



Position: Lead Cook

Reports To: Kitchen Manager

Start Date: March 1st, 2025

Hours & Location: Seasonal Part-Time | Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, Canada

ABOUT US

The Salt Spring Centre of Yoga (SSCY) is a non-profit educational and spiritual retreat centre dedicated to teaching and promoting the core principles of yoga, which embody peace, resilience, and belonging.

Purchased in 1981, The Centre remains the keystone project of the *Dharma Sara Satsang Society* – founded in 1974 by a devoted and enthusiastic group of students of Baba Hari Dass (Babaji). In harmony with yogic philosophy, the Society has the central aim of fostering the search by each person to find the deep inner peace of spiritual fulfillment. By means of Sadhana (spiritual practice), Karma Yoga (selfless service), and Satsang (supportive community), we aspire to create an environment for the attainment of peace.

We value living in harmony with ourselves, our community, and the land we inhabit, and see the daily practice of yogic principles as the means for achieving that.

Set on 69 acres of protected land with a network of nature trails through towering cedar, alder and maple trees, the SSCY boasts rustic accommodations, garden to table meals, a woodfire sauna, and a variety of spiritual development classes, workshops, and programs based on traditional yogic teachings and practices.

SSCY staff receive a discount on guest accommodations, retreat tuition, and merchandise, as well as complimentary access to many of our classes, events, and offerings.

ABOUT THE ROLE

The SSCY kitchen team is charged with a passion for creating delicious lacto-vegetarian cuisine in alignment with the principles of a sattvic diet. Our Lead Cook exhibits leadership in cooking excellence as well as human relations and collaborative team performance.

This position is responsible for providing the highest quality and maximum production in all areas of food preparation. The Lead Cook is a team leader, assisting in managing culinary operations and providing consistent quality food preparation for groups ranging between 25 – 300 people. The Lead Cook ensures that health and safety standards are followed during all methods of food preparation. They are responsible for ensuring meals are served on time and up to the standards outlined by the Kitchen Manager, and for ensuring excellent production resulting in minimal food wastage or spoilage in the kitchen. This position also provides direction and guidance to support cooks, kitchen volunteers, and other kitchen staff in the absence of the Kitchen Manager.

The Lead Cook has an artful ability to remain calm, clear, and peaceful in a busy environment, communicate clearly, and provide guidance and oversight of kitchen personnel with varying degrees of skill and kitchen experience. They also demonstrate the ability to take ownership and execute tasks, to write and to follow recipes, weigh and measure food accurately, and demonstrate a strong understanding of the fundamental techniques and principles used in cooking, baking, and food preservation.

The Lead Cook organizes their team and meets the production requirements for program meals as communicated by the Kitchen Manager. It is the role of the Lead Cook to ensure meal menus and restricted diet details are understood, covered, and executed correctly.

The Lead Cook is always accountable for following health and safety standards for the work area, and for reporting and correcting safety hazards. They keep the work area clean and will ensure safe operations of kitchen equipment.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The Lead Cook is expected to exercise exceptional interpersonal skills, show up on time, and dress in a clean presentable uniform. This position is exposed to continuous deadlines and the need for effective and precise time management is essential. This position is responsible for operating equipment and preparing food in accordance with WorkSafe BC's health and safety standards and the Lead Cook must be able to follow company policy in cases of injury or incident, and respond to guest complaints/questions. They must be able to lift and carry up to 40 lbs, walk, kneel or stand for long periods of time, and navigate stairs multiple times daily.

Work schedule is seasonal in nature. Total weekly hours will fluctuate between 15-30 hrs./week depending on our program schedule and may exceed 35 hrs./week during peak program times. You may be asked to work outside of regular working hours or split shifts as needed, which may include evenings, weekends, holidays, or extended hours as our program schedule dictates.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Food Planning & Preparation

- Awareness / mindfulness to use food and ingredients that are readily available and/or need to be used first in order to minimize food waste and keep costs low.
- Follow the menus, recipes, and cooking procedures provided by the Kitchen Manager during program meals.
- Collaborate with the Kitchen Manager to adapt program recipes to accommodate dietary preferences and restrictions.
- Ensure the daily restricted dietary needs of guests are met.

Quality Assurance

- Uphold kitchen guidelines and protocols while also ensuring that they are upheld by anyone cooking in the kitchen under your supervision.
- Monitor food quality and presentation to ensure that all meals meet our food preparation guidelines.
- Acknowledge any guest feedback or concerns promptly and professionally and relay them to the Kitchen Manager.

