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## Chocolatier Michael Recchiuti Shares His Sweet Obsessions

Oct 15th 2009 11:20AM

By Tami Yu

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Michael Recchiuti knows a thing or two about chocolate.



Recchiuti Confections



As the first American chocolatier to present his chocolates to the prestigious Le Club du Chocolat aux Palais in France, he's been experimenting with intoxicating spices and unique flavors for a long time. Each exquisite confection is a perfect amalgamation of texture and flavor.

At the moment, Recchiuti is literally drowning in chocolate for the holiday season, but we were still lucky enough to learn about the Picasso of Chocolatiers' favorite obsessions.

#### When did you first get so obsessed with chocolate? What was the 'a-ha' moment?

My first obsession with chocolate was inspired when I was exposed to real chocolate while working and apprenticing alongside European chefs in Philadelphia during the late 70's. That 'a-ha' moment occurred when I realized my knowledge and journey with chocolate has just started and is a lifelong experience. Humbled by chocolate, and always will be.

#### Tell us about a funny anecdote about your confections.

Well, I always wanted to take a stab at making peeps for Easter. I thought we could use our vanilla bean marshmallow base to hand pipe little chick bodies and then make the eyes with chocolate and the ears with toasted almonds slices. Well how sweet to have a tray of adorable Recchiuti-style peeps staring up at their proud creator. What turned out to be adorable, ended up to be a tray of deformed peeps with eyes and ears drooping and their little bodies melting into a puddle. Funny and yet a sad moment. Once again, humbled...

#### Any new confections coming out for the holiday season?

I'm proud to say we've finally released, after months of testing and tasting, peppermint thins. My inspiration is totally selfish. One of my favorite candies, on a mass-produced level, has and always been Junior Mints. I wanted to spin off of this Recchiuti favorite and create a mint thin made with the cleanest of mint essential oil, fresh mint, and then coated with our custom blend of 64% semisweet Valrhona chocolate exclusively formulated for Recchiuti Confections.

#### Who's your biggest food mentor?

One of my biggest mentors is Raymond Moderski. Raymond spent a lot of time personally training me, and allowing me to work with him at some of his various restaurants while I was living in Philadelphia. Raymond and I still keep in touch, and share our passion with all aspects of the culinary world.

#### What inspires you?

An unexpected confection, and listening to a great band.

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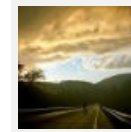
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### What recent trend have you been noticing in the world of chocolate?

What I've been noticing a lot of lately is salt related desserts, and chocolates. It's funny that such a basic ingredient resurfaces and becomes the focal point in all aspects of cuisine and confections.

### We know you play the drums - how often do you play? Any chance of starting up your own band soon?

Not often enough. I have three different kits. All three kits have a variety of purposes when it comes to drumming. I hope to get back into a more regimented practice routine. I would love to feel the confidence to be able to sit in with a variety of local musicians. Starting a band would be a wonderful dream. Yes I would love to do this, and hopefully sooner versus later.

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