



American Pie Council Announces Best Pies in America at 24th Annual APC National Pie Championships

First-Year Sponsor Guittard Chocolates Scores a Best of Show Win

ORLANDO (May 7, 2018) – The best professional and amateur pie-makers descended upon Orlando, Fla. April 6 and 7 for the 24th Annual APC National Pie Championships at the Rosen Centre Hotel. It was here that 714 pies were entered by 71 pie-makers and entered into three divisions. In the commercial division, Bakers Square won the most first place ribbons with 25, while the inventive pies from Chef Kathy Hanson from the Ritz Carlton Orlando and amateur Jennifer Nystrom from Clarksville, Ohio also reigned supreme.

Chef Hanson won the professional best of show put of 107 pies. Titled “I Love a Great Love Pie,” it won in the Royal Wedding category – which is a one-time category created to commemorate the upcoming royal nuptials between Prince Henry of Wales and Meghan Markle. Hanson’s best of show pie featured bananas foster with vanilla bean and Marcona almond honey cookie crust and sprinkled on top with “Markle Sparkles.”

“Bananas foster was a favorite dessert of my parents who had their own great love story,” said Hanson. “I Love a Great Love Pie is a testament to their love for one another and the celebration of the beginning of another great love story.”

Chef Hanson has been the culinary training cook at the Ritz Carlton Orlando for the past eight-and-a-half years and has participated at the National Pie Council since 2007 – initially as an amateur and then the past nine as a professional. Hanson earned second place in 2008 in the custard category and has either placed or received honorable mention in six NPC competitions since. She entered 13 pies in 2018. In addition to best of show, she placed first four times and received one honorable mention.

Hanson’s advice to those who strive to bake that great recipe, “Bake with love. Bake with your passion. Use your integrity with your ingredients – the freshest you can find.”

Jennifer Nystrom has competed in the NPC for nine years, having at least placed all but two years. This year, she entered seven pies, earned four ribbons and scored best of show in the amateur division – out of 185 pies – with her Chocolate Caramel Turtle Sundae Pie.

“I’ve been baking forever for my children,” stated Nystrom. “In recent years, I’ve been able to have a great time with my now six-year-old granddaughter who loves to bake with me. Pie is a

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way to give someone something they might need – whether they’re going through a rough time or simply need to be cheered up. To me, this is the best way to celebrate or brighten up a day!”

The chocolate pie was created using professional chocolates provided by the Guittard Chocolate Company, who sponsored the chocolate pie flavor category for the first time in 2018.

During the 24th Annual APC National Pie Championships amateur, professional and commercial bakers entered their most delicious pies among an array of flavor categories for bragging rights to be named the nation’s best. From apple and pumpkin to an open category and savory pot pies, hundreds of pies were sampled by more than 200 judges throughout the two-day competition.

“We had an incredible array of competitors this year,” said Linda Hoskins, executive director of the American Pie Council. “It’s evident that our best of show winners put much passion into their pie craft; have learned from their past experiences at the championships; and coupled these learnings with their passion to be the nation’s best.”

The 25th APC National Pie Championships will be held April 11-13, 2019 at the Renaissance Sea World Hotel in Orlando. Recipes and photos of the best of show and all top award-winning pies are available at piecouncil.org. For best of show winners photos, [click here](#).

About the American Pie Council

The American Pie Council® (APC) is the only organization committed to preserving America's pie heritage and promoting American's love affair with pies. Designed to raise awareness, enjoyment and consumption of sweet and savory pies, the APC offers amateur, professional and commercial memberships. As part of the Pie Community members can participate in a variety of network and promotional opportunities provided by the APC and will have access to all information that we have available for the pie baking industry. The APC has designated and registered National Pie Day...January 23rd. For more information about the American Pie Council and to learn more about next year’s 25th APC National Pie Championships, visit PieCouncil.org.

About Guittard Chocolates

Guittard Chocolate Company is a San Francisco Bay Area chocolate maker celebrated for crafting world-class couverture chocolate based on traditional French methods. Founded in San Francisco in 1868, Guittard Chocolate Company is the oldest continuously family-owned and operated chocolate-making business in the United States. Guittard is an industry leader in its global efforts to promote sustainability of the environment of the cocoa-growing regions and the well-being of cocoa workers. The company’s Collection Etienne is made in the centuries-old, small-batch French artisan tradition, delivering to pastry chefs, artisan chocolatiers, pâtisseries, restaurants, caterers and hotels a premium line of single origin and blended chocolates. For more information, visit Guittard.com.