

WITH DESSERTS



Emily with renowned Bahraini cook Afnan Al Zayani



Emily visits Bahrain Institute for Hospitality and Retail



American celebrity pastry Chef Emily Luchetti was the talk of the town recently as she visited Bahrain as part of the U.S. Embassy's "Discover America Week 2016." She has helped to define what great pastry in America means. After attending culinary school and working within New York restaurants and Jeremiah Tower's legendary Stars in San Francisco, Emily switched to the sweet side of the kitchen and didn't look back. Her pastry style is focused – she creates simple, elegant desserts that are full of flavor.

Passionate about teaching and mentoring chefs and restaurateurs, Emily serves as a Dean at The International Culinary Center in New York and California. She is the founder of dessertworthy a movement to empower people to be more mindful of their sugar and fat indulgences.

Weekender had a word with the dessert maestro as she explored Bahrain and gave impeccable demonstrations and held talk sessions, inspiring enough for anyone to take the road to pastry glory!

W. Is it hard to create new and exciting recipes to keep the sweet mouth satisfied?

Emily: Sometimes yes! I try to always be thinking of new desserts even when I don't need them, so I am ready when I do. When I need inspiration I go to the market and look at the beautiful fruit, have a bite of good quality chocolate or look through old cookbooks and think of ways to update classic desserts to make them taste better

W. When was the first time you knew desserts and pastries will be your way of life?

Emily: I started as a savory cook

and something was missing. I eyed the pastry department from across the kitchen and knew I had to try it. Half an hour into my first baking job I knew I had found my home. Also, when I saw how much longer a group would linger at a table together chatting and laughing if there were great desserts on the table.

W. Can you recall the most memorable comment you received and from whom?

Emily: When someone (don't remember who) said: "They don't like desserts but they like mine!" Also, after my first book was published and savory chefs told me they used it for ideas.

W. Is there a veteran chef that you have always looked up to?

Emily: Jeremiah Tower was the owner of Stars in San Francisco, the first restaurant I was pastry chef at. His palate was extraordinary.

W. How do you keep striving ahead in your profession? What is your motivational tool?

Emily: Desserts aren't necessarily good for you physically, but they are important emotionally. They have to taste so good that they're worth the calories. Anything else is wasted so it makes me strive to make the best.

W. Traditional or unconventional- what style of baking do you prefer?

Emily: I am more traditional, but I do like to give desserts a bit of a twist to update them in ingredients or make them taste better. But I always keep true to the inherent vision of the dessert.

W. Do you ever feel overwhelmed with the rise of different kinds of chefs, esp. pastry chefs, or do you feel there is a distinctive style to everyone?

Emily: What is so wonderful about the world of desserts is the variety of styles and talents. Each pastry chef will create a dessert



from their own perspective.

There's no right or wrong. As a pastry chef it's important to be true to who you are while creating.

W. You've published a range of books. How do your books differ in their content and recipes?

Emily: My first two books (Stars Desserts and Classic Stars Desserts) were desserts I created and made at Stars Restaurant. Apple Napoleons, Summer Berry Pudding, Chocolate Silk. A Passion for Desserts is oriented around the time of year. We eat fruit when it is available in its own season. And even though chocolate is around all year (thankfully!) we eat it differently due to the temperature outside. That includes desserts like Macaroon Pineapple Napoleons, Apple Splits, White Peach Melba, and Chocolate Fondue.

I love ice cream, but many of the books printed had recipes on how to make ice cream - not what to do with it once you had it. Passion for Ice Cream teaches how to make different flavored Lemon Ginger Cookie Ice Cream Sandwiches, Mocha Chip Marshmallow Ice Cream Cake, and Baked Alaska. Many people get intimidated by baking, so I wrote The Fearless Baker to show people how great tasting desserts don't have to be hard to make, like Vanilla Bean Pound

Cake Chocolate Peanut Butter Bites or Blueberry Lemon Tart.

W. Can anyone master the skills of baking and create the perfect recipe?

Emily: Yes, anyone can bake. Start with a simple recipe like cookies so you have success and gain confidence. Read the recipe ahead of time so you understand everything you need to do. Get all your ingredients together and measure them before you start. Follow the recipe and don't improvise. (You can switch things up the second time!) Relax and have fun. One of the nice things about baking is you get two levels of satisfaction: 1) when you create something with your hands and 2) when you present the dessert to your family and friends and they love it!

Emily's Favourite Dessert Creations

- Vanilla Bean Crepes with Corn Ice Cream and Blueberries
- Torta Regina- almond walnut cake with citrus zest, creme anglaise and espresso ice cream
- Apple Charlotte with Brioche and Caramel Sauce
- Summer Pudding- this dessert is made of a compote of strawberries, raspberries and blackberries layered and soaked in brioche.



Emily Luchetti