

What's Old Is New Again

Chef Daniel Pliska, CEC, AAC

Executive Chef, The University Club — University of Missouri

Author, *Pastry & Dessert Techniques*

In terms of desserts,
what comes to mind
when you think of
“What’s Old Is New
Again”?

*Some pastry experts
share their thoughts...*



Response from: ***Cher Harris, CEPC***

Executive Pastry Chef, Hotel Hershey

2015 Top Ten Best Pastry Chefs in America

Queen of Pastry Winner

- ▶ *Classic desserts resurfacing, and often in a different presentation*
- ▶ *Use of modern techniques to obtain interesting textures*
- ▶ *Often dissecting flavors and arranging them differently*

Response from: **Jacquy Pfeiffer**

Co-Founder, The French Pastry School

Starred in “Kings of Pastry”

MOF (Meilleurs Ouvriers de France) Finalist

- ▶ *The classics of pastry will always make a comeback in a transformed version and that is a good thing as it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel.*
- ▶ *The wheel has been invented a long time ago and it is great.*

Response from: **Andy Chlebana, CEPC**

*Pastry Instructor, Joliet Junior College
2015 Food Network Spring Baking*

Winner

Member of 2015-2016 Team USA

- ▶ *Reinvent a classic with a modern twist.*
- ▶ *Go with what has worked in the past and give it your own personal twist.*

Response from: ***Jérôme Landrieu***

Director, Barry Callebaut Chocolate Academy

MOF (Meilleurs Ouvriers de France) Semi-Finalist

2011 Top Ten Best Pastry Chefs in America

▶ *Bringing back the classics with a modern twist.*

Response from: **Nathaniel Reid**

Valrhona Chocolate Professional

2014 Top Ten Best Pastry Chefs in America

Patis France Pastry Competition Winner

- ▶ *It makes me think of modern desserts based on a background of classic techniques.*

Many trendy desserts that are popular today are actually quite old!

Macarons

- ▶ Gerbet Macarons were named after the 19th century pastry chef who invented them.
- ▶ Les Macarons de Nancy (said to be the most famous) were made by Sisters of the Order of Saint Benedict in 1793.

Éclairs

- ▶ Choux pastry was invented in the 16th century by the pastry chef to Catherine de' Medici, Queen of France.

Baked Alaska

- ▶ Originally called omelette à la norvégienne in Europe
- ▶ Became famous as a dessert in New York's Delmonico's restaurant celebrating the U.S. purchase of the state of Alaska

Trio of Eclairs



Two fillings in each (left to right):

**Chocolate Pastry Cream and
Chocolate Mousse**

Topped with Ganache and Cocoa Nibs

**Mocha Pastry Cream and
Whipped Cream Espresso**

Topped with Fondant and Chocolate Coffee Bean

**Vanilla Pastry Cream and
Praline Buttercream**

Topped with Praline Fondant and Pralinée

All Great Desserts Stem from Fundamental Techniques and Formulas

Creams:

- ▶ Whipped Cream
- ▶ Pastry Cream
- ▶ Crème Anglaise
- ▶ Bavarian Cream
- ▶ Ganache Cream

Doughs:

- ▶ Pâte à Choux
- ▶ Pâte Brisée
- ▶ Pâte Sucrée

Egg Foams:

- ▶ Génoise
- ▶ Meringue

Hazelnut Frangelico Slice

Pâte Sucrée ❖ Gianduja Ganache ❖ Hazelnut Japonaise Meringue
❖ Frangelico-Soaked Biscuit ❖ Praline French Buttercream



Examples from Top Pastry Chefs

- ▶ **Cher Harris** ▶ Black Forest Torte; Smores; Peach Melba
- ▶ **Jacqy Pfeiffer** ▶ Beignets becoming the main “hero” of a plated dessert
- ▶ **Jérôme Landrieu** ▶ Éclairs; Saint-Honoré Cake; Religieuse Pavlova
- ▶ **Andy Chlebana** ▶ Pineapple Upside-Down Cake; Baumkuchen; Linzer Bombe
- ▶ **Nathaniel Reid** ▶ Éclairs; Macarons; Croissants (bi-color croissants)

Example from French Pastry Shop Website in France (submitted by Nathaniel Reid)



Éclairs

Fouchon and L'éclair de Génie

<http://leclairdegenie.com/>

From a Chef Educators perspective “What do you think would be beneficial from this topic?”

- ▶ Cher Harris
 - ▶ Learning flavor combinations and classic presentation and then challenging the students to re-create the dessert through a different interpretation.
- ▶ Jacquy Pfeiffer
 - ▶ It is very important that culinary students realize that for hundreds of years chefs have been testing flavor combinations. Over time, customers’ taste buds decided on what flavor combinations taste great together and what does not.

From a Chef Educators perspective what do you think would be beneficial from this topic?

- ▶ Nathaniel Reid ▶ Teach relevant material and adapt with trends.
- ▶ Jérôme Landrieu ▶ I think it's always better to make things simple. Students need to slow down and master certain skills and techniques, rather than run and master nothing and have mediocre desserts.
- ▶ Andy Chlebana ▶ Explain to the audience your approach to these desserts. One example: pineapple upside-down cake consists of a buttery cake, pineapple, caramel, cherry, and whipped cream. These flavors are what I would use to create a new upside-down cake.

