

Chef Joel Reno

Pastry Chef Instructor

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Joel Reno is a Chef Instructor at The French Pastry School who teaches in L'Art de la Pâtisserie, the 24-week Professional Baking and Pastry Program. Reno began his diverse career in the food industry as a teenager in hometown restaurants. A love of travel and adventure landed Reno in the Virgin Islands where he was a savory cook on a Charter Yacht. When he returned to the continent, he moved to Chicago and began working in some of the finest French restaurants in the city: first at the legendary Le Français, founded by celebrity Chef Jean Banchet; then Les Nomades with Chef Roland Liccioni, where he began working in pastry. His mentor, Chef Roland Liccioni, gave him the opportunity to move to the pastry station and Reno was immediately fascinated by pastry: he found the need for precision more challenging and the result deeply satisfying.

During his tenure at Les Nomades, Reno realized that he was starting a never ending journey to continue learning about the craft. He supplemented his on-the-job education with Continuing Education classes at The French Pastry School where he was first introduced to Chefs Jacqy Pfeiffer and Sébastien Canonne, M.O.F. Over his years as a pastry chef in Chicago, Reno referred to The French Pastry School as his primary resource for technical questions and recommendations. Through this relationship he was afforded chances to study under Chefs Jean-Pierre Wybauw, Jim Graham, and Pierre Hermé.

From Les Nomades, he went on to becoming the opening Pastry Chef for Chef Liccioni's Le Lan before accepting the job of Executive Pastry Chef at Jean Joho's Everest, a Chicago institution. Under the watchful eye of Chef Joho, Joel continued to master the French classics and create highly-rated desserts for prominent clientele for the next five years.

Joel then headed west to San Francisco to work for Chef Michael Tusk as Executive Pastry Chef at Quince Restaurant. At Quince, Joel was introduced to all that California has to offer. He had the opportunity to source fruits and vegetables from Bay area farmer's markets on a daily basis. He then headed to Los Angeles to take the position of Executive Pastry Chef at the well-known Patina Restaurant and work with Alain Ducasse alum Chef Tony Enault. While at Patina, the opportunity came for Joel to shift gears in his career and open up Baguetier Bakery in Huntington Beach where he received Best Pâtisserie of Orange County within just a few months of opening.

As a chef instructor at The French Pastry School, Reno brings years of experience within many types of establishments in the pastry world: from yachts in the Caribbean; to four-star restaurants in Chicago; to small, artisan bakeries in Southern California. He believes that a pastry chef's biggest responsibility is to give customers the best experience they can possibly have and that experience is dependent on the chef's willingness to continuously challenge themselves to become better. “Pastry is a beautiful craft and I love getting people excited about it,” Reno explained. “When students of pastry get equally as excited about learning the process and science behind making the recipes, magic can happen.”