crews with skills in food safety, storage, portion control, and waste reduction, ensuring both quality and efficiency onboard.

Across our offices, we create and support a healthy, inclusive workplace through a range of well-being initiatives, including emotional intelligence coaching, in-house nutritionist sessions, team-building activities, and personal development programmes. Our culture is built on continuous growth, inclusion and care for our employees' well-being.

Beyond our internal efforts, we engage with the wider community through internship programs, sustainability campaigns, educational webinars, newsletters, and industry conferences that promote responsible practices across our industry.

ESG Pillar: Governance

Strong governance ensures that sustainability is embedded across our operations through transparency, accountability, and ethical decision-making. We follow clear internal procedures and conduct regular reviews of our environmental performance to guide informed, responsible action.

In our supply chain, we uphold high standards by conducting structured sustainability surveys, requesting documented evidence of eco-friendly practices, and setting shared goals for continuous improvement. These practices help align our partnerships with our core values and reinforce integrity at every level of our operations.

Our Commitment in Action

In line with SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, we support building a maritime industry rooted in trust, accountability and continuous improvement.

Today, aligning with ESG principles and global green standards is no longer optional, it is essential. As one of the world's most impactful industries, maritime has a responsibility to lead by example. By embedding sustainability into every level of operations, from sourcing to reporting, the industry can play a defining role in addressing global environmental and social challenges.



With All My Heart

Nichole Stylianou, Health & Wellbeing Consultant Dietitian-Nutritionist
Eirini Konstantinou, Marketing Coordinator

A Wellness Weekend Like No Other

This year's MCTC Family Wellness Retreat was more than just a break from routine, it was a vibrant celebration of health, connection, and community. Set against the serene backdrop of Club Balai Isabel in Batangas, the two-day event welcomed seafarers, their families, and members of the MCTC team for a revitalising experience centered on cardiovascular health and holistic wellbeing.

MCTC Family Wellness Retreat 2025:
A Weekend of Connection, Education & Heartfelt Health
Location: Club Balai Isabel, Batangas
Dates: June 13-14, 2025

The Heart of the Matter

Under the theme "With All My Heart," the retreat spotlighted the heart not only as a vital organ, but as a symbol of balance, resilience, and lifelong health.

Leading the sessions was MCTC's Health and Wellbeing Consultant, Mrs. Nichole Stylianou, who explored:

- The science behind cardiovascular wellness
- The effects of stress on the heart
- Real-world strategies for maintaining physical and mental balance, especially in the demanding maritime world

Through a mix of expert talks and interactive learning, participants gained practical tools to improve their health at sea and at home.

Movement, Mindfulness & More

The schedule was thoughtfully curated to engage attendees of all ages and fitness levels. Activities included:

- Aqua Zumba & Dance Classes, Getting hearts pumping with fun, rhythmic moves
- Basketball & Volleyball, Fostering friendly competition and team spirit
- Group Movement Games, Inclusive, energetic, and perfect for families

Workshops also covered wellness essentials like:

- Healthy cooking demos
- Stress management through breathwork
- Hydration and sleep tips

Special sessions were held for children and teens, planting early seeds of wellness and encouraging healthy habits from a young age.

More Than Just Fitness

The retreat was a heartfelt reminder of the human side of life at sea. It celebrated family, unity, and the ongoing commitment MCTC has to nurturing the health of maritime professionals and their loved ones.

"Wellbeing is not a one-time initiative. It's a continuous, shared journey." MCTC

The 2025 retreat radiated with laughter, learning, and connection, further cementing MCTC's mission to support healthier, happier lives for all.

