

AS SEEN IN *FLAVORS*

CHEF PROFILE: Kathleen Miliotis

EXECUTIVE PASTRY CHEF OF DAVIO'S NORTHERN ITALIAN STEAKHOUSE

WRITTEN BY TERESA TOBAT

PASTRY CHEF KATHLEEN MILIOTIS had every intention of becoming a traditional chef while in culinary school in Rhode Island. But when she saw one of her teachers blowing sugar with a slotted spoon, her fate was sealed. “I was like, ‘This is fabulous,’” she says. Miliotis decided to earn a bachelor’s in baking and has never looked back. In 2001, a few years after she graduated, the Atlanta native returned to her hometown to study under Roy Yamaguchi, the renowned Asian-fusion chef who helmed the now-closed Roy’s in Buckhead. In 2003, Miliotis relocated to New Jersey to work as the pastry chef of Harvest Bistro & Bar. While there, she received recognition from *The New York Times* for her creations, with the newspaper describing Miliotis as “a rising star, her French desserts so venerable they belong in the Louvre.” She returned to Atlanta in 2006 and worked for the now-closed Pano’s & Paul’s for three years. She continued her career at Baker’s Man, a bakery that has been called North Alpharetta’s version of “Ace of Cakes.” She currently serves as the executive pastry chef of Davio’s Northern Italian Steakhouse and is responsible for overseeing the production of all pastries and desserts and managing the pastry staff. ○



Kathleen Miliotis

Flavors: How do you change Davio’s dessert menu to keep it fresh?

Chef Miliotis: Our menu changes with the season. I keep it classic, with dishes like panna cotta, but I do a new twist on everything. A good example is our no-bake cheesecake. Instead of New York-style, the crust is made with ladyfingers and topped with oven-roasted black pepper pineapple.

Flavors: What’s the tastiest dessert you’ve created for Davio’s?

Chef Miliotis: Probably the triple-chocolate parfait. It’s three different types of chocolate with cocoa nibs and chocolate shavings. It’s very decadent, very rich, and a chocolate-lover’s paradise.

Flavors: Describe your baking style.

Chef Miliotis: I find myself to be both classic and modern when making a dessert. I’m not going to go way too over the edge, but I’ll stand on the edge with my flavors and uniqueness.

Flavors: What inspires you as a chef?

Chef Miliotis: There’s a book called *A Woman’s Place Is in the Kitchen*, and it’s about how women got respect as chefs. When women like Julia Child became chefs, women weren’t respected in the kitchen. ... When you’re in culinary school, in a class of 10, there will be eight guys and two girls. That book has inspired me to be a harder-working female in the kitchen. Women like Claudia Fleming,

who worked at the Gramercy Tavern, and Kathryn King [of Aria Restaurant], and other top-10 chefs, these women had to strive to be more creative. Atlanta is a fast-growing city, and there are a lot of foodies. And if you don’t stay on that edge, people will skip over you. You want people to keep coming back, and to keep respect for yourself, for your restaurant.

Flavors: Your Twitter handle is Cupcakechefatl. Is making cupcakes a hobby of yours?

Chef Miliotis: Yes. I make these very intricate fondant bows. I make figurines with fondant. Recently, I made 300 cupcakes for Legoland with their logo on them.

Flavors: You’ve baked for several charities (including Share Our Strength). What do you enjoy about work like that?

Chef Miliotis: I love every bit of it. It’s great to give back to communities. Bake sales, cake competitions, whatever I can do to give back. Usually I’m out and about in the city twice a month. I do a lot of charity events. I’m a social cupcake.

Flavors: Do you cook with your daughter?

Chef Miliotis: Absolutely. She’s doing Taste of Atlanta’s kids’ competition in October. Her name is Kora, and she thinks she’s going to be the new Cat Cora [of the Food Network]. We’ve been training her. She gets mad if she doesn’t get to cut the cucumbers, tomatoes. She’s 7. She’s my sous-chef.

Flavors: Do you have any other hobbies?

Chef Miliotis: I was just ATV riding in West Virginia. It’s my new, fun sport thing to do now. I had the time of my life. I also like gardening; my daughter and I like to garden.

Davio’s Northern Italian Steakhouse

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For Chef Miliotis’ recipe for *Chèvre Cheesecake with Black Mission Oven Roasted Port Figs* (pictured left), see page 68.



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