

# From architectural design to sustainable cooking



## 3 Kitchens

Volunteer • Seek Employment • Become an Entrepreneur

### Manuela Gaillardet New paths through food

Manuela Gaillardet

Country  
France

Find out more  
<https://mariecurry.fr/>



### Her Story

Manuella has always been driven by two things: a taste for beauty and a taste for good food. Of Korean origin, she was adopted at a very young age in France and grew up in a French family curious about her culture, where cooking quickly became a means of expression and transmission. Her parents, who were passionate about food, cultivated a strong connection to her origins through flavors, travel, and discovery. But her first path did not lead her to the kitchen. After earning a CAP and then a Bac Pro in upholstery—where she excelled, winning a regional gold medal—she turned to applied arts and then architecture. She enrolled in a school in Bordeaux, earned her architecture degree, and worked for more than ten years in a large firm specializing in real estate development.

### When the body says stop

Everything changed during the first wave of Covid. The pace suddenly intensified. To save the company, she and her colleagues worked seven days a week, juggling multiple projects. The stress built up until her body sounded the alarm: a violent bout of eczema forced her to slow down. She made a radical decision. She quit her job, with no plan B, but with the certainty that it was time to take care of herself. She was entitled to two years of unemployment benefits—a space to reinvent herself.

***You always have to keep moving. Even when you have doubts, even when you feel like you don't belong. Dare to go to a meeting, dare to apply for a job, dare to change. That's how things get started. Nothing happens when you stay stuck in the same place.***





## Marie Curry, the turning point

One day, she came across an Instagram post announcing an information session for a culinary training program offered by Marie Curry and 3 Kitchens. She went, partly out of curiosity, without any great expectations. But what she discovered immediately convinced her: a program combining cooking, entrepreneurship, and personal development.

She joined the program in 2024 and learned, experimented, and opened up. What she took away most was the human richness. "We were a group of very different women, some with difficult life stories. It was powerful."

Her two internships confirmed her choice. First at Vedette, an organic, zero-waste catering company, where she learned to produce large quantities while respecting strong values. Then at Ortus, in a more traditional French kitchen, where she discovered ancient techniques passed down with passion.

## A golden opportunity



At the end of her training, Vedette offered her the chance to do some extra work at events organized by Back Market, their main client. She took part in preparing 360 meals: breakfasts, picnics, dinners... It was a real test, but she passed with flying colors. When the company opened a new catering corner at Cultura's headquarters, Manuella seized her chance. She expressed her motivation, remained proactive, and landed a permanent contract. Today, she is part of an all-female team within a young and rapidly growing organization. She appreciates everything: the hours that fit her personal life, the commitment to the environment, and the friendly atmosphere. "We are listened to and respected. There is a real exchange."

## What are your Future Plans?

Although her initial project of a Korean catering business inspired by Chinese medicine is on hold, it has not been forgotten. She has realized the reality of entrepreneurship, especially in the kitchen: the standards, logistics, management... It doesn't scare her, but she knows she doesn't want to go it alone. For now, she prefers to learn, observe, and contribute to the growth of the company that hired her. And why not, one day, create something else elsewhere, with her partner, once their family situation allows it.

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