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# The Sweet Life

GJUSTA'S HAZELNUT LINZER COOKIE IS THE JAM



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEPH SHIN

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CRAVE-WORTHY COOKIES, OVERFLOWING PASTRIES, FROZEN CREATIONS, AND MORE. WE SALUTE THE CITY'S MOST BRILLIANT DESSERTS BECAUSE THERE'S NEVER BEEN A BETTER TIME TO HAVE A SWEET TOOTH

*Edited by Betty Hallock*

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# JONESING FOR CHOCOLATE... OR ALL THAT FRUIT?

**A** CHOCOLATE CRAVING is different from just needing some dessert to finish off your meal,” says pastry chef Karen Hatfield. She would know. Her chocolate rye pie at Odys + Penelope—the restaurant she co-owns with husband Quinn—is killer. “It’s like the need for caffeine in the morning that only the perfect shot of espresso can satisfy.” That must be why, according to market researcher Euromonitor, Americans consume \$18.27 billion of the stuff a year. Here are five ways to fill your quota. > HILLARY EATON

## **CIOCCOLATO** **Osteria Mozza**

● Inspired by the chocolate masters of Italy’s Perugia region, this rich (flourless) cake by Osteria Mozza’s Dahlia Narvaez is a chocoholic’s dream. She adorns the bittersweet wedge with pieces of chocolate-dipped honeycomb, chocolate-covered hazelnuts, and Sicilian pistachios. 6602 Melrose Ave., Hancock Park, osteriamozza.com.

## **CHOCOLATE RYE PIE** **Odys + Penelope**

● The consistency of the fudgy filling is a cross between chocolate mousse and moist brownie; a touch of caramel is mixed in for depth of flavor. Rye flour adds a slightly bitter, nutty note to the crust. In combination these ingredients make for one unforgettable

pie. 127 S. La Brea Ave., Hancock Park, odysandpenelope.com.

## **CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER CRUNCH CAKE** **Charcoal**

● At Josiah Citrin’s ode to grilled meats, the highlight of the dessert menu is this one: seven alternating layers of dark chocolate mousse, chocolate sponge cake, crunchy peanut butter *feuilletonne*, and almond dacquoise. 425 Washington Blvd., Marina del Rey, charcoalvenice.com.

## **CHOCOLATE BUDINO TART** **Bestia**

● Genevieve Gergis’s tart starts with a tender, crumbly, cocoa-laden crust. She fills it with salted caramel and Mast Bros. bittersweet chocolate custard, finishing with a touch of olive oil and a sprinkle of sea salt. 2121 E. 7th Pl., Arts District, bestiala.com.

## **DARK CHOCOLATE SOUFFLÉ** **CUT**

● The dessert may be a classic, but finding a superb soufflé is no small task. Look no further than the one conjured at Wolfgang Puck’s steak house. Here the smooth dark chocolate soufflé comes to the table warm, accompanied by a melting dollop of whipped *crème-fraiche* and *gianduja* (chocolate-hazelnut) ice cream. Beverly Wilshire, 9500 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, wolfgangpuck.com.

**W**ITH MORE THAN 30 varieties of peaches alone at local farmers’ markets during the summer, fruit is a boon to Southern California pastry chefs. “I start with what’s available at the market. That’s where we begin,” says Shannon Swindle at Craft. “We’re really lucky to get the stuff we get. And people know that.”

This season he’s reveling in pears: Bartletts, Warrens, Boscs, and Asian varieties such as Shinko. “A perfect pear is my favorite thing because of the complexity of flavor and texture,” Swindle says. For his pear rugelach, he poaches Boscs in white wine and spices for the filling and serves it with huckleberries, rye whiskey ice cream, and sorbet made from Warren pears.

Rustic Canyon’s Jun Tan has been waiting for early fall’s passion fruit since summer. “It’s a short season, so we grab as much as we can,” says Tan, who’s returning to his Filipino roots by melding secret recipes from his grandmother (a former baker who owned Alice’s Sapin-Sapin in Hollywood) with his French and Italian culinary training. His *brazo de mercedes*, a jelly roll made with soft meringue, uses the tart tropical fruit to flavor the custard filling.

At Friends & Family bakery, slated to open later this month, Roxana Jullapat makes her persimmon pudding with Hachiyas (softer than the Fuyu variety) grown in the Inland Empire. “It has a butterscotch flavor when you bake it, so it’s spot-on,” she says. “That’s in my top ten things to eat before I die, even if I have to make it on my deathbed.”

> CLAUDINE KO

## **WHERE TO SAVOR THE SEASONS**

**Craft**  
10100 Constellation Blvd., Century City, craftrestaurantsinc.com

**Rustic Canyon**  
1119 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, rusticcanyonwinebar.com

**Friends & Family**  
5150 Hollywood Blvd., East Hollywood, no Web site at press time

