

Pastry Perfection

Meet the artists creating sweet, savory, and creative bites

By Julie Arnan | March 17, 2017



Julia Child once wisely pointed out that a party without cake is just a meeting. Meetings are things that clog our calendar, generally preventing us from doing our real work. Therefore, cake. Or, at least a scone, croissant, cookie — anything made of flour, butter, and possibly sugar. In this executive chef-worshipping modern culinary age, it's easy to overlook the talented pastry personnel baking the savory rolls and sweet desserts that augment a dinner out. But, we have all seen how a simple dessert course has taken out many a Top Chef contender. That's because baking requires scientific precision along with artistic creativity. We've dusted off these sweet creatures for a little of the limelight this month. Say hello to three Eastside pastry chefs.



Jacquelynn Beckman Trellis Restaurant

Cheerfully disposed Jacquelynn Beckman has been mistress of the ovens at Trellis Restaurant in Kirkland since just before the holiday rush of 2015. She joined the team as her first culinary adventure north of her native California, where she worked as a pastry cook for the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, and as pastry sous chef at Carmel Valley Ranch and 24 Carrots Catering.

Beckman grew up in Huntington Beach with her parents and two big brothers. She always loved baking and often tried to bribe her brothers and their

friends to play with her via a proffered plate of cookies or other such treat. By high school, Beckman was the go-to girl for birthday cakes among her friends, and she devoured every book she could find on the subject of baking. When a relative in culinary school suggested Beckman consider attending pastry school, she was sold in two shakes of a powdered sugar sieve.

At Trellis, Beckman seeks to make baked goods as naturally as possible. Her confections aren't necessarily meant to pose as healthy treats, but perhaps "healthier" than most. She experiments with cutting down sugar when possible, eliminating high-fructose corn syrups altogether (saying honey works just as well), using beets for color and sweetness when appropriate, and even incorporating gluten-free and paleo elements (like coconut or almond flour).

"But it's not a gimmick," she says. "It's not about beets or gluten-free. It just happens to be."

"It's not about beets or gluten-free. It just happens to be."

Professionally speaking, Beckman says it has taken a while to establish her sense of authority as a young woman in a restaurant kitchen — to be taken seriously despite her gender and age. She has also had to adjust her macaron recipe to account for the humidity since moving to the Pacific Northwest.

Beckman's work is about flavor, fun, and whimsy. She loves to include items that bring joy and maybe even some nostalgia to guests — like snowballs or Creamsicles. Dessert is a celebration, she says.