

THE  
PASTRY  
ARTS  
MAGAZINE

# PASTRY ARTS MAGAZINE

**SIRH/+**  
COUPE DU MONDE  
DE LA PÂTISSERIE  
TEAM USA

PASTRY • BAKING • CHOCOLATE • BREAD • FROZEN

# PASTRY ARTS

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## ECLAIR FLAIR

BY CHRISTOPHE RULL

Chocolate Packaging • Busting the Sourdough Starter Myths • Sweet Centenarian

The Anatomy of Dessert • Sustainable Ingredients • The Plot Thickens



# THE ROAD TO LYON BEGINS

Club Coupe du Monde de la Pâtisserie Team USA is proud to announce the nine pastry chefs selected to compete in the 2025 U.S. National Selection. This prestigious competition will take place Saturday September 6, 2025, at the Washburne Culinary and Hospitality Institute during the Chicago Baking and Pastry Forum. The event will serve as a critical step in determining which chefs will represent the United States at the Americas Continental Selection in summer 2026 — the final stage before the Coupe du Monde de la Pâtisserie in Lyon, France in January 2027. The eight-hour competition will challenge chefs across multiple disciplines, including two tasting tests and an artistic presentation. Each candidate must present a frozen entremets and a plated restaurant-style dessert. Additionally, every competitor is required to produce a showpiece crafted from either chocolate or sugar, along with a presentation display that integrates and showcases both the showpiece and frozen entremets. At the conclusion of the competition, the jury will select three chefs to represent the United States: one in sugar, one in chocolate and one in ice. A fourth chef will be selected as the team alternate. The theme of the national selection will be revealed at a later date. The candidates selected are:



**FRANÇOIS BEHUET****— Chocolate**

**candidate:** (Originally from Caen, France, and currently based in Los Angeles, CA.)

Behuet was the chocolate candidate for Pastry Team USA in the 2023 Coupe du Monde de la Pâtisserie. With more than 20 years of experience as an executive pastry chef, he has worked at prestigious locations such as The Ritz-Carlton and JW Marriott L.A. Live, The Pendry West Hollywood and Petrossian in New York. Behuet is also an accomplished chocolatier, having hosted demonstrations and events worldwide, including at the Salon du Chocolat in Paris.

**DAVID BONET —****Sugar candidate:**

(Originally from Villeneuve-sur-Lot, France, and currently based in Washington, VA.) Bonet is a highly

skilled pastry professional with extensive international experience. He served as the Director of Operations and Creations at Lenôtre Culinary Art School in Thailand and recently has been named Group Executive Pastry Chef at The Inn at Little Washington. Over the years, he has held key positions, including Executive Pastry Chef at the Mandarin Oriental Bangkok, Hotel Martinez Cannes and The Savoy Hotel in London. He has also worked as a pastry consultant and educator, conducting worldwide masterclasses and demonstrations.

**JOSHUA CAIN — Chocolate candidate:**

(Originally from Stedman, NC, and currently based in Orlando, FL.) Cain is an accomplished executive pastry chef currently leading the pastry team at Evermore Orlando Resort. He is responsible for menu creation, custom

tasting menus for VIPs, and overseeing the creation of pastries and confections in a distinctive resort setting. Cain has a strong background in high-volume production and special event planning and is dedicated to innovation in both the culinary and guest-experience aspects of the resort.

**DANIEL JOSEPH****CORPUZ — Chocolate**

**candidate:** (Originally from Staten Island, NY, and currently based in New York, NY.) Corpuz is a Filipino-American chocolatier and founder

of Daniel Corpuz Chocolatier, known for confections that reflect his cultural heritage. A graduate of The Culinary Institute of America, he has trained at top kitchens and appeared on Netflix's *School of Chocolate*. He teaches internationally and has earned recognition including "Best in Division: Chocolate" and induction into The Sweet Life Hall of Fame.

**NICHOLAS FORTE —****Tasting candidate:**

(Originally from Las Vegas, NV, and currently based there.) Forte is a graduate of The French Pastry School's *L'Art de la Pâtisserie* program.

He is currently Corporate Pastry Chef for Tao Group Hospitality's West Coast properties, where he oversees pastry operations and contributes to recipe and menu development. His previous experience includes roles at Brezza & Bar Zazu, Encore Boston Harbor, Joël Robuchon at MGM, and several other restaurants and hotels.





