ZENNON WIJLENS

Location: Auckland

Zennon Wijlens, MICHELIN Star awarded Co-Owner and Head Chef of Paris Butter, is a culinary expert who, alongside fellow Co-Owner Nick Honeyman, has positioned the restaurant at the forefront of Auckland's dining scene. Their collaboration has effortlessly combined a lively, innovative, yet sophisticated atmosphere, delivering a modern dining experience that resonates with patrons.

In June 2026, Paris Butter was awarded One MICHELIN Star in the inaugural MICHELIN Guide New Zealand, officially putting Zennon and Paris Butter on the global stage.

Recently awarded Cuisine NZ Chef of the Year for 2023/24, Zennon's culinary expertise mirrors his commitment to excellence. Drawing inspiration from memories and travels, he crafts innovative New Zealand dishes that strike a balance between familiarity and exciting novelty. Under his direction, Paris Butter's menu reflects creativity and culinary finesse, offering diners a choice between three or six courses showcasing the best of New Zealand's produce.

Zennon's dedication extends to meticulous ingredient selection, working closely with top suppliers to guarantee the highest quality. This commitment is evident in every dish, where a focus on seasons, textures, and flavours creates a well-balanced evolving menu, taking diners on a refined gastronomic journey.

Beyond his chef role, Zennon embodies more than meets the eye. With robust biceps and an array of tattoos, he exudes a rock'n'roll vibe, yet his culinary talent embodies ambition, curiosity, and quiet determination. As Head Chef of the two-hatted Auckland restaurant, he has fostered a culture of enduring strength, reflected in the daily lifting of iron and the restrained determination in his voice when discussing culinary creations and plans for wider outreach.

From aspiring for coveted hats to the relentless pursuit of excellence, Zennon's journey is marked by hard work, determination, and a touch of

rebellion against those who doubted his discipline and focus. His leadership at Paris Butter, characterised by quiet strength, has solidified his reputation not only as a chef but also as a visionary guiding a team towards culinary innovation.

Zennon's path to culinary prominence began at sixteen when he boldly left school, securing a job in a restaurant kitchen. Unbeknownst to him then, he would be backing up his words—quite literally. His serious and wholehearted approach, ingrained in his DNA, led him on an international culinary quest, dining in thirty-four of the world's top fifty restaurants before joining Paris Butter.

In essence, Zennon Wijlens emerges as a talented chef, moving forward with his unique brand of strength and a generous dose of iron grit. His culinary expertise and resolute demeanour promise a journey filled with continued success, leaving an indelible mark on the gastronomic world.

SKILLS

Other Chef, Cooking, Cooking Demonstrations, Food Judge, Public Speaker