

JOANNA ARTIEDA

The Artist

Joanna Artieda (Pamplona, 1989) defines herself as a “postrera”, a dessert chef in Spanish. Her work shows the precision and attention to form of a practiced artist, creating not just delightful desserts, but edible works of art. Apart from being an artist, she is a curator.

Artieda’s vigorous agenda takes her to many destinations not only to design custom desserts while consulting for Michelin-starred restaurants around the world, but also to teach Master Classes. She has even found time to write a book. *Sweet 12* is an ever-evolving text that is based on cataloging seasonal products sourced for desserts with a prologue written by Jordi Roca of El Celler de Can Roca (Girona, Spain), which tops the list of the World’s 50 Best Restaurants. All this is done while being a single parent.



Artieda has traveled and worked in Spain, the United Kingdom, Italy, Switzerland, Turkey, Romania, Mexico, the United Arab Emirates, Thailand, Vietnam, and other countries. She is based in Pamplona, an ancient city known today for the Running of the Bulls, which attracts visitors from around the globe. The bulletin boards in her office evidence her demanding agenda, and also showcase a professional with a disciplined work ethic. Her immense creativity is reflected in the presence of a pinecone on her desk: an inspiration for a current project, exemplifying her highly tactile nature while researching new concepts.



MILHOJAS DE PIÑA A LA BRASA

Inspired by the concept of mille-feuille, (which normally contains thin layers of puff pastry and fillings like whipped cream or fruit), this interpretation uses fresh fruit and grilled pineapples indigenous to Mexico as caramelized puff pastry and a homemade lime yogurt with pink pepper toffee. The classic cream of the interior is replaced with a creamy, thinly grilled pineapple sorbet (holm oak wood) interspersed amongst the layers of the pineapple.



LIMONCELLO PIE

Inspired by a traditional lemon tart, reinterpreted using lemons and limoncello from Italy and rendered into a whimsical sculptural dessert with no gluten, lactose, egg or white sugar. It features a crunchy lemon-skinned cone, creamy limoncello, lemon basil gel, lemon peel sorbet, lime oil, honey cloud and a crispy meringue toast.

As a constant seeker of seasonal products embedded in local cultures, she affirms: “traveling inspires me.” Her desserts are carefully curated for restaurants by studying and incorporating the seasonal, autochthonous products in addition to the work of local artisans such as tableware that coordinates with each dessert. Several days before meeting with her clients, she arrives at each destination to do research on all these aspects. Artieda is present during the whole process, right down to the plates on which her creations are served, as she wants each dessert to reflect the distinctive identity of its local environment. She takes great pleasure in her creative process and is involved every step of the way. Her eyes glisten when she describes her work, and her passion and talent are palpable. First, she sketches out her ideas to conjure up an aesthetic and inspirations for the dessert and how it will be plated. She does several trial runs to achieve the desired taste, and when satisfied, Artieda even participates in the process of photographing the dish, adding her input on its style and deciding whether flatware will be used to show interaction with her creation. Her three-part formula focuses on combining high quality products, local traditions, and expert technique. She describes the process as akin to designing a window display for a fine jewelry boutique: “everything has to be harmonious and shine in order to catch the eye of passersby.”



SOFT CACAO

A lot of the dessert chef's time is spent teaching and sharing her craft with others. At each restaurant for which she consults, she ensures the owner is present along with the team so that the knowledge of replicating the dessert is not lost when personnel move on. When imparting Master Classes to aspiring chefs, she insists they start by studying their own culinary environments, advising them with her contagious enthusiasm: "you have to understand how to eat!" She recommends that her students invest not in buying new things, but in culinary experiences, encouraging them to explore farmer's markets, street food, and restaurant cuisines to identify flavors and culinary processes to train their senses.

Artieda has always been surrounded by sweets, and the hard work involved in producing them. Her mother's pastry shop in Pamplona was her first laboratory. At age 14, when she could not yet work at the front of the house, Joanna made a dessert that her mother decided to sell. It was popular amongst the clientele, but what struck Joanna was the confidence her mother had in her at that moment—a confidence she carries with her to this day. Her grandmother served as a great inspiration as well. She would shoo her granddaughter out of the kitchen, refusing to reveal her secrets, but Joanna was very observant and insistent on learning from a woman who prepared meals with fresh, local foods for seven children and many grandchildren, spending a great deal of time each day in the kitchen. Artieda's attention to detail started with the desire and curiosity to learn, and these qualities were recognized when she was proclaimed the Best Chef in Spain in 2016, the first woman to receive this honor. She put in a lot of effort to reach this pinnacle, working and studying with some of the most renowned chefs in the world: Pedro Subijana, Martín Berasategui, Michele Bras, and Albert Adrià (who recently opened Mercado Little Spain in New York City with his brother Ferrán Adrià and José Andrés).

Along the way, she realized that women are held to a different standard, noting that "women are questioned more." Despite this, she is optimistic about women's future in gastronomy, and she wants her daughter to see how excited and fulfilled Artieda is with her profession.



CARROT CAKE

Utilizes the original elements of a carrot cake, restructuring each ingredient with a particular technique, resulting in a dessert that is both delightful and light, with stand-out flavors of ginger, spices, and carrots.



CIDER TATIN

This will surely be the case, because Artieda is brimming with enthusiasm for her work. "Cooking is chemistry, and more important than reading recipes, it's important to have knowledge of how different products react with one another." She uses olive oil from Spain in a great deal of her desserts because it withstands well at different temperatures and depending on the variety of olives from which it is derived, the oil can contribute to the intensity of flavor in a dessert. The use of olive oil points to her interest in developing more natural and creative desserts.

Artieda's approach begs us to think about the origin of the word "dessert," derived from the mid 16th century French word *desservir*, meaning to 'clear the table.' If we think of the prefix 'des,' (which expresses removal) in conceiving of Artieda's productions, she works to remove certain elements that are overused in the final course at many restaurants: chocolate and lactose. Instead, she serves up a *Cider Tatin*, reinterpreting a classic French recipe with ingredients from the Basque Country: apples, hard cider, and vinegar, using the apple itself as the receptacle.

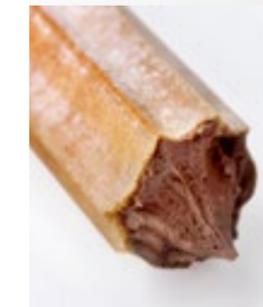


When she does work with chocolate, it takes a backstage role, letting other elements radiate instead. This is the case with her *Air Churro*, where a normally filling and heavy churