

Two Norman Love Confections chefs win national pastry competition

Pastry Chef Chocolatiers Maura Metheny and Dan Forgey of Norman Love Confections captured awards at the Pastry Live 2013 National Showpiece Championship

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Pastry Chef Chocolatiers Maura Metheny and Dan Forgey of Norman Love Confections (NLC) used their magic touch to capture this year's National Showpiece Champions award as well as Best Chocolate Showpiece honors at the Pastry Live 2013 National Showpiece Championship held in Atlanta last month.

Seven teams of two chefs competed for six hours, using a unique trio of pedestal bases to construct showpieces based on the theme "The Art of Illusion." Each team chose from either chocolate or sugar to showcase their innovation and talent while competing for the title of National Showpiece Champions.



Metheny and Forgey's winning showpiece, titled The Hurwitz Hypnotist, evoked a magician-themed chocolate 3-D sculpture, which was inspired by the illusion sculptures of Jonty Hurwitz and the works of Harry Houdini.

"Maura and Dan worked hundreds of hours during the last six months perfecting their showpiece," says Norman Love, president of NLC. "We're honored to have these innovative and talented chefs at Norman Love Confections!"

One of NLC's original employees, Metheny is the chef chocolatier in charge of design and innovation, and Forgey is chef chocolatier overseeing the production of the company's numerous product lines.

During the three-day event, Metheny also garnered second place as Chocolatier of the Year with only a few points separating her from the first place winner, Melissa Coppel, from Jean-Marie Aubeine Chocolates in Las Vegas.

This competition offers chocolatiers national recognition for their skills and the opportunity for the artisans to display their talents in a competitor-friendly environment. Fifteen pastry chefs were selected for their expertise and abilities; each competitor was required to produce two different chocolates sold in their shops. Both taste and appearance were key criteria evaluated, so each chocolatier had to meticulously handcraft their creations to obtain the title of Chocolatier of the Year.

The goal of the Pastry Live Showpiece Championship is to raise the artistic and competition skills of more top level chefs, while enriching the whole pastry community. It is organized to overcome the time constraints and resource requirements chefs experience in other competitions, making it possible for skilled chefs to participate at the highest level competition without making extraordinary personal and financial sacrifices.



NLC creates and distributes handcrafted artisanal chocolates from its Fort Myers corporate headquarters that encompasses both production and retail operations. The Fort Myers and Naples chocolate salons are stylish retail shops with an intimate ambience in which customers may purchase chocolates or linger over house-made pastries, gourmet coffees, lattes and smoothies.