

# Stagier Introductory Note

Thank you for your application to stage at Restaurant noma. We appreciate that you have chosen this restaurant to further your professional development. This document is as a brief introduction to our philosophy and work ethics.

At noma, we not only place an immense value on the products that we work with, but also on the people that work with us.

Whilst here, you will have the opportunity to handle and prepare very rare and costly ingredients – from wild dandelions shoots foraged from around Copenhagen to hand-dived sea urchins flown in from Norway especially for us and still alive. However, we must always bear in mind that every product has more than simply monetary value; there are sentimental, humane and intrinsic costs associated with everything we receive from our suppliers.

You might find the working system different to what you have experienced before. At noma, everyone is entitled to put forward their opinion – indeed, we encourage everyone to do so. Noma might be a restaurant that deals solely with Scandinavian and Nordic produce, but our staff are global; it is their ideas and input that have helped shape noma into what it is today. Therefore, if you have a suggestion or comment that you consider valuable, please share it – providing that the time and place are right, of course.

The following guidelines will explain what is expected of you whilst part of our team.

- The Neighbourhood

Restaurant noma resides on the artificial island of Christianshavn in Copenhagen. Once a working-class area between the Inner City and Island of Amager, today it is a trendy part of the city with a unique identity. People from every walk of life live side-by-side amongst fashionable cafes, old school bodegas, expensive restaurants and charming 19-century houses along picturesque canals.

It might be useful to acquire a map to familiarize yourself once you arrive. An accurate one can be found on Wikitravel.

- The Building and Restaurant

Noma resides within the Nordatlantens Brygge (English: North Atlantic House). The administration of the building is run independently from that of the restaurant. Nevertheless, it is crucial that you show respect and dignity towards it as well as the other people that work in it. Acts of disrespect, polluting or anything else that could be condemned as immoral could lead to punishment, including expulsion from your stage.

We have also included information about this building as we believe it is vital for you to know if you are to fully understand the restaurant inside.

The old warehouse that is the framework for North Atlantic House was built in 1766-67 by Master Builder J.C. Conradi. It is five stories tall and encompasses a total of 7000m<sup>2</sup>, making it one of the most impressive constructions lining Copenhagen's waterfront, as well as being one of its most well-preserved structures.

The building is situated by the Greenlandic Trading Square, which, for 200 years, was a bustling centre for trade between Denmark and the Faroe Islands, Finland, Iceland and, in particular, Greenland. In and around the warehouse, dry fish, salted herring, whale oil and skins were stored before being sold off to European markets. For years, for countless Greenlanders, Icelanders and Farovians this square was the first Danish soil that they stood upon after their long journeys.

Noma covers two floors – a ground floor where the dining room and service kitchen are found and a 1st floor with changing rooms, private dining room, production kitchen, test kitchen, offices and staff area. We also have an outdoors space where the grill and waste disposal areas are located and where, weather permitting, vegetables are stored.

- Working Schedule

Your stage starts on a Tuesday and ends on a Saturday, with no exceptions. Fulltime staff are currently working five days a week, therefore so are stagiers. If an emergency does arise, and you need a day off, you should communicate this to our Head Chef (who is responsible for stagier assignments) one week in advance. The structure of the kitchen means that there are two working timetables. One begins at

06:00 and ends earlier in the evening; the other starts at 09:00 and finishes at 00:00.

- Important Aspects while at Work
- Personal Hygiene is of utmost importance. This rule is not restricted to the kitchen. At any time, you may be asked to step in the dining room or need to speak with a guest; on such occasions, you are required to be immaculately attired whilst also to act and speak in a polite and sensible manner. If required in the dining room, take a moment to compose yourself, consider what you want to say and walk calmly and elegantly to the table. Good posture and smiles are essential.
- A tidy work environment is vital. Disposing rubbish, sweeping or mopping the floor are actions that will be asked of you over and over again. It is extremely important to keep the outside area clean and neat: any crates, empty packaging or small pieces of litter scattered in this area should be immediately dealt with. Taking the initiative is encouraged. A positive and proactive attitude towards this issue could improve your chances of moving between different sections and being called upon for service, etc.
- Labelling. At Noma, we have specific procedures for correctly marking items. Use masking tape to label containers, pots, crates and anything else that needs it. Write in black marker using CAPITAL LETTERS, and clear handwriting. Include the name of the product, date and your first two initials. Cut the tape with scissors or an x-acto blade and store the newly-marked item with the label facing to the front, so that it can be easily seen. When leaving a labeled item in the washing-up area – or when cleaning it yourself – make sure that any tape has been removed and properly discarded.
- Responsibilities & Communication. At many times you will be asked to work tasks without immediate supervision. In these cases, it is essential that you fully understand the work that you have been entrusted. If you need to, note instructions on paper – for example, you may find it useful to draw a picture to demonstrate the right size of a leaf that you have been asked to pick. Another important concern is deadlines. Establish yourself a timeframe to finish each task. This is where being diligent and communicating well will make a difference. As a stage at noma, you are not expected to be a spectator. Working here means working as a team. This attitude will not help accomplish tasks faster and better, but will help establish good working relationships between staff, improve working conditions for everyone.

Please learn these guidelines:

**Keep the staff room clean and tidy. You will each be given lockers: keep your shoes in these. There are hangers for jackets. Empty the uniform bin when full. Anything not stored correctly overnight will be discarded.**

**All knives must be kept in your own locker and not under prep tables. This will avoid clutter in the kitchen. It will also be less likely that you lose them.**

**Follow the instructions of your chef de partie precisely. This is integral to your job.**

**Please shut ANY doors behind you immediately and keep the door to the staff area closed at all times. This is an ESSENTIAL point.**

**Do not use the restroom near the upstairs kitchen; this is for guests only.**

**There are restrooms for the staff outside the staff area – within the main building. These are to be used by everyone and must be kept clean.**

**No cell phones allowed in the kitchen at any time. If you need to make a phone call, ask one of the permanent staff first.**

- Kitchen Material. Noma will supply jackets and aprons and we ask that you wear only these. However, you are required to provide your own black clogs/ shoes and black pants. We do not wear hats in the kitchen so, if you have long hair, please keep it neatly arranged with no loose ends. It will also prove helpful to you if you bring with you: a black marker pen; a small notebook that fits into your back pocket; scissors; and of course, your knives.
- For stages, we accept people for a minimum of three months and, as previously stated, all stages must start on a Tuesday and end on a Saturday (although you may be asked to come on the Monday before your first day for a tour of the kitchen and formal introduction). Only extraordinary circumstances will warrant the early termination of a stage. Therefore, if you are worried that you will not be able to afford to stage very long, please ask for only the minimum length of stay here (three months). Ending your stage early without consent or simply not showing up will result in your name being added to a blacklist, which will be shared with others restaurants around the world with whom we share a good relationship. Please note, Copenhagen is expensive and even though we supply you with meals on working days, it is still up to you to support yourself whilst here.
- Accommodation. Unfortunately, we do not offer this: you must find it yourself. Former stagiers have had success with craigslist (although we advise you to be wary of possible scams and never to send money in advance of your stay anywhere). We can suggest Danhostel and Generatorhostels.com (mention you are staging at noma here) as safe options. Additionally, from time to time locals with rooms to rent will advertise at the restaurant (in these cases noma or any noma representative cannot act as a mediator). We strongly recommend that you secure accommodation for at least the first two weeks of your stay in Copenhagen – if not the entire duration.
- Dining at Noma. The restaurant remains fully booked three months in advance at almost all times. It is therefore extremely difficult find a table for someone who does not already have a booking. If you would like for your stage to coincide with a meal here, you must have reservation upon arrival. To make a booking online, visit [noma.dk](http://noma.dk).
- Blogging, publishing, posting. We do not allow any blogging or publishing (online or otherwise) of your activities at noma, if you fail to comply with this rule, you will be expelled immediately and your name will be added to a blacklist, which will be shared with others restaurants around the world with whom we share a good relationship.

We hope that you have read this document in its entirety. It forms a crucial part of your integration into restaurant. Furthermore, it will be assumed that you have and are comfortable with what is asked of you as a stagier at noma.

From our part, we hope to make your time at restaurant noma as successful and rewarding as possible. To stage at noma is a mutually rewarding experience and we hope that you both enjoy and learn whilst with us.

Sincerely,

The noma team.