

**BOCANOVA
JACK LONDON SQUARE**



**PAUL CONTE
EXECUTIVE PASTRY CHEF**

It's not uncommon for pastry chefs to move to the savory side of the kitchen (sometimes to great effect: think Michel Guérard and Michel Richard). Bocanova pastry master Paul Conte reversed the process: A graduate of the Culinary Arts program at the esteemed Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island, Conte got his first restaurant experience cooking under Tom Colicchio at Mondrian in New York City. From there, he moved to the kitchen of the Plaza Hotel, where chef Kerry Simon recognized his latent talent as a pastry chef and encouraged him in that direction, moving him to the pastry station. Stints at restaurant legend Joe Baum's Aurora and the original China Grill, in Manhattan's CBS Building, followed. At the same time, Conte was developing his artistic talents through music, photography, and even a stint of painting animation cells with Broadcast Arts.

Moving to the West Coast in 1993, Conte found himself at home in the food mecca of San Francisco, where he created a variety of desserts at two popular establishments, Restaurant Lulu and Tiramisù. He took two years off to hone his photographic skills at the San Francisco Art Institute before returning to the local restaurant world as opening pastry chef for Valhalla Restaurant. There, marrying his artistic and culinary skills, he began creating whimsical, architecturally inspired desserts that introduced warm and savory elements where cool sweetness had previously prevailed.

Taking his talents to the new MarketBar at the famed San Francisco Ferry Building, Conte worked for the first time alongside Bocanova executive chef Rick Hackett. After a taking on a new challenge fashioning desserts for the market-based menu at the elegant Franco-Japanese Chaya Brasserie, Conte has reunited with Hackett at Bocanova, where his irresistible creations—still combining savory with sweet—will employ a whole new range of ingredients and flavors.



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