



# 3 Kitchens

Volunteer • Seek Employment • Become an Entrepreneur

**Nariné Lalayan**  
**Armenian pastry business owner**  
**now living in France**

Nariné Lalayan

**Country**  
France

**Find out more**  
<https://refugee-food.org/festival/>



## My Story

Originally from Armenia, I arrived in France after leading a very active life back home. To cope with the challenges of migration, I looked for ways to stay engaged. I volunteered with Secours Populaire and cooked in the shelter where I lived, sharing meals and recipes with women from different backgrounds. Later, I led cooking workshops at the cultural center in Villenave d'Ornon, where I could talk about my country and culture. I then joined a European peer-help project and was mentored by an Armenian caterer who inspired me to pursue formal training. I completed two CAPs in cooking and pastry-making, and today I'm self-employed, creating personalized cakes to order.

## Motivation

Cooking has always been more than just preparing meals – it's my way of connecting, expressing my culture, and rebuilding myself. Every opportunity I had to cook, share recipes, and talk about Armenia helped me find confidence and direction. Today, creating personalised pastries allows me to bring joy to others while continuing to tell my story through food.

*From cooking in shelters to leading workshops and eventually starting my own business, I've built my journey step by step.*

*Sharing my culture through food has always been my way of connecting with others and finding my place here.*



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