RESTAURANT SPANISH – BACK OF HOUSE: TERMS AND VOCABULARY EVERY CHEF SHOULD KNOW

Cooking Edition

If there is a profession to be passionate about, it is gastronomy, this is undoubtedly a career that can satisfy professionals and customers alike. I know what you're thinking, who in the Gordon Ramsay's name is this person, and why is she talking about cooking? No, I am not a chef. On my best days, I'm a simple cook who does everything by eye and may burn occasionally an arepa (Typical Venezuelan dish). But my mother, a pastry chef/cook with more than 20 years of experience, and her best friend, a chef at one of the most renowned restaurants in Venezuela, agreed to tell me everything someone working in restaurants should know if they want to **learn Spanish for restaurants**. Today we have a cooking edition, a compilation of the most important terms of kitchen work, are you ready? Let's cook!

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Daily Vocabulary

Chefs may be totally absorbed in the *Mise en place (*French culinary phrase that means "putting in place" or "gather"), but they have a code of words that their brains guard with zeal and keep them on constant alert. It's a language that only chefs understand, and whether they come from French words or not, that doesn't prevent them from understanding perfectly what they are referring to.

Spanish	English
Caliente atrás	Hot in the back
Adán y eva en una balsa	Adam and eve on a raft
Voy atrás	Behind
Ahumar	Smoke
Oído chef	Heard / heard that
CP (Comida del Personal)	(SM) Staff Meal
Curar	Cure
Plato muerto	Dead plate
Aún muge	Still mooing
Ocho seis	Eight six
¡Marchando!	On deck!

Clothing

The kitchen staff's clothing is like their second skin, and if there is something that distinguishes one from another, it is the care with which they keep it in perfect condition, even after a long day. Let's see how to name each garment in Spanish.

Spanish	English
Filipina	Chef's jacket / coat
Delantal / mandil	Apron
Gorro Bandana	Skull Cap

Spanish	English
Pico de Cuello	Neckerchief
Gorro francés (champiñón)	Chef hat
Gorro alto de cocina	Le Toque
Gorro Cofia	Beanie
Trapos	Rags
Toallas	Towels

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Tools

A self-respecting chef differentiates perfectly the types of pans, utensils, and tools to be used, and, of course, their correct use in THEIR kitchen; without them nothing is possible. Here are the most commonly used in the kitchen!

Spanish	English
Cuchillo mondador o puntilla	Peeler knife
Cuchillo cebollero o de cocinero	Onion knife or chef's knife
Cuchillo deshuesador	Boning knife

Spanish	English
Cuchillo fileteador o filetero	Filleting knife
Cuchillo jamonero	Ham knife
Cuchillo para carpaccio o salmón	Carpaccio or salmon knife
Cuchillo para pan o cuchillo serrado	Bread knife or serrated knife
Cuchillo Santoku	Cuchillo Santoku
Báscula	Scale
Termómetro para líquido, horno y aceite	Liquid, oven or deep-fry Thermometer
Cuchara pluma	Plating spoon
Inyector de salsas	Sauce injector
Colador	Strainer
Sifón	Siphon
Tenaza casca mariscos	Seafood tongs
Taza medidora de líquidos / sólidos	Measuring cup for liquids/solids
Racionador de helado	Ice cream scoop
Espátula	Spatula
Prensa	Press
Sartén	Frying pan
Cacerola / olla	Saucepan / pot
Soplete	Blowtorch

Spanish	English
Aro de emplatar	Plating ring
Tabla de cortar	Cutting board
Pelador	Peeler
Molino de sal y pimienta	Salt and pepper mill
Rallador microplano	Microplane grater
Paellera	Paella pan
Salsera	Sauceboat
Cuchara para miel	Honey spoon
Reloj de cocina	Kitchen timer with alarm
Pinza para emplatar	Plating tongs

Staff

The kitchen team is like a family that must work like a Swiss watch. From the most notorious to the most unnoticed position, everyone keeps the kitchen running smoothly. Some of the names come from French terms; however, here are those that have a Spanish equivalent.

Spanish	English
Chef ejecutivo	Executive chef
Chef de cocina	Chef de cuisine / Head chef
Chef repostero	Patissier (pastry chef)
Línea de cocina	Chef de partie / Line cook

Spanish	English
Chef carnicero	Boucher (butcher chef)
Cocinero de frituras	Friturier (fry chef)
Chef de parrilla	Grillardin (grill chef)
Almacenista	Garde manger (pantry supervisor)
Portero de cocina	Kitchen porter
Dishwasher	Lavavajillas / Lavaloza

Knife cuts

The dream of chefs is to get a Michelin star, those that can only be achieved with innovative, creative and distinctive work in the kitchen. But to achieve one, you must master the basics to get that quality, appearance and final taste; starting with the cut of the ingredients, and in Spanish, you must also master the name if you want to be able to communicate, shall we start?

Spanish	English
Bastones	Baton
Juliana	Julienne
Cerilla	Matchstick
Cubo o cuadros	Dice
Picada	Mince
Rodajas	Paysanne





Cooking Techniques

Saying the name of a technique incorrectly, or not understanding it, can lead to the same result as executing it incorrectly: a poorly finished dish. So, if you intend to talk about them in Spanish as well as you cook, these are some of the techniques you should know:

Spanish	English
Cocción en seco, cocción en medio aéreo o por concentración	Dry Heat Cooking
Al horno	Oven
A la parrilla	Grilling
A la plancha	Broiling
A la brasa	Roasting
Gratinar	Grating
Baño maría	Bain-marie
Al vacío	Sous vide
Cocción en medio líquido o húmedo	Moist Heat Cooking
Hervir	Boiling
Blanquear o Escaldar	Bleaching or Blanching
Escalfar o Pochar	Poaching
Cocción al vapor	Steaming
Cocción en caldo blanco	White stock simmering

Spanish	English
Cocción en medio graso	Oils & Fats Cooking
Freír	Frying
Rehogar y sofreír	Sauté and Pan Frying
Saltear	Stir-fry
Dorar	Browning
Cocción mixta o combinada	Combination Cooking
Estofar o guisar	Stewing
Brasear	Braising

Red Meat Doneness

In Spanish, the word “Término” refers to the doneness of the meat. Which one you choose at mealtime is a matter of taste, but if you would rather not be the one to deliver meat at an undesirable doneness, you may want to know the following words:

Spanish	English
Cocción azul	Blue rare
Rojo o inglés	Rare
Termino medio o al punto	Medium rare
Tres cuartos	Medium
Bien cocido	Well done



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Flavors

It is indisputable that gastronomic diversity is infinite, as are the flavors, each chef and cook has a seasoning identical to a fingerprint, unrepeatable. Do you know the flavors you can achieve when cooking?

Spanish	English
Dulce	Sweet
Amargo	Bitter
Agrio o ácido	Acid or sour
Salado	Salty
Picante (lo sé, no es un sabor)	Spicy (I know, it□s not a flavor)
Delicioso, sabroso	Tasty
Desagradable, asqueroso	Gross

Hey there. Welcome.

I'm Kéllyta Quijada - and I wrote this article.

Stuck on this topic? Hire me for just 1 hour to start mastering it. Pass a test, improve basic vocabulary or improve your conversational level in Spanish.

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Just as there are vocations to select careers, there are also inclinations within the cooking profession. Regardless of your inclination, if at some point you have to travel to a Spanish-speaking country, you now have the basic terms to get by. Tell us, would you like a second part with terms related to dealing with the public? We look forward to seeing you next time!