



A Look Behind the Loaf with En-Ming Hsu: A Pastry World Champion

Pastry Chef En-Ming Hsu's career began at Lespinasse restaurant in New York's exclusive St. Regis Hotel. In 1994, she joined The Ritz-Carlton Chicago Hotel and served as Executive Pastry Chef from 1997 to 2004. Since then, En-Ming has been sharing her knowledge as an independent pastry chef and consultant. She is a guest chef instructor at leading culinary institutions, including The French Pastry School in Chicago where she is a faculty member.

In 2001, En-Ming served as Team Captain of the first U.S. pastry team to take the Gold Medal at the Coupe du Monde de la Patisserie in Lyon, France. She returned to future competitions to serve in various capacities including President of the International Jury, Jury President, Manager for Team USA, and live Commentator.

Awards include **"Top 10 Pastry Chefs In America 1998 and 2001"**, **"Best Pastry Chef In Chicago"** 2002 to 2004, **"Distinguished Visiting Pastry Chef"** 2007 and 2008 by Johnson and Wales University, and **"Lifetime Achievement Award"** by Paris Gourmet. In 2009, Académie Culinaire de France named her **Dame de l'Année** and she received the Honorary Degree of **Doctor of Culinary Arts** from Johnson and Wales University. In 2010, En-Ming was presented with the Amoretti World Pastry Team Championship **"Pastry Chef of the Year"** award. Her online class, *Modern Methods for Classic Cakes*, is available on mybluprint.com and instructional DVD *Chocolate Pastries Made Simply At Home* is available on her website pastryresource.com. En-Ming is a member of Les Dames d'Escoffier, Académie Culinaire de France, and Research Chefs Association.



What/who inspired you to become a baker?

Since I was young, I enjoyed being in the kitchen cooking and baking. Very few cooking shows were televised at that time so I spent much of my free time reading cookbooks and making recipes for my family. While studying at the Culinary Institute of America in New York, much of my inspiration came from chef instructors. I realized that it was possible to make a career out of something I was very passionate about. While at the CIA, the school began their Baking and Pastry Associates Degree program. That's when I decided to be a pastry chef.

What challenge have you had to overcome?

Like many of us, there have been many challenges along the way. The toughest for me in recent years has been finding the balance between how I believe I should teach and how students want to learn. I feel I've been able to maintain my core standards and values and I work hard at being more open-minded to the compromise needed. At the end of the day, I would like my students to be able to think for themselves, understand what they are doing, and be valuable to the team they are a part of.

What/who inspires you now?

My students constantly inspire me to continue learning and growing. That's important because our business is constantly evolving. Students have those wide eyes and excitement when we work together. It's an energy booster and helps me to view an industry that I have spent decades in differently.

What piece of advice would you offer someone considering a baking career?

Formal education is very valuable. While learning by watching free YouTube, Instagram, online, or virtually is beneficial, it's not the same as the hands-on experience that a well-rounded program offers. If that's not an option, finding a mentor to work with is invaluable. I hope that once our country opens up again, we will all have more opportunities to get together again in classrooms and continue learning from each other.



En-Ming is teaching **Sweet and Savory Pastries of Malaysia** on March 26th, 2-3:30 pm EST where she will share her expertise in creating Chicken Curry Puffs, Roti Canai with Chicken Coconut Curry, Coconut Tart, Egg Custard Tart and Pineapple Tart.

https://www.bbga.org/events/demos_now_open