



HOTEL EZRA CORNELL

ISSUE THREE

Happy New Year from Hec!

Welcome to the third edition of the Hotel Ezra Cornell (HEC) 101 Newsletter! As we kick off the New Year, we are counting down to HEC this April with fresh stories and behind-the-scenes looks at what is happening across the hospitality industry. From seasonal inspiration to industry insights, there is plenty to explore as we head into an exciting few months. Happy New Year—we hope you enjoy this month's issue and join us as the excitement for HEC continues to build!

Upcoming Events

- 
2/9 ▶ Humanities Scholars Program Winter Open House (open to Freshmen and Sophomores interested in a humanities minor)
 5:00pm - 6:00pm A.D. White House - Room 110
- 
2/10 ▶ HEC Movie Night: Hotel Transylvania and Popcorn Bar
 7:00pm Statler Auditorium
- 
2/12 ▶ From Ghosted to Hired: AI Tools for Resumes & Interviews
 4:30pm-5:30pm Virtual Event

Industry Insider



Company Challenge

Marriott is facing slowing demand in traditional hotel stays as travelers prioritize flexible, longer, and more localized stays - especially post pandemic shifts toward work-from-anywhere culture

Company Solution

Marriott is rapidly expanding **Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy**, turning what was a niche experiment into a core portfolio pillar across key global markets.



Company Challenge

Rising labor cost and demand for faster service models are forcing food service brands to rethink the in-store hospitality experience.

Company Solution

Chipotle has been rolling out **Chipotlanes** (drive-thru pickup lanes for digital order) - a massive operation pivot that is driving 10-15% of total digital sales growth, reshaping expectations for fast-casual hospitality.



Company Challenge

Slowing same-store sales growth, boutique coffee shop competition, and Gen Z's demand for customization and experience are reshaping the coffee industry.

Company Solution

Starbucks is reframing by expanding smaller, pick-up focused stores with new beverages and loyalty perks. This moves them to a hybrid convenience and experience approach that blends efficiency with premium personalization.



The Details Behind the f&b Pod



Food & Beverage Department

The Food and Beverage department is one of the most influential teams that will allow HEC 101 to run smoothly. The F&B department has a largely managerial role, as they oversee the entire F&B pod. In addition, each member of the F&B department is responsible for managing their own function teams, which include a representative from each department within the F&B pod and are tasked with planning

and executing all F&B experiences during HEC weekend. Currently, the F&B department is working on its annual Pop-Up event. Pop-Up is an opportunity for the F&B departments to practice for HEC weekend by testing menu items, centerpieces, floor plans, designs, and overall service for Cornell faculty and Statler Hotel staff. It allows teams to identify potential issues and improve their events. Function teams receive feedback to refine details and ensure the event's success, and are responsible for implementing any necessary adjustments. This is just a snapshot of the work that the F&B department does in managing and preparing the entire F&B pod for HEC weekend. We are appreciative of their hard work and are excited to see their months of planning come to life in April!

Food & Beverage Service Department

Alongside the F&B department and the other teams in the F&B pods, the F&B Service Team is busy preparing for Pop-Up, an annual event that helps them perfect their service in preparation for the April conference banquet. First-year students in this department are quickly learning under the guidance of their director, Vegas Chiddick '27. Melody Xu '29 said, "We have been working on



the details of our food displays... what equipment we need and how much." As she explains, this Pop-Up event is valuable because "professionals can give us tips, things that we can't really see, things we might have overlooked." HEC 101's theme of All in the Details is especially reflected through teamwork in service: while collaborating with Conference Services and Design, Deacon Coffman '29 said, "We're all working together to make sure that everything we are doing is cohesive... to make sure that the details in each group are matching." Alisa Arana '29 adds that, "it's good to work in a team because sometimes they can see details that you would not have seen." The F&B Service Team is excited to work together and ensure the events runs smoothly!



Beverage Spotlight

You Survived the Stacks!

Inspiration:

Lucy Abrahamson, MMH Beverage Lead, developed the featured drink for Friday's MMH Lunch at HEC 101 by drawing inspiration from the event's "golden hour" theme. While searching for ingredients that naturally carried a warm, golden hue, she was drawn to tamarind for its rich color and distinctive tangy flavor. Wanting the beverage to feel both elevated and celebratory, Lucy incorporated bubbles as a nod to milestone moments, creating a bright, refreshing drink that captures the warmth, joy, and sense of accomplishment at the heart of the celebration.

Beverage Ingredients:

1.5oz Tamarind and Ginger Simple Syrup
0.5oz Lime Juice
3oz Sparkling Water

Beverage Recipe:

Build in a flute/champagne glass and garnish with a sugar swizzle stick!

If you want to jazz it up, replace the sparkling water with Sparkling Wine (HEChampagne perhaps!)

Tamarind and Ginger Simple Syrup Ingredients:

6 Tamarind Pods
2 inch piece of Ginger, peeled and grated
1 cup Granulated White Sugar

Tamarind and Ginger Simple Syrup Recipe:

Peel the shell of the tamarind off and remove the seeds. Soak the tamarind for 15 minutes in warm water to help break down the flesh. After 15 minutes, combine 1 cup of water with 1 cup of sugar and heat in a saucepan on medium until sugar is dissolved. Add the ginger and tamarind (discard the water the tamarind soaked in). Change the heat to low, and occasionally stir for 12-15 minutes. Remove from the heat, let cool to room temp, and strain using a cheesecloth. Store in an airtight container in the fridge until use.





