

Chef Jonathan Dendauw

Master Baker / Chef Instructor

“Bread baking and pastry creation are passions. Once you start to enjoy them you will never stop thinking about how to create new products. My mentors inspired this passion in me, and now it is my turn to share it with others.”



When Chef Jonathan Dendauw joined The French Pastry School as Master Baker and Chef Instructor, he was thrilled to be able to share his knowledge and dedication to the art of artisan bread making with the students of The French Pastry School.

Dendauw recalls his first experience baking when, at the age of three, his school went on an outing to a bakery in his hometown of Oudenaarde, Belgium. Since then, Dendauw's devotion to his profession has taken him all across France and the United States. He and his family moved from Belgium to France at the age of six, and Dendauw began his baking apprenticeship 10 years later in Nimes through a centuries-old organization called the Compagnons du Devoir. Since the 12th century, this organization has connected young apprentices with experts in many different trades all across France and, more recently, throughout the world.

The Compagnons du Devoir is a pillar of the apprenticeship system that makes France world-renowned for its craftsmen. One must be invited to become a part of this celebrated organization which stresses not only the importance of craftsmanship and professionalism but also of character. Before one can be accepted as a member of the Compagnons, the craftsperson must pass rigorous tests to prove his or her abilities and principles. By participating in the organization, Dendauw has worked in bakery-pâtisseries in cities all across France - this is called the “Compagnons du Tour de France.” The tour allowed him to work for a year at a time in French cities such as Nimes, Dijon, Lyon, Valence, and Privas. The Compagnons also took him to Cary, North Carolina to the famous La Farm Bakery where Dendauw worked under Master Baker Lionel Vatinet who coached the United States Baking team to victory in the World Cup Baking Championship in 1999. Some of Dendauw's other major influences include Master Bakers Patrick Doucet and Stephan Aubert, as well as Patrick Castagna, M.O.F. (Meilleur Ouvrier de France Boulanger/Best Craftsman of France in Baking).

Chef Dendauw brings with him knowledge and passion that has been passed down to him from his mentors. His particular talent lies in the fine craft of artisan bread baking and viennoiseries. Students benefit from his expertise and his experience as a professional baker. He recently returned to a retail bakery, serving as production manager of La Fourchette in Chicago under the direction of his colleague and World Baking Champion, Chef Pierre Zimmermann, during its first years of operation.

In 2016, Chef Dendauw was inducted in the Académie Culinaire de France.

He is delighted to be able to work alongside Master Pastry Chefs and co-founders of The French Pastry School, Jacquy Pfeiffer and Sébastien Canonne, M.O.F. Jonathan shares his knowledge, skill and enthusiasm with his students while continuing his lifelong pursuit of excellence in the French pastry arts.