

A career in ice sculpting

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A Career in Ice Sculpting When we see an ice sculpture glistening in the light we are mesmerized by the intricate designs that have the look of solid crystal. The beautiful piece of art is appreciated for its stunning form as it slowly melts away into the pool of water where it started. When the ice has melted and the sculpture gone, little thought is given to the artist that was at the core of its creation. Yet, someone took the initiative to learn this craft, to practice the trade, and apply their knowledge to generate an additional outlet for their artistry and an additional source of income. We are in awe as we wonder; how did they learn the art of ice sculpting and how do they apply it in the culinary trade For those people fortunate enough to know how to skillfully carve blocks of ice, life has been a series of instruction, catering events, and ice sculpting competitions.

Learning the fine art of ice sculpting is done through advanced culinary training academies or professional associations that offer classes and seminars. The Academy of Ice Carving and Design offers classes that feature skill levels that start at basic sculpting for caterers to advanced classes in "sculpture skills; computer enhanced custom design; closed-cell ice engraving; multiple block fusing; [and] high-tech special effects" as well as safety and marketing (Ice Carving Training Certification Programs). The Art on Food culinary school, in Lucerne Switzerland, offers classes in ice sculpting, which are two days in length for both beginning and advanced courses (Ice carving classes). Students are taught the proper handling of ice and the basic tools of the trade.

After the successful completion of a basic or advanced class, the ice sculptor will most likely be employed catering to lavish events. Here they will pursue

their culinary career as they display the art that is always a part of fine dining and elegance. Maurie Pearson operates a private ice carving company where he turns three hundred pound blocks of ice into four-foot sculptures. Located in La Crosse WI, his sculptures take about two hours to carve and sell for almost \$300 each (Former Chef Carves Out Cool Career). A highly skilled artisan may also be found catering a ball honoring the President or a major corporate convention.

As the ice sculptor becomes even more skilled, there are ice sculpting competitions where the winners can win thousands of dollars. The winner at the Realistic Multiple Block Classic Competition in Fairbanks Alaska was a team that constructed a sculpture of a dog-sled team out of 25 tons of ice (Balto's Charge). Even more exciting are the Extreme Ice Sculpting demonstrations. " With chainsaws screaming and ice flying, speed and precision are used to create works of art" that stand 8 feet tall in less than an hour (Extreme Ice). There is literally no end to the opportunities that await the skilled ice carver.

In conclusion, ice sculpting begins with a short course that teaches the basics of ice carving with a chisel and progresses to chainsaws, lathes, and power tools. It can be an economically rewarding career supplying finished sculptures or catering lavish events. As the artisan becomes more skilled they can gain notoriety by entering international competitions. Ice sculpting is a valuable trade and a beneficial addition to anyone's resume that is pursuing a career in the culinary arts.

Works Cited

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