

New baristas ready for competitions

Ciro Coffee Academy has launched its **Ciro Beverage Solutions Barista Upliftment Programme**, which takes unemployed South Africans with limited skills and puts them through an approximately three month barista training programme where they learn the elements of what it takes to be a professional barista, the history of coffee, coffee recipes as well as barista competition training.



Fano Hlongwane (left) and Cebo Sithathu will be competing in the SCASA (Speciality Coffee Association of Southern Africa) Regional Barista Competition in November 2010.

The programme is certified by the internationally accredited training body, City & Guilds, allowing the participants to complete their training with the company's stamp of approval as well as an internationally recognised certificate.

The first two participants, Fano Hlongwane and Cebo Sithathu, will be competing in the SCASA (Speciality Coffee Association of Southern Africa) Regional Barista Competition in November 2010, where they will be able to display their newfound knowledge and have the opportunity to create their own signature drink.

An opportunity to perfect their techniques

Applicants need to go through an interview process to be accepted into the programme. There is no cost to the participants and once they have completed their training, the company will seek out opportunities for them in the industry amongst their hospitality clients. As part of the training participants work at the in-house café practising their coffee making on visitors and staff in order to perfect their techniques.

"There is a lack of skilled baristas in the industry and the Barista Upliftment Programme is an opportunity for the company to take an active role in upskilling the industry while offering skills training and employment for people who otherwise may not have had the opportunity. It also ensures that we can offer our clients a well rounded solution by providing quality

products and ensuring that there are qualified baristas in the field to complement the product," says Angela Todd, training manager at the Ciro Coffee Academy.

The programme is currently only in Johannesburg but as it grows it will be expanding through the Academy's Cape Town and KwaZulu-Natal branches.

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