

The Expanded MGU 9 Pastry Classification System

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Abstract

This paper introduces the Expanded MGU 9 Pastry Classification System, a modern taxonomy designed to provide pedagogical clarity, curriculum consistency, and global applicability for pastry education. The system categorizes pastries into nine functional and technical classes and compares this approach to classical French pastry classification, leading culinary schools (CIA, Le Cordon Bleu, Escoffier), professional bakers' guilds, and international pastry traditions.

Contents

1. 9 Pastry Categories (Expanded MGU System)
2. Comparison to Classical French Pastry Classification
3. Comparison to Leading Culinary Schools
4. Comparison to Professional Bakers' Guilds
5. Comparison to Cultural / World Pastry Systems
6. Conclusion
7. References

1. Pastry Categories (Expanded MGU System)

The MGU system organizes pastries into nine functional and technical categories, allowing educators and professionals to teach transferable skills while providing a comprehensive framework for global pastry coverage.

1. Laminated Pastries: Croissants, Danish, Mille-Feuille, Kouign-Amann. Flaky, layered pastries produced by repeated butter folding.
2. Shortcrust & Tart-Based Pastries: Fruit tarts, custard tartlets, frangipane tarts, cheesecake. Crumbly or firm crusts with sweet or savory fillings.
3. Choux Pastry: Éclairs, profiteroles, Paris-Brest. Steam-leavened egg dough with hollow centers for fillings.
4. Phyllo & Ultra-Thin Dough Pastries: Baklava, strudel, spanakopita. Extremely thin, layered doughs used in Mediterranean and Eastern European cuisines.
5. Sweet Puff & Convenience Pastries: Turnovers, hand pies, vol-au-vents. Puff pastry items intended for portability and convenience.
6. Enriched Dough Pastries: Brioche, kolaches. Yeast-based pastries with added fat, sugar, and eggs.
7. Fried Pastries & Doughs: Churros, beignets, bomboloni. Fried dough products with a variety of flavorings and fillings.
8. Meringue-Based Pastries: Pavlova, baked Alaska. Egg-white based desserts providing light structure or topping.
9. Hot Water Crust & Molded Pastries: Pork pies, molded meat pies. Dense doughs set by hot water, used for molded savory or sweet pastries.

2. Comparison to Classical French Pastry Classification

Classical French classification emphasizes foundational doughs: pâte feuilletée, pâte brisée, pâte sucrée, pâte à choux, and pâte à brioche. While technically rigorous, it is less inclusive of global and hybrid pastries. The MGU system balances technique with product-based pedagogy.

3. Comparison to Leading Culinary Schools

Leading schools organize curriculum by production type: laminated, choux, cakes, confectionery, chocolate, and plated desserts. The MGU system consolidates categories for indexing and skill progression while accommodating hybrid or cross-cultural pastries.

4. Comparison to Professional Bakers' Guilds

Guild frameworks separate bread, pastry, and confectionery, focusing on certification standards. MGU's categories align with guild competencies while encompassing global items, facilitating teaching, assessment, and curriculum mapping.

5. Comparison to Cultural / World Pastry Systems

World pastry systems vary widely, from phyllo and syrup-soaked sweets in the Middle East to steamed and rice-based desserts in Asia. MGU's technical and structural categorization enables inclusion of most international pastries, providing consistency across cultures.

6. Conclusion

The Expanded MGU 9 Pastry Classification System is pedagogically robust, globally inclusive, and practical for curriculum design, recipe indexing, and professional training. It preserves classical technique while supporting contemporary and international pastry practice.

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