Dish Spotlight

Karaage Chicken & Waffles

Inspiration:

Matthew Cheung '29, a member of the HEC Culinary team, created a nostalgic twist on the classic chicken and waffles. Inspired by his Asian heritage and his experience working in Japanese restaurants, Cheung incorporated karaage-style chicken into the dish. He paired it with Eggo waffles to reflect the blending of comfort food nostalgia with personal culinary influence. By serving this dish at HEC, Cheung hopes to share a familiar favorite reimagined through his own background and experiences.

Ingredients:

- 300 g Boneless Skin-On Chicken Thigh
- 3 tbsp Soy Sauce
- 1 tbsp Sake
- 5 g Ginger, minced
- 10 g Garlic, minced
- ¼ cup Potato Starch
- ¼ cup Maple Syrup
- ¼ cup Soy Sauce
- Eggo Waffles



Instructions:

1. Cut chicken thighs into 1 inch pieces.
2. Combine soy sauce, sake, ginger, and garlic together. Add to the chicken pieces and marinate overnight or a few hours.
3. Drain any excess liquid from marinated chicken. Add potato starch and mix until each piece is fully coated, thoroughly press each chicken piece to create bits of starch, add additional starch if needed.
4. Make glaze by combining maple syrup and soy sauce in a pot. Cook until reduced and can coat the back of a spoon. Let cool fully.
5. Fry marinated chicken in 300°F oil for 2 minutes. Set aside.
6. Reduce soy sauce and maple syrup together until slightly thickened and coats back of spoon.
7. Fry chicken again at 350°F until golden and crispy (~3 minutes).
8. Toss chicken in soy-maple glaze.
9. Toast Eggo waffle until warm. Place 1 waffle and 3-4 pieces of chicken into a paper cup lined with deli paper.



Inside Nolan

How One Hotel Class Revealed the Details Behind Restaurants

By: Laura Fennessy

As many Hotelies know, a fundamental part of the Hotelie freshman year experience is HADM 1361, the Food & Beverage Management lecture and lab. Taken by every Cornell hotel student, “F&B” is a class that not only teaches you information about the restaurant industry, but allows students to experience firsthand what it is like to work in a back-of-house restaurant setting.

For context, the F&B lecture teaches the history of the restaurant industry, as well as key concepts such as menu pricing and costing. This information carries over into the food lab where students spend three hours cooking and baking in a culinary kitchen each week.

The final project of the course is to create a menu item of our choosing and walk through the process from start to finish, including testing it, calculating the ingredient costs, and setting the price.



Example #1 of a Meal Prepped in the F&B Lab

After taking this course, I can confidently say that it has transformed the way I think about the restaurant industry. In fact, what truly changed my perspective of the industry was the menu costing and pricing aspect of the lab. Before the course, I would not understand why restaurants would price their menu items so high, especially when the ingredients seemed inexpensive. Now, I understand the numerous factors that go into pricing a menu item. Along with the ingredient cost, the restaurant also has to take into account other expenses such as labor, rent, or utilities. An average customer might see a high menu price as a sign of greed, but after

taking F&B, I understand it as the restaurant aiming to reach a specific profit margin. While menu prices may seem like a minor part of a large operation, this course showed me how much thought, strategy, and precision go into running a restaurant, especially the importance of details, lessons I can carry into any future role in hospitality or beyond.



Example #2 of a Meal Prepped in the F&B Lab



Hotellie Career Playbook

A Look Into a Hotellie's Summer Internship

During the summer of her junior year, senior Hotellie Sydney Rosenberg '26 had the opportunity to intern for Williams Sonoma Inc. Rosenberg worked in New York City for William Sonoma's furniture and home decor brand, West Elm, where she was a merchandising intern assigned to the bath category. As part of her role, Rosenberg analyzed seasonal assortments, balancing the current inventory and products while simultaneously managing future assortments and contributing to product design. Working at West Elm was an especially rewarding experience for Rosenberg, as the company fostered a strong entrepreneurial spirit and people-focused culture. Rosenberg also enjoyed the high-level of independence she was given; even as an intern, her coworkers treated her with respect and trust, allowing her to take on significant responsibilities.



Williams-Sonoma, Inc. named to 2022 Dow Jones Sustainability Index North American

During her internship, Rosenberg noticed the company's strong ties to hospitality, as one of its main goals was to help customers feel more comfortable at home in their living spaces.

Handshake

Handshake Co.

Rosenberg originally discovered this opportunity on the Handshake platform. After applying, she completed four rounds of interviews before receiving an offer. This interview process relied heavily on persistence and initiative, as she was expected to reach out to interviewers and coordinate her own interviews for each round. To prepare for the interviews, Rosenberg conducted

extensive research on the company, and became particularly interested in the fact that Williams Sonoma has the longest standing female CEO in the Fortune 500, a point she referenced during her interviews.

When she was initially admitted to the Nolan School, Rosenberg was interested in a food and beverage-oriented (F&B) path, but throughout her time in the Nolan School and from her experiences working in F&B jobs over the summer, she discovered a growing interest in marketing. Through Cornell Classes and the required 800 hours of work experience in the hospitality industry, Rosenberg found her desired path in hospitality. After graduating, Sydney will return to West Elm as an assistant buyer in the same department, continuing her professional journey with the company.



Hospitality x Valentine's Day Trivia

How many restaurant reservations are made in the U.S. on Valentine's Day each year?

Which hotel amenity sees the biggest spike in demand around Valentine's Day?

What is the most popular alcoholic drink ordered on Valentine's Day?

Look to the HEC Instagram to win a prize & see the answers



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THANK YOU FOR READING!

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Yours in Service,

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