

THINKING CREATIVELY ABOUT PASTRY



“What makes pastry unforgettable is the memories. It’s the emotion that goes into food. I always try to take this into consideration. I think it’s fun for people—this new way of interacting with food.”

Chef Dominique has made a career of making playful desserts that are full experiences for patrons, not just an afternoon pick-me-up. From the opening of his bakery in New York City, where the Cronut®, his croissant-doughnut hybrid, put him on the map to his dozens of fanciful inventions since, Chef Dominique has fun thinking of new techniques and new ways of presenting his pastries. “I always think of how to make my food interactive so it connects with people.”

Here, Chef Dominique demonstrates a few of his most beloved creations. First is his Frozen S’more, inspired by American nostalgia—kids sitting around campfires and roasting marshmallows. The treat consists of vanilla ice cream and a chocolate wafer enveloped in honey-sweetened meringue and served on a

smoke applewood branch. The meringue is torched to order, allowing snackers to taste the freshly caramelized marshmallow against the chilled ice cream center. Second is the Flowering Hot Chocolate, inspired by the blooming chrysanthemum tea leaves in hot water. Chef Dominique developed the dish for his bakery in Japan, where it was a hit with patrons who loved how it mimicked the opening of cherry blossoms, with its marshmallow petals unraveling in the hot chocolate to reveal a beautiful flower.

Next up is his Chocolate Chip Cookie Shot, another play on an iconic American dessert, where Chef Dominique ups the ante by shaping the cookie like a shot glass, lining it with chocolate to seal it, and filling the “glass” with ice-cold, local milk that’s infused with Tahitian vanilla beans. You take a sip of the milk, bite off the warm cookie, and repeat until the whole dessert disappears.

Finally, Chef Dominique shows off his Pop Fleur, an haute take on a Push-Pop where wakamomo (a local Japanese fruit that tastes like “peach mixed with lychee”) flavors frozen yogurt and is pushed through a specially-designed lid that mimics a piping tip used for piping rosettes of icing on cakes.

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As you strike out on your own, endeavor to apply the same creativity that Chef Dominique does to everything you make. Don't be afraid to play around with your desserts in form and flavor because, after all, working with pastry should always be playful and fun. Once you've mastered the foundational aspects of pastry that Chef Dominique teaches in this class, the same whimsical spirit that he applies to create his desserts is within reach for you, too.

CONCLUSION

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“When working with pastry, think about the people you’re serving the food to, your connection or relationship to them, and the experience you want them to leave with. And don’t forget to always be creative.”

