

PASTRY | BAKING | CHOCOLATE | BREAD | FROZEN

# Pastry Arts

WINTER 2020 · ISSUE 6

## MAGGIE AUSTIN

Creating Elegant  
Bespoke Cakes

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## WINTER FLOWER

Scott Green's  
Step-by-Step  
Technique

## ANGEL R. BETANCOURT

The Journey To  
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# Pastry Arts

magazine

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Andreas Galliker is the Senior Vice-President of Innovation and Product Development at Albert Uster Imports in Gaithersburg, Maryland.



**Biagio Settepani**

Chef Settepani is a Certified Master Baker who owns and operates two Bruno Bakery outlets in Staten Island, and has won many accolades and medals over his long pastry career.



**Francois Payard**

Francois Payard owned and operated Payard Patisserie until 2009, and has won many awards such as 'Pastry Chef of the Year' by the James Beard Foundation, Medal of Honor by the French government, and selection as a member of Relais Desserts International.



**Jacquy Pfeiffer**

Chef Jacquy Pfeiffer is the co-founder of the prestigious French Pastry School in Chicago. He has won numerous awards and honors, including the National Order of the Legion of Honor in France, and a James Beard Award for his cookbook, *The Art of French Pastry*. He was also the subject of the Kings of Pastry documentary film.



**Norman Love**

Norman Love is an internationally acclaimed pastry chef and chocolatier, and the founder/owner of Norman Love Confections. Norman Love owns and operates four chocolate salons in Southwest Florida and ships signature chocolates and specialty products around the country.



**Susan Notter**

Chef Notter's international work experience led to being an instructor and co-owner of The International School of Confectionery Arts for many years. She has resided in the USA since 1992, and is currently the USA Sales Professional for Max Felchlin AG, Switzerland.

# Editor's NOTE

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**W**elcome to 2020! Can you believe another year—and decade—has passed? Goodness, they speed up with time, but I love how Oprah says each year brings “another chance to get it right.” So, what’s in store for *Pastry Arts Magazine* in 2020? A host of projects and initiatives we hope you’ll love.

First, we begin the year with our new publishing schedule—January, April, July and October. Each issue will continue to have seasonal themes, but they shifted by one month from last year’s schedule, so do make a note. Second, we are publishing a plated dessert recipe book! Unnamed at the moment, the book will include a couple of dozen chefs, most of which we featured last year, who are contributing high-level plated dessert recipes. More to follow in the coming months, but the book will release this fall. Third, after 1600+ readers completed our editorial survey last year, we know a critical mass possesses an entrepreneurial spirit. As such, in 2020, we will work to build an online resource dedicated to dessert entrepreneurship; a place where high-level dessert entrepreneurs teach actionable steps to achieve success. More to follow after Q1, but we began laying the groundwork for this last year. Lastly, what’s a great magazine without a little swag? In Q1, we will launch the official *Pastry Arts Magazine* shop filled with fun merch and more. All in all, we’re anticipating another great year.

Finally, we have many thanks for the chefs, chocolatiers and bakers who contributed their time, energy and effort to breath life into this issue. From industry icon Pierre Hermé to the talented Maggie Austin and Angel R. Betancourt, recipes from Richard Hawke, Clarice Lam, Danielle Marelli, Deden Putra, Jean-François Suteau, Nicolas Houchet, the step-by-step Winter Flower from Scott Green—which is breathtaking—and so many more. Our magazine is produced in collaboration with these fine professionals.

With that, we hope you enjoy the latest issue of *Pastry Arts Magazine*, and may 2020 bring endless possibilities for you to achieve success and happiness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shawn Wenner'.

Shawn Wenner  
Editor-in-Chief







# ANGEL RAMIREZ BETANCOURT

Sacrifice and a passion for pastry  
have paved the way to success for  
this talented Venezuelan chef

By Genevieve Sawyer

**P**astry Chef Angel Ramirez Betancourt hails from Barquisimeto, a city on the Turbio River in northwestern Venezuela that is known for its regional museum and modern cathedral. But it was a more utilitarian structure that created a lasting impression on the chef during his formative years – the city is also home to the headquarters of Chocolates El Rey, and the intoxicating scent of cacao filled the air of his hometown. “Being surrounded by the smell of good chocolate was, and still is, in my memory.”

At home, cooking was the focal point of life for the budding chef. “My first ever recipe was from a Plaza Sésamo [Sesame Street] cookbook. That day my mom and I made the granola recipe, and my whole family, as well as neighbors and friends, got to try it. The amazing feedback we got made me realize that I could bring so much joy to people, and was the part of the reason why I became a pastry chef. Since I was very young, everything good happened around the kitchen: parties, reunions, meetings, table games – just the hanging out place for everyone to be happy!”

