

Chef Salaries Dropped In 2008

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Celebrity chefs may make a fortune but chefs across the country make more modest salaries and those salaries got a little smaller in 2008. [StarChefs.com](#), the online magazine for culinary insiders, recently conducted its fourth annual Salary Survey and found that after four years of increases culinary industry salaries dropped. Executive chef salaries went from \$77,611 to \$74,869, a drop of 3.5 percent. Chef/owners saw an even bigger decline, a change of 9.7 percent, from \$94,288 to \$85,179. But even they aren't suffering as much as the pastry chefs. The masters of sugar and chocolate saw their salaries slide nearly 13 percent from an average of \$53,017 to \$46,228 below the US median household income of \$50,740.

If you want to make money as a chef, aside from getting your own television show or book deal, the money is in being an executive chef at a country club or a hotel where salaries are significantly higher. A hotel executive chef makes an average of \$84,443, a country club chef makes \$81,328 but an executive chef at an independent fine dining restaurant brings in an average of \$74,620. Chefs in big cities make the most but surprisingly Miami has the highest reported average salary for executive chefs at \$90,333. You can read the full report at the [Starchefs website](#).

Given the current state of the economy and the fact that [many are looking](#) to take dining out off their lists of expenses, 2009 isn't likely to bring an uptick in these numbers.

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