Voices from the Retreat

"Very informative and interactive. Had so much fun. Hope to join again. Very thankful to MCTC."
Chief Engineer

"Such an educational experience on how to improve healthy living."
Seafarer's Wife

"Thank you to the MCTC family for this wellness retreat. It was an amazing experience."
Chief Cook

"The MCTC staff were friendly and accommodating. The topics really helped shift my perspective on a healthy, balanced diet."
Second Officer

"We really enjoyed the retreat. Thank you and more power to the MCTC team!"
Third Officer

"It was a pleasure being a participant. I love and appreciate it very much."
Master

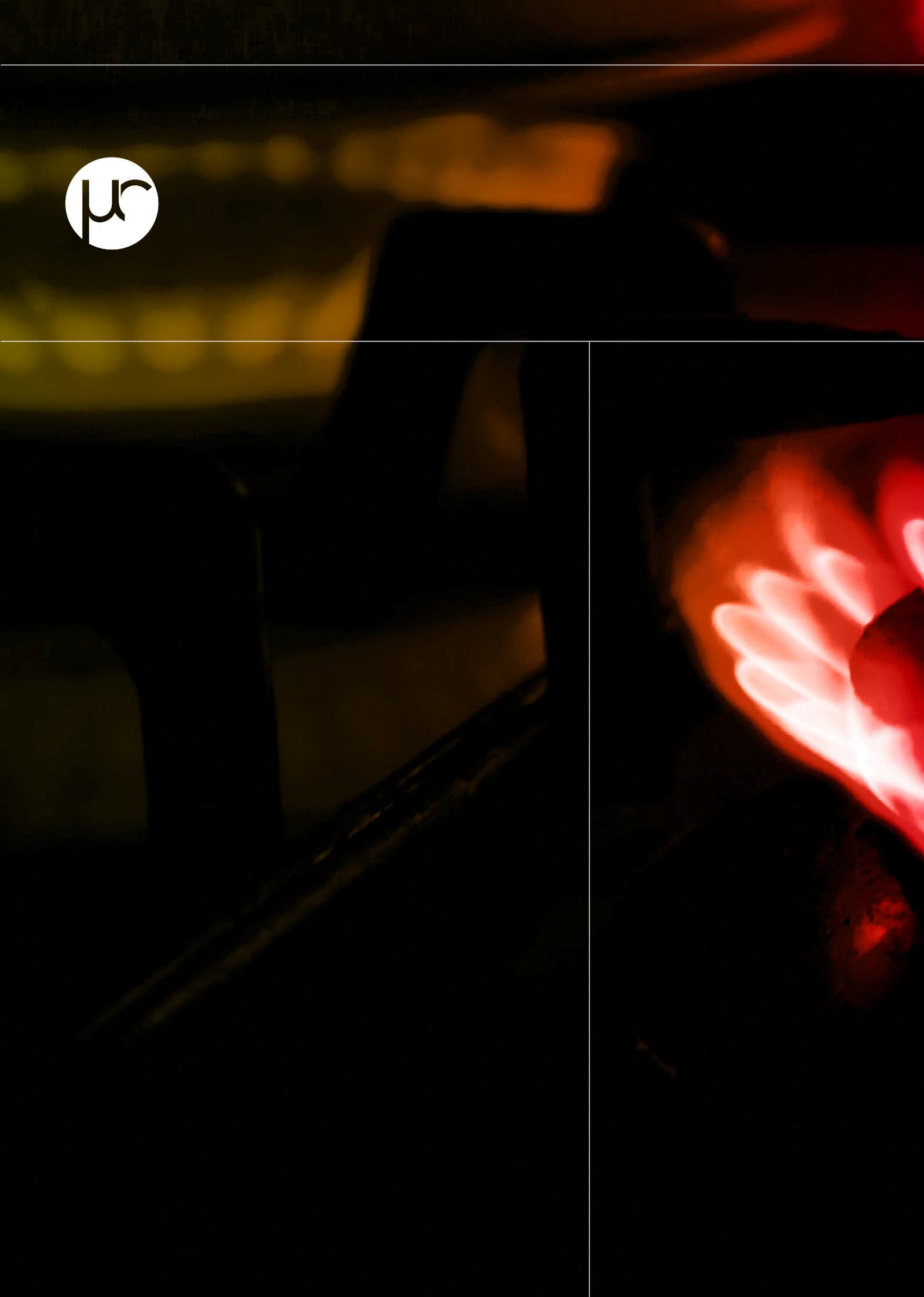
"Thank you for this healthy retreat."
Wife of a Second Officer





**Sharing
our passion**







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