Still, Betancourt had more to learn about what he really wanted in his professional life. Inspiration – even if it comes from growing up in the same town as a chocolate factory – is insufficient preparation for a career in baking and pastry, according to the chef. He advises that anyone who considers entering the industry should “Get involved, and try to



work in the kitchen or hotel before you go and pay for expensive cooking schools, because the reality of working in a [professional] kitchen is harsh, and basically your first years are kind of a sacrifice that you won't overcome if this is not really your true passion!” Taking a professional kitchen job that is fairly low status might not be glamorous, but in Betancourt's opinion, it can give one a good idea of the years of hard work that inevitably precede the kind of career success that he has achieved. “You need to forget about holidays and social life,” notes Chef Betancourt, “because your working schedules are going to take most of your time!”

Before beginning his formal education at Le Cordon Bleu in Ottawa, Canada, Chef Betancourt did internships in coffee shops, catering companies, bakeries, and hotels. “You must try all fields, because they are all very different – even if it means working for free in all outlets to get a true feeling of what you want to do.” After completing his culinary studies, Betancourt still felt that he wasn't completely well rounded, and decided to study pastry so that he would be better prepared for his future in the food industry. “I was determined to be a culinary chef, but everything changed when I got trained at Le Cordon Bleu.” To his delight, he found that creating sweets and pastries was more personally fulfilling than cooking savory dishes. “I fell in love with pastry, and since then have not worked in anything other than sweets. From that day, everything has just followed its path.”



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*If you go to Home Depot, think of the tools you can use to create a new texture to chocolate or, next time you go to a craft store, check out the different brushes they have so you can use them with chocolate or sauces.*

Betancourt was the Executive Pastry Chef at the renowned Jean Georges restaurant in Manhattan for ten years. He was also on the 2017 culinary team of the Bahamas at an influential competition in Miami called 'A Taste of the Caribbean.' Now the lead Corporate Pastry Chef of the Blue Diamond Resorts, Chef Betancourt oversees 44 hotels in 10 countries as well as a huge staff at the Royalton, Planet Hollywood, Lido, and CHIC hotels. And he has a soon-to-be-published cookbook, *Sweet Matter*, that promises to inspire readers everywhere with over 70 desserts that feature his signature use of color and combinations of sweetness and acidity.

Alongside advocating a strategy of broad experience, Chef Betancourt recommends nurturing a rigorous creative process. "Cook in your head!" he says, meaning that ideas and concepts are as important as the final product in the food industry. "Look for ideas and inspiration in your daily life." For this chef, even hardware and building materials stores can be sources of inspiration, as can pharmacies that sell cosmetics. "If you go to Home Depot, think of the tools you can use to create a new texture to chocolate or, next time you go to a craft store, check out the different brushes they have so you can use them with chocolate or sauces. And take a look at the cosmetic section of the pharmacy – they always have amazing tools you can use with your bonbons – different cottons and mini brushes, etc."







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Chef Betancourt has become an influential pastry chef, teacher, and author who enjoys what he does on a daily basis. “Wow, I don’t call it successful myself, I call it a happy life!” On a personal level, he has been able to support children and animals in his native country, and he wants to do more of that. “It is a necessity or even a responsibility to help as much as I can in my country of birth.” Venezuela has a history of political violence and extreme poverty, and Betancourt notes that his social relationships with friends and family’s children (and with animals, including his dog Rocket) are an effective way of combating the ill effects of both. “It is my way of helping my country prosper despite communism and dictatorship.” Combining his skill with pastry and working with young people, he teaches teenagers entering the industry at high-end hotels in Central America and the Caribbean. At these masterclasses he is able to “teach without hiding any secrets or tips,” and has found that passing on his knowledge and expertise “gives him deep happiness.” One of the tips he likes to pass on to his students is the importance of using regional flavor profiles. For example, he likes to showcase the sweetness and acidity that many tropical fruits that the Caribbean and the Americas offer, as in his Citrus Pavlova, which utilizes lime, coconut, passion fruit, and mango.

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The principles that Chef Betancourt advocates are simple and can be applied to culinary neophytes universally. Getting real-life experience in the many different facets of the food industry, determining one’s true passion, being willing to sacrifice one’s social life, enriching one’s community, and continuously searching for aesthetic inspiration in surprising places are steps that anyone can take, and they have propelled him toward extraordinary and consistent success.

*Photos courtesy of Angel Betancourt*