**Yigit Pura,**

**Executive Pastry Chef**

Yigit (*rhymes with ‘sweet’*) began his culinary training in the pastry arts at the age of four in Ankara, Turkey. One of his fondest memories is of his mother making him a big spoonful of dark caramel. His first job in the United States was in the pastry kitchen at The Meetinghouse, a three-star San Francisco restaurant, where he worked for two years under chef and mentor Joanna Karlinsky. From The Meetinghouse he went on to work in several other pastry kitchens in San Francisco including Postrio and Gary Danko. Yigit moved to New York City in the Fall of 2003 where he held increasingly responsible positions at the famed Le Cirque 2000 and the five-star, five-diamond Four Season Hotel, both under Executive Pastry Chef Luis Robledo-Richards. He went on to work at the world famous Restaurant Daniel, as Pastry Sous Chef, and at Daniel Boulud in Las Vegas as Executive Pastry Chef, both under chef/owner Daniel Boulud. Yigit joined Taste Catering & Event Planning as Executive Pastry Chef in the Spring of 2007.

Yigit was crowned the winner and fan favoriteon the premiere season of BRAVO’s “Top Chef Just Desserts” – a spin-off of the popular Emmy-nominated and James Beard Award-winning “Top Chef.” Yigit opened Tout Sweet Pâtisserie, a high-end pastry shop located in San Francisco’s Union Square. Tout Sweet is a fresh new concept marrying traditional American flavors with extensive French technique, while infusing a young and fresh perspective. Yigit opened his second Tout Sweet Pâtisserie location in Palo Alto’s Town and Country Village in December 2014 and is currently planning for nationwide expansion.

Since winning, Yigit has become an internationally recognized chef and has been featured on TV and in magazines and newspapers across the globe – including *Food & Wine* magazine, *People* magazine, *Entertainment Weekly,* “The Rachael Ray Show,” *Time Out Istanbul, Vogue Turkey,* BRAVO’s “Watch What Happens Live,” *Sunset* magazine, and *OUT* magazine – as well as on numerous national and international websites and blogs. In 2011, the *Advocate* magazinenamed Yigit one of the “Top 40 Under 40” in their annual list of exceptional LGBT and was also featured as one of *Out* magazine’s *“*Out 100,” which recognizes influential lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and community allies. In October 2012, Yigit was named one of *7x7* magazine’s “Hot 30,” and was featured on the cover of the issue.

Bringing his expressive style, enthusiasm and passion for baking, Yigit has travelled extensively throughout the United States participating in various culinary events, cooking classes and speaking engagements. In 2011, Yigit was twice featured as the celebrity chef for President Obama was also featured as a Gala Chef at the 2011 James Beard Foundation Awards in New York and showcased at the world famous Annual Pebble Beach Food & Wine Festival. In May 2011, Yigit was a presenter at the 2011 GLAAD Media Awards in San Francisco. Yigit was Celebrity Grand Marshal at the 2011 San Francisco Pride Celebration and Parade joining Academy Award-winning actress Olympia Dukakis and Chaz Bono.

Yigit continues to be an advocate for human rights and for those who are underserved, using his voice to raise money for non-profit organizations around the nation, including Human Rights Campaign, The Trevor Project, Meals On Wheels, the Matthew Shepard Foundation, Project Open Hand and ASPCA. He has received recognition and awards from the city of San Francisco, as well as the California Senate, for his efforts.

Yigit’s first cookbook with Chronicle Books – titled “Sweet Alchemy” – is available in-stores and [online](http://www.amazon.com/Sweet-Alchemy-Dessert-Yigit-Pura/dp/1452108889) now. His goal with the book is to share his expertise of pastry-making in an exciting and accessible way.