

Listen and complete the missing words

Recording script

You will hear a restaurant chef talking about his work. For questions 1–10, complete the sentences.

Max

It's difficult to say when exactly I made up my mind I wanted to cook for a living, because I'd always been interested in cooking. As a child I used to watch my parents preparing meals at home, and I would imagine myself cooking something delicious for the family. But (1) it wasn't until my elder sister showed me how to create some really original dishes that I realised I wanted to make a career of it. Though she wasn't a chef and in fact I very nearly wasn't either because my dad had other ideas.

He was an engineer but in his younger days he would've loved to be (2) a footballer, so when he saw I could play a bit he tried to persuade me to take it up professionally and forget about cooking. But by then I knew I was better with a frying pan than a ball, and I didn't take any

It would be a while before I actually began work, though. First I went to catering college, in the autumn of 1999, and studied there until (3) 2001. Towards the end of that year I was offered work at a hotel in London, and I accepted straightaway. That job was tough at first, extremely tough. I was working very long hours when I was there and it was always very hot in the kitchens, but (4) it was the head chef who really got me down. He treated us like slaves, and I hated him so much I hardly noticed the working conditions. As soon as I could, I moved to France.

Some people were surprised by my decision to do that, but I'd been thinking of going to Paris for some time before I actually went. And although I hardly knew any of the language (5) I had a very useful contact there: the owner of one of the city's top restaurants. I'd met him when he was staying at the hotel in London, and fortunately he was very impressed by the meal I'd made for him. And the rest, as they say, is history.

I worked there for five years, developing my skills and sometimes preparing dishes for celebrities. (6) They included film stars, unlike at the London hotel where they tended to be big-name sportspeople, or rock stars.

Nowadays I have a restaurant of my own, and our regular customers also include quite a few well-known faces. It's popular with people from both home and abroad, and I have a team of four chefs from different countries. Even so, (7) I try to source ingredients wherever possible, that all our vegetables, fruit and meat comes from local farms. It gives them business, and it makes environmental sense, too. In terms of the cooking, I suppose what makes it special is (8) the variety of dishes on the menu, actually, rather than any one type such as vegetarian or fish dishes. That's what I really take pride in, because it's not something that's easy to achieve.

Unlike in many other restaurants, we only cook when we receive orders from (9) customers. So to ensure that their food is freshly made, we need to keep all the ingredients ready for anything they might choose from the menu. And that's difficult because there are so many things that can go wrong. Starting with deliveries. They can turn up late, as the meat did on Friday, or even disappear altogether, which is what happened to (10) a van heading here last July. I still remember what the thieves did with several hundred kilos of fish at the hottest time of the year.

Compact First - Unit 2