

Having your cake and eating it

Adina almost didn't apply for the Tasting Success Program. Thanks to some gentle encouragement from her high school teacher, she took the plunge and has gone from strength to strength, recently opening her own boutique cake shop in Sydney's west.

Tasting Success is a female chefs' mentoring program introduced to increase the likelihood that participants will complete their apprenticeship and embark on a hospitality career that brings them to senior leadership positions in the restaurant industry.

The program includes 35 hours of mentoring with a leading chef over an eight month period to complement the student's course work and apprenticeship experience. Participants have the opportunity to experience working in the kitchens of top restaurants and some may participate in television cooking demonstrations or food styling for magazines and recipe books.

For Adina, Tasting Success gave her the opportunity to learn tools of the trade and be inspired by mentor Paris Cutler, owner of Planet Cakes.

"It was an amazing experience. [Paris] taught me to do everything from scratch and really made me understand that your work can't just be good – it needs to be perfect," she said.

"Paris' work is all about an incredible level of attention to detail; for example, seven tools are used to make just one tiny flower petal made from icing."



Adina said the experience resulted in "a million light bulbs" coming on and culminated in her opening her own business – Babycakes by Adina in Wetherill Park.

"My dad encouraged me to go for my own business and it's been the best experience. I'm already planning on opening another shop and I'd like to train someone to pass on my skills to," she said.

Tasting Success supports the NSW Government's commitment to increase female employment in traditionally

male-dominated industries. In NSW, while there are 18,000 chefs, only 21.6 percent are female.

Tasting Success was cofounded in 2007 by industry leaders Lyndey Milan and Courtney Clarke OAM. Developed by TAFE Sydney Institute in partnership with the Office for Women's Policy, the program is also supported by industry partners such as Tourism Training Australia, Clubs NSW and Restaurant and Catering NSW.