



Hot Dish: Loving Summer Classes at Norman Love

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Summer loving had me a blast when I tied on a plastic apron, threw on a hairnet and wore closed-toed shoes for the first time in months as a student of Love—[Norman Love](#), at a nighttime class in his Fort Myers Chocolate Salon.

We locals know to expect some fun in the off months, and my experience conquering crumb coats, something that had stumped me for years, definitely ranks high in that department. The nationally famous chocolatier hosts a [schedule of three-hour enrichment courses](#) (each \$95) until late September, including the one I took, where we learned how to bake and assemble two 6-inch layer cakes: a double chocolate featuring chocolate buttercream and a vanilla chiffon with lemon buttercream and fresh raspberries.



Most of the teaching is done by Love's Jedis, but the Master himself likes to be at the first half of every class, welcoming students and sharing anecdotes (the chocolate cake, he says with a boyish grin, "is best with a milkshake"). And no matter how big his company grows, Love also says: "Every day I am in the kitchen getting my hands dirty. I like to smell it and feel it."

Some classes are heavier on demonstrations, but ultimately they're what you make of them. I stood for more than an hour painstakingly trying to recreate each flick of our instructor's wrist, determined to build three-layered confections that could possibly pass for ones that would sell in the company's retail locations throughout Southwest Florida. My compatriot sharing a piping bag whipped up both cakes, lopsided and wobbly but nonetheless tasty, in record time and went home early.

But when my family dug in close to midnight ("We can't go to bed without trying them!") and my coworkers did the same the following afternoon, the precise frosting-to-cake ratio did not go unnoticed. But moreover, I served slices made with love and everyone appreciated that.

Norman Love Chocolate Salon

Summer class schedule: Each session is \$95 and runs from 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the Fort Myers Chocolate Salon (11380 Lindbergh Blvd.). Call (239) 561-7215 to register; click [here](#) for further details.

- Around the World in Chocolate: Aug. 5
- Cupcakes: Aug. 19
- Molded Candies: Aug. 19 and Sept. 16
- Truffles: Sept. 2
- Dessert Shooters: Sept. 2
- Quick Chocolate Bites: Sept. 16
- Chocolate and Wine Tasting: Sept. 30