Personnel Relations, Supervision, & Training

- Direct the shift's kitchen staff on the day's plan – assigning specific tasks, mise en place, set up, food preparations, and testing all food before it is served.
- Work in the spirit of karma yoga, or selfless service, and foster this mentality amongst the kitchen team, inside and outside the kitchen.
- Foster positivity, productivity, and collaboration, promoting teamwork and personal growth within the kitchen.
- Provide training, mentorship, and support to kitchen staff and volunteers as needed.
- Fill in for or assist other kitchen team members as necessary.
- Maintain focused, professional, respectful, and constructive communications with the entire kitchen team, the Kitchen Manager, fellow SSCY employees, karma yoga volunteers, and guests at all times.

Maintaining A Sattvic Environment

- Understand the principles of sattvic cooking and its alignment with yoga and actively contribute to maintaining a sattvic work environment in the kitchen.

Safety & Cleanliness (Saucha)

- Maintain a highly sanitary, well-organized kitchen and work area. Cleanliness of fridge, freezer, floors, counters, and all food production areas should be a source of pride.
- Ensure the safe operation of kitchen equipment by inspecting, reporting, and correcting any safety issues.
- Maintain the cleanliness, organization, safety, and the general sattvic ambience of all kitchen work areas.
- Dress in a safe, clean, and professional manner at all times. Must wear closed toed non-skid shoes. Fingernails must be kept short and clean, and hair must be tied up and covered by a hat or scarf.

Inventory Management

- Conduct weekly, quarterly, and seasonal inventory counts; record and note ingredients in need of restocking, ensuring the entire kitchen has sufficient materials and preparation to meet production requirements.
- Participate in the preservation of farm and orchard produce throughout the harvest season.

Centre Care & Stewardship

- All staff may share responsibility for dishwashing and cleaning during high season times.
- All staff participate in work parties that provide overall care for the Centre seasonally.
- All staff are expected to invest in the Centre's general care – we prioritize providing a positive guest and community experience in the spirit of yoga.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Education/Diploma/Degree in culinary arts and/or equivalent experience of 3 years professional cooking.
- Experience cooking for groups of 20+ people.
- Food Safe Certification is required.
- Genuine interest in yoga and the principals of a sattvic lifestyle.
- Knowledge of contemporary vegetarian cooking.
- Ability to read and follow recipes.
- Strong knife skills.
- Strong organizational and time-management skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Can work well under pressure while maintaining a calm and positive attitude.
- Enjoys working collaboratively within a team.
- Comfortable within the dynamics of community living.
- Flexible in terms of scheduling, adaptable, able to work weekends and holidays.
- Able to lift and carry up to 18 kg (40 pounds) and navigate stairs multiple times daily.

- Must be legally able to work in Canada and enjoy living in a remote / rural setting.
- Occupational First Aid certification is an asset.
- Familiarity with the principles of Ayurveda and Ayurvedic cuisine is an asset.
- Previous experience cooking at a retreat centre, ashram, or yogic community is an asset.

COMPENSATION

- Salary: \$25 per hour.
- Seasonal contract: March to November 2025, with an opportunity for winter extension.
- Access to weekly classes and special events hosted by the Centre.
- In accordance with Section 34 (f) of the Employment Standards Regulation (BC), this position is exempt from overtime compensation required under Section 40 of the Employment Standards Act. The base salary for this position includes compensation for all hours worked.

RESIDENTIAL POSITION AVAILABLE

We are proud to have a multi-generational residential community at The Salt Spring Centre of Yoga. As part of our commitment to fostering a harmonious environment, we offer the possibility for team members to join our community as residents for the duration of their contract. While we have limited spaces available for those looking to live here, this unique opportunity allows individuals to immerse fully in the community and activities of The Centre.

Residents in our community are asked to make a commitment to engage with others in a positive and respectful manner, to maintain a clean and sober environment with no alcohol or drugs on the property, and to adhere to the lacto-vegetarian dietary guidelines while on the premises. We believe that this shared living experience enriches both personal and collective growth, further deepening our connection with the Earth and each other, and supporting our common commitment to engaging in the daily practice of yogic principles of right-living.

If you are interested in residential opportunities, please indicate this in your application. More information will be made available during the interview process for those interested.

APPLY

Please apply online at: saltspringcentre.com/about-us/employment-opportunities/

You will have an opportunity to upload your resume and cover letter.

This position is open until it is filled. Please get your application in as soon as possible.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.