

# BEST DESSERT

## The Chocolate Conspiracy

A handmade chocolate globe encompassing homemade pumpkin ice cream atop a bed of streusel and pomegranate arils. Once the chocolate globe was presented and set in front of the guests it was topped with hot caramel. The hot caramel created a “blossoming” effect, revealing to guests the surprise dessert hidden beneath the chocolate globe.



We wanted a dessert that would wow our guests. It was our goal to build a decadent dessert that beautifully blended the fall flavors of Utah in order to finish off the earthy varieties of our menu. Additionally, we wanted not just a delicious dessert, but also a presentation - a performance just as important and exciting as the taste of the dessert that would be the finale to our guests' nights, a dessert experience to be remembered.

We have never offered a dessert that not only was a delicious cap to the meal, but was also an integral part in the show and presentation of the menu. While having as many elements of the recipe be made in-house is not an original characteristic of our menu items, having an interactive presentation surely was. It was our first time making homemade ice cream in-house as well as the scale of production necessary to ensure each plate was perfect; our bakery team worked for over a week to ensure we had enough chocolate spheres as well as 100 extras in case any were broken during transit or production.

One of the most incredible compliments we have received from any client was a week later when they informed us the CEO had stopped a board meeting with high ranking government officials to share his favorite video captured during the dessert portion of the event where his chocolate sphere was being melted by the hot caramel.





The chocolate globes were made in our bakery by hand beginning a week before the event. At the event, we had a line with each staff member assigned to one of four jobs: laying out plates, placing down a bed of streusel, placing a scoop of homemade ice cream on top of streusel, topping the ice cream and streusel with pomegranate arils, and finally placing the globe delicately over the ice cream. Right before dessert was served, the caramel was heated. When it was time to serve dessert, we had the plates ready to go out for our servers to take to the guests followed by another server carrying hot caramel. Once dessert plates were placed in front of guests anxiously awaiting with cameras ready, caramel-carrying servers poured the hot caramel slowly over the chocolate globes to blossom the globe, revealing the rest of the decadence hidden inside.

One of the biggest challenges to this dessert was the creation and preservation of the delicate chocolate spheres until the night of the event. We had all bakery staff, 4 in total, working for a solid week melting and tempering chocolate and hand-rolling the chocolate in molds in order to create as evenly cast chocolate molds. Our bakery staff ended up making hundreds of molds, many of which broke during unmolding or while carving out a hole in the bottom of the spheres so they could sit solidly on the bed of streusel. Because the molds were so delicate, our goal was to have double the amount needed on hand in case any broke during transit to the event or during dessert production at the event.

Another obstacle we faced was the inconsistency with the melting of the spheres at the presentation of dessert to guests. Because the chocolate globes were molded by hand, there were some spots on each globe that were thicker than others; this posed a problem of the caramel taking too long to melt the chocolate. To mitigate this, we had our bakery staff test each globe and cut out the thickest section as the empty bottom that would be lowered over the dessert.

Further, it was not uncommon for the caramel to cool slightly in transit from back of house to the guest tables, this also inhibited the spheres from melt enough to blossom. To combat this, we doubled the number of staff carrying caramel so there was always someone with fresh, hot caramel to melt all spheres in a timely manner and thus all guests could enjoy their dessert at the same time.





## Pumpkin Ice Cream

2 cups half-and-half or whole milk  
1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise  
1/2 cup sugar  
4 large egg yolks, at room temperature  
1 cup pumpkin purée

Set a large fine strainer over a medium bowl and set the bowl in a shallow pan of cold water.

In a large saucepan, combine the half-and-half, pumpkin purée and vanilla bean and cook over moderately low heat just until small bubbles appear around the rim, about 5 minutes.

In another medium bowl, whisk the sugar and egg yolks just until combined. Whisk in half of the hot half-and-half in a thin stream. Pour the mixture into the saucepan and cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until the sauce has slightly thickened, about 4 to 5 minutes. Immediately strain the sauce into the bowl in the cold water bath to stop cooking. Scrape the vanilla seeds into the sauce. Pour into a bowl and cover well. Freeze at least overnight.

## Chocolate Domes

Melt and temper high quality dark chocolate. Pour chocolate into 10” round molds and roll molds gently by hand until chocolate begins to cool to achieve even thickness. Drain excess chocolate and allow to fully cool. Carefully unmold. Delicately tap around the chocolate globe to determine the thickest spot and carefully cut out a large circle. You need the globe to be fairly thin so the caramel can melt away the top of the globe quickly to reveal the rest of the dessert to guests.

## Walnut Streusel

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup flour

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup brown sugar

$\frac{1}{3}$  cup butter - room temperature

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup walnuts

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup pomegranate arils

Mix dry ingredients except for arils then cut butter in with a pastry blender until it starts to stick together.

Sprinkle pomegranate arils over the bed of streusel on plate.

Top with pumpkin ice cream. Cover with chocolate globe. Present plates to guest and immediately drizzle hot caramel in a circular motion atop the chocolate globe until the chocolate starts to melt and blossom to reveal the ice cream inside.