JKI
JAH KENTE INTERNATIONAL

Culinary Arts & Sommelier Pathway

A HUMANITIES-CENTERED WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

MULTIYEAR COHORT PROGRAM

"Food is a primary text of human civilization — a lens through which culture, memory, and sovereignty are read, preserved, and transmitted."

— Jah Kente International Program Philosophy

PROGRAM PURPOSE

JKI's Culinary Arts & Sommelier Pathway treats gastronomy as a humanities discipline. Students study food as literature, history, and social science — decoding cultural texts embedded in recipes, foodways, and culinary traditions across the African diaspora and Global South.

- Gastronomy as humanistic inquiry

DIASPORA FOODWAYS

"From the Motherland to the Table"

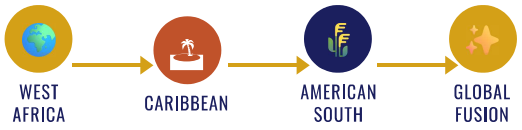
The curriculum maps the African diaspora through its food systems — tracing ingredients, techniques, and flavor profiles from West Africa to the Caribbean, the American South, Brazil, and beyond. Students engage with ancestral knowledge as living pedagogy.

SOMMELIER PATHWAY

The sommelier component reimagines wine and beverage study through the lens of terroir, heritage, and cultural diplomacy. Students learn WSET-aligned curriculum while centering African and diaspora wine-growing regions, fermentation traditions, and spirits heritage.

- WSET Levels 1–3 preparation

- Food history & cultural memory
- Ethnobotany & indigenous knowledge systems
- Culinary narrative and oral tradition



"Ingredients carry histories. Recipes are archives."

- Terroir as cultural geography
- African wine regions & heritage fermentation
- Pairing as cross-cultural dialogue

94%
Program Completion Rate

80+
Workforce Pathways Supported

6
Cultural Regions of Study

100%
Graduates Enter Culinary or Hospitality Sector

WORKFORCE OUTCOMES

Culinary Entrepreneurship
Food business ownership, catering, and pop-up enterprise

Beverage & Sommelier Roles
Restaurant sommeliers, wine educators, bar program directors

Food Systems Advocacy
Community food planning, urban agriculture policy

Culinary Arts Education
Instructors, curriculum developers, youth program leaders

Cultural Heritage Work
Museum food programming, cultural centers, diaspora orgs

Culinary Tourism & Diplomacy
Cultural exchange programs, gastrodiplomacy initiatives

GASTRONOMY AS CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

JKI positions culinary arts as an instrument of civic and international engagement. Graduates become cultural ambassadors — using food to build cross-community bridges, represent diaspora heritage, and participate in global dialogues about identity, sovereignty, and belonging.

> *"The table is a diplomatic space. Every meal is a negotiation between worlds."*

SOFT POWER | DIASPORA HERITAGE | COMMUNITY BUILDING

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