February 21, 2014

Packaging & Freezing For A Personal Chef Service

As a personal chef, your business is all about making great food. In a restaurant, the good food is for tonight. As a personal chef, your great food is for many nights after you've been busy in the kitchen. So exactly how does that excellent meal made today, look and taste excellent 2 weeks from now? The secret is in the cooling and packaging phase. Most importantly - you need to know WHAT will freeze and remain excellent 2 weeks from now. Not all foods will, but even foods that won't alone, will when properly blended with a complimentary ingredient. The Culinary Business institute Personal Chef 1-2-3 program fully covers cooling, packaging and freezing techniques, but in this blog we'll try to high the high points of each. After a meal is created, destined for the freezer, it needs to be cooled rapidly. Just setting the pot or pan out to cool won't cut it, and will likely result in bacterial growth. Bye-bye business if that happens. You'll need to learn, or devise a method(s) to quickly bring the food temperature down. Next you need to know what container will best work with the meal made. Is the meal soupy or saucy? Is the meal heavy/ is the presentation value something to be preserved at all cost? How will your client likely heat the meal? Will the meal need to transfer to another container for heating? It's not as simple as tossing the meal into a tin foil pan and sticking it in the freezer. Remember, you and your service are being evaluated every time a meal is consumed. If that meal loses its flavor, color or appeal, that reflects directly on you. And soon after the client will reconsider the value for their money spent. There are also a variety of meal containers available. Does the client want reusable or disposable? How versatile do you want your containers to be? How much are you willing to spend on a suitable container? A successful personal chef must know the answers to all of these questions before he/she even opens their door for business.