**MARK FREISCHMIDT —  
Chocolate candidate:**

(Originally from Waukesha, WI, and currently based in Las Vegas, NV.)

Freischmidt is an accomplished pastry chef with extensive experience in high-end hospitality, currently overseeing banquet pastry operations for Caesars Entertainment City Wide in Las Vegas. He has previously led pastry teams at renowned properties such as Dominique Ansel at Caesars Palace, Halekulani Waikiki, and The Ritz-Carlton Naples. Mark's career includes developing innovative pastry offerings, managing large teams, and earning multiple accolades, including being named Best Pastry Chef in Hawaii in 2014.



**SARAH HELZER —  
Tasting candidate:**

(Originally from North Ridgeville, OH, and currently based in Steamboat Springs, CO.)

Helzer has honed her pastry expertise at distinguished venues including The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas, The Fontainebleau Miami, and The Nomadic Table. While at The Greenbrier Resort, she trained under Executive Pastry Chef Jean-François Suteau and contributed to seasonal menu development, high-volume production and kitchen operations.



**TONI ROBERTS —  
Chocolate candidate:**

(Originally from: Minerva, OH, and currently based in Chicago, IL.) Roberts has an extensive career in pastry,



currently serving as Executive Pastry Chef at The Ritz-Carlton Chicago, where she oversees all pastry production, including fine dining desserts, VIP amenities, and seasonal high tea, while also contributing to off-site charitable events. Previously, she held the role of Executive Pastry Chef at the Wit Hotel, managing pastry items for multiple outlets, driving sales through an online platform, and participating in high-profile events such as the James Beard Foundation Gala. Her earlier experience includes leading pastry operations at C-House Restaurant and Custom House Restaurant, with notable accomplishments such as creating desserts for high-profile events like the State Dinner at the White House.

**JORDAN SNIDER —  
Sugar candidate:**

(Originally from Charleston, SC, and currently based in Kiawah Island, SC.)

Snider is an accomplished executive pastry chef with extensive experience in luxury hospitality, currently leading the pastry team at The Sanctuary on Kiawah Island. With previous roles at prestigious properties such as Fairmont Grand Del Mar and Mandalay Bay Resort, he has built a reputation for creating exceptional pastries and leading high-performing teams. A member of Team USA for the Coupe du Monde de la Pâtisserie in both 2019 (alternate) and 2023 (sugar candidate), Jordan is recognized for his expertise in sugar artistry and his significant contributions to pastry competitions. For more info on the Coupe du Monde de la Pâtisserie, visit [www.cmpatisserie.com/en](http://www.cmpatisserie.com/en).







A miniature version of the trophy the U.S. team won for taking first place in the 2001 Club Coupe Du Monde De La Patisserie. Provided

“You want a judge to look at your piece and say, ‘How did they do that?’” said Hsu, who now lives in Las Vegas but was a pastry chef at The Ritz-Carlton Chicago when she won.

With the whole world watching, anything and everything can go wrong, Hsu said. The judges — all top pastry chefs — deduct points for anything from discolored chocolate to portions that aren’t identical in weight and, on rare occasions, for cheating. For example, someone might sneak in a premade cookie they need for a garnish. With a few exceptions, everything must be prepared on the day of the competition.

And if you get caught?

“Huge point deduction,” Hsu said.

In 2001, the U.S. team had one hour to prepare its kitchen for the next day’s competition. Unfortunately, they didn’t get any help from the Italian team, which had just competed. “Italy trashed the kitchen,” Hsu recalled. “At that time, that was just a massive panic.”

Once the competition got under way, Hsu didn’t stop to eat or even pay a visit to the bathroom, she said. Twenty-four years later, that single-minded focus hasn’t changed.

“If you have to go, you have to go, but it’s not a lolly-gagging time,” Roberts says, adding that she doesn’t plan to break for lunch. “I’m going to probably treat it like a marathon and carb-load the night before.”

Link to the article: <https://chicago.suntimes.com/food-drink/2025/07/02/chicago-pastry-chef-toni-roberts-coupe-du-monde-de-la-patisserie-team-usa>