Coconut Rice Pudding

- Pâté Sucrée Cookie Bases
- Swiss Meringue Brûlée
- Strawberry Lavender Syrup
- Hippenmasse Corkscrew Cookie



What basic techniques/recipes do you think are lacking or need to be reinforced by pastry instructors?

▶ **Cher Harris**

- ▶ There is a definite lack of time spent on the fundamentals. They should know how to make crème anglaise and pastry cream with confidence. I find that they are often doing things in groups at school and only see what the end product is and may not have actually done it themselves.

▶ **Jacquy Pfeiffer**

- ▶ Pastry students are too impatient to become stars nowadays. Therefore, they do not want to put in enough time to master fundamental recipes like pâte à choux, sponges, doughs, and creams.

What basic techniques/recipes do you think are lacking or need to be reinforced by pastry instructors?

- ▶ **Andy Chlebana** ▶ I think repetition is lacking for students. They make something once and we are to believe they will execute it again when they are asked. This is not true. Just because I can make them in my sleep does not mean they know how. We, as instructors, need to teach through repetition. That way we know when they leave they can make it.
- ▶ **Jérôme Landrieu** ▶ A lot of pastry instructors do not know how to crystallize chocolate or praline. I've also noticed emulsions being something that many people cannot explain or understand.

Are basic techniques and recipes still important today? What areas are lacking when you work with recent pastry school graduates?

- ▶ **Cher Harris** ▶ Absolutely, much of what we do is based on the fundamentals. There is often a shock when they get out of school and into the workplace. I would like to see more emphasis on the hours that they may be expected to work and the importance of speed of tasks. Overall, having a general sense of urgency.
- ▶ **Jacquy Pfeiffer** ▶ They are the backbone of our profession; without them you are not a pastry chef. Chefs in Chicago tell us that the graduates do not have the same technical skills coming out of school and they also lack a sense of loyalty towards the chef or the company they are working for. They will work in a place for 2 or 3 months and then leave, because the grass is slightly greener on the other side.
- ▶ **Andy Chlebana** ▶ I think repetition is lacking for students. They make something once and we are to believe they will execute it again when they are asked. This is not true. Just because I can make them in my sleep does not mean they know how. We, as instructors, need to teach through repetition. That way we know when they leave they can make it.

Are the basic techniques and recipes still important today? What areas are lacking when you work with recent pastry school graduates?

- ▶ **Nathaniel Reid** ▶ Yes! They are the background of modern desserts and cooking. Production knowledge- how to work with equipment and how to work with production size recipes. Consistency- need more repetition on basic skills. More knowledge on chocolate and ice cream and traditional items like pate a choux.
- ▶ **Andy Chlebana** ▶ I think repetition is lacking for students. They make something once and we are to believe they will execute it again when they are asked. This is not true. Just because I can make them in my sleep does not mean they know how. We, as instructors, need to teach through repetition. That way we know when they leave they can make it.
- ▶ **Jérôme Landrieu** ▶ Scaling ingredients seems to be something that new graduates struggle with. Figuring out what can be scaled together and production.

What do you think the future will hold for re-envisioning the classic dessert and pastry?

- ▶ **Cher Harris**
 - ▶ The future of pastry is moving quickly with refinement of techniques that are applied to the classics. I do not think the classics will ever go away. They seem to resurface and some do re-create themselves.
- ▶ **Jacquy Pfeiffer**
 - ▶ They need to stay the way they are and they need to be mastered first by the chef and then they can be used and transformed using the proper techniques. This is what every successful chef is doing.

What do you think the future will hold for re-envisioning the classic dessert and pastry?

- ▶ **Jérôme Landrieu** ▶ Fresh ingredients and less sweet! The basics are always coming back because they are tasty and comfortable. Molecular is out!
- ▶ **Andy Chlebana** ▶ The basics are what they are and they will not change. I think there may be some “new” techniques or techniques we perceive as new, but may find they were used in a book that is 50 years old.
 - ▶ We may stumble on something new, but much of this is not new. I think the only thing we have left that is new is to combine different flavors or unique ingredients to create a new experience for the guest.



Plum Hazelnut Tart

Linzer Crust ❖ Berry Phyllo Purse ❖ Lemon Champagne Sabayon
❖ Merlot Gastrique

Frangipani

Traditional



Modern



Key Take Aways

- ▶ All great desserts start with the basics.
- ▶ **Quality + Ingenuity = Excellence**
- ▶ Teach fundamental techniques with emphasis and repetition.
- ▶ **Composition ideas such as fancy cocktails and candy bars.**
- ▶ Secondary research is often easier than primary research.
- ▶ **Classic desserts put together in new ways.**

What's Old Is New Again!

Special Thanks

Cher Harris



Jacquy Pfeiffer



Andy Chlebana



Jérôme Landrieu



Nathaniel Reid

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