

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS



Holiday Season

**CHRISTMAS
ON A SHIP**

**RECORD
CHEFS
TRAINED IN
2023**

**MILOSZ'S
INSPIRING
JOURNEY**

**SOCIAL
IMPACT**

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THE MONTH**

DECEMBER 2023

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CHRISTMAS AT SEA

Christmas at sea for seafarers is unique. There are customs and traditions that take place onboard vessels where crews with different nationalities and religious beliefs come together, working around the demands of being on board.

“During my twelve years of sailing, I never spent the Christmas holidays at home. However, me and my fellow seafarers always tried to make the most of the festive season. We played various games, such as bingo, shared a special meal, and sang karaoke,” says Valerijs Melikovs, an experienced captain.

“During my father's time, as he is now retired, seafarers would celebrate Christmas and New Year by preparing delicious meals onboard. They would celebrate this feast together, but of course, they would still miss their family, and they would call their families at home,” says Joshua Albert, IFS General Manager in the Philippines.

“The Christmas meals that we prepare onboard could range from beef stew, ham, shrimp, and grilled chicken to chicken wings,” remembers Captain Melikovs.

While Christmas is widely celebrated on the 24th or 25th of December, in parts of Eastern Europe, the Baltic, and Russia, Christmas takes place on the 7th of January (in line with the Julian calendar). Seafarers of other religions who do not celebrate Christmas as a religious event do, however, join the festivities as a secular holiday.



Joyful Season





CELEBRATING TOGETHER

"In the maritime catering industry, every day is a Monday. There are no weekends or holidays. Usually, the crew gathers in the mess room to share a meal. After that, they retreat to their cabins to communicate with their friends and family," said a senior catering superintendent.

"A lot of what happens depends on the location and nature of the work. On a small offshore vessel, it is possible to stop working, and everyone celebrates together over a good meal. On tanker vessels, there are always people on the bridge (when sailing), and it's not possible to celebrate all together. On the bigger oil rigs, the work goes continuously on 24/7, and the celebration will be done in two shifts," says Tim Melotte, an IFS Catering Superintendent.

"Most of the time, the cooks prepare a celebration meal, decorate, and set up the tables, but the crew does not have time to participate in the festivities. After all, they are usually tired after the 12-hour shift, and they will return to work the next day." adds Tim Melotte.

"During my father's time, there were no social media apps or even instant messaging like Skype or Facebook Messenger, so they would use satellite phones to call their families. It is quite different now since seafarers can call their families anytime and have a "face to face" conversation using the currently available technology," says Joshua Albert.

Milosz Inglot

is our newest **Junior Catering Support Officer**. After graduating as a Logistics Technician, Milosz planned to spend some time in the UK. What was meant to be a short stay turned into four years away from home.

After working several months in a warehouse, the pandemic made him shift his career to construction, where he started with general labor on various projects. Eventually, he became skilled in flooring and carpentry.

Feeling homesick, Milosz decided to return to Poland. He looked for a job where he could continue to communicate in English.

That's how he started as a **Data Encoder** at IFS, where his duties included cross-checking quantities, weights, and prices against supplier data.

Although the role requires a lot of attention to detail, Milosz found that the advanced IFS system lightened his workload.

He was promoted to Junior Catering Support Officer, after being trained to manage price requests, updating records, inventories and processing daily meals..

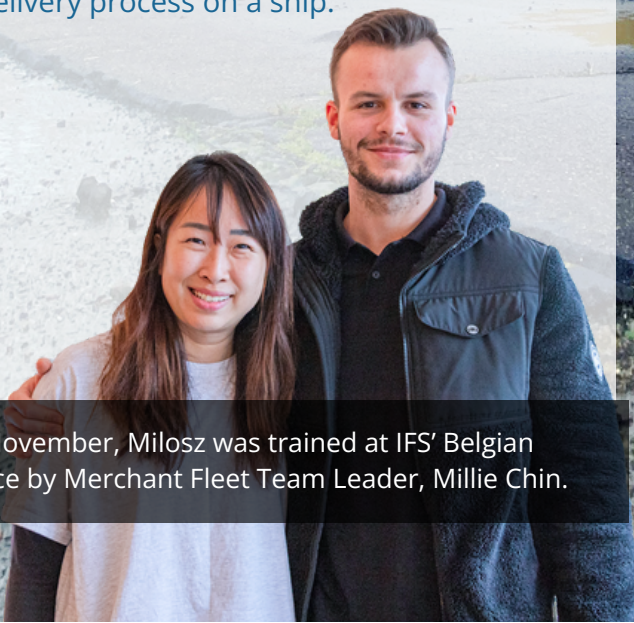
For Milosz, the highlight of this training was a visit to a chemical tanker and a general cargo vessel, where he could observe the delivery process on a ship.

FROM CONSTRUCTION TO MARITIME CATERING



I see a lot of similarities between logistics, construction, and IFS: On-time delivery, economic ways of transport, the well-being of the staff, and the value of teamwork.

In November, Milosz was trained at IFS' Belgian office by Merchant Fleet Team Leader, Millie Chin.





RECORD CHEFS TRAINED IN 2023

Imagine being able to cook healthy, nutritious, delicious, and diverse meals while navigating the high seas. For chefs onboard marine vessels, this reality requires a unique set of skills and expertise. That's where IFS comes in - our maritime food labs in Antwerp and our training facility in the Philippines are dedicated to training ship cooks to levels that meet the highest industry and regulatory standards.

In 2023, we trained 230 chief cooks from our training facilities in the Maritime Food Lab in Antwerp and the Philippines.

This is a significant increase of 58.62 percent from the previous year's record of 145 trainees. The growth is attributed to the progressive growth of our company and the trust we have garnered from our clients and business partners over the years.

Over the five-day training period, trainees are equipped with technical skills such as cooking multinational cuisines, baking, menu planning, safety, and hygiene practices. At the end of the training, instructors also assess non-technical skills such as teamwork, leadership, and attitude in addition to the theoretical understanding of the course.

Trainees who meet the minimum threshold are awarded the IFS Chief Cook certification and proceed to practice on different vessels. Our trainees also get to join the Cooks Club, a community of all cooks working for IFS-catered vessels. Here, they get exclusive insights and tips and get to exchange ideas with other cooks.



FACT OF THE MONTH:



- It enhances the ship's efficiency, thereby reducing costs and waste.
- The ship's cook certification is mandatory for all commercial vessels with more than ten crew members on board.
- The training gives the cooks familiarity with the galley and the safety standards and protocols expected to prevent food-borne illnesses.
- Introduction to the IFS digital interfaces, such as IFS, IVI, and OBS.
- After the training, the ship cooks get additional useful material and can access support from other ship cooks through our cooks' club.
- Our training upskills our staff to health, safety, and environmental guidelines.

BENEFITS OF THE TRAINING

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of training seafarers. The training is critical because:

If you need more information on the modalities of our training, please reach out to us via training@ifs.be

A QUOTE FROM THE TRAINERS



“

Training is essential in transformation of mind and elevate skills.

-- JIMMY PATIÑA



“

Knowledge without action is just a theory while action without knowledge is irrationality, so we must put together knowledge and action to produce the best results.

-- JOSUA GABOR



“

Competent Training is a place where Trainees and trainers are supporting each other.

-- MARK MENDOZA

SOCIAL IMPACT



IFS SUPPORTS LOCAL COMMUNITY SAFETY WITH AED INSTALLATION IN MERKSEM, ANTWERP

IFS has sponsored the installation of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). This emergency device was installed in a public area in front of a local school in Merksem, Antwerp, making it accessible to the community. The move is in line with IFS' social responsibility, giving back to local communities where and when the opportunity arises.

Cardiac arrests can be sudden and life-threatening without prompt intervention. The presence of an AED in a public space is crucial as it can increase the chances of survival in such emergencies.

With this installation, IFS aims to contribute to public safety, especially in critical health situations where it can save lives.

In line with our commitment to health and safety, IFS has also planned to conduct First Aid courses for its employees in Belgium and Singapore next year.

Here, our colleagues will be trained on various injury treatment and emergency response techniques. These courses are designed to train our staff with essential skills to effectively respond to emergencies, ensuring overall safety preparedness of the company.

IFS provides different types of support to multiple social programs in Belgium and the Philippines, trying to help disadvantaged communities with training or local engagement. The company's CEO was recently recognized by the Belgium Royal House for his work in social impact.

