



THE  
FRENCH PASTRY  
SCHOOL

## *Chef Laura Ragano*

Pastry Chef / Instructor



*“There is nothing more exciting and motivating to me in teaching than seeing a student produce something under my direction that they take great pride and joy in having created.”*

When Pastry Chef Laura Ragano enrolled at The French Pastry School at City Colleges of Chicago to sharpen her skills in the pastry arts, she never predicted she would one day teach alongside Chefs Jacquy Pfeiffer and Sebastien Canonne, MOF, the same chefs who mentored and inspired her as a student. But upon graduation in 2003, the star student would find herself in that exact role after accepting a rare invitation to join the school. Since, Ragano has made a name for herself as a talented baker, artist and mentor.

Promoted to Chef Instructor in January 2005, Ragano leads the school's wedding cake and gum paste class during the L'Art de la Pâtisserie program. Having received training from internationally-acclaimed pastry artists Nicholas Lodge and Kerry Vincent, Ragano teaches the delicate art with a discriminating attention to detail. In addition, she oversees many aspects of the school's operations, including curriculum development, kitchen management and intern coordination.

Ragano's love of cooking began at a young age. While growing up in Rockford, Illinois, she spent many weekend days in the kitchen preparing gourmet meals with her father. Later, after graduating from the University of Michigan, Ragano experienced work in a commercial kitchen at Café Patou, a French bistro in her hometown. Her experience at Café Patou, rotating through every facet of the restaurant, solidified her desire to work in the culinary industry.

That pursuit led Ragano to the Culinary Institute of America, where after graduating at the top of her class, she decided to focus on the pastry arts. After spending two and a half years at Bin 36 in Chicago as pastry sous chef and looking to broaden her pastry skills, she enrolled in The French Pastry School's L'Art de la Pâtisserie program.

Known by her students for having a calm demeanor, Ragano inspires her students with her attention to detail, her love of the art, and her team-focused attitude. And as a woman in a traditionally male-dominated industry, she is proud to be a mentor for the many women in the program looking to establish themselves in the field of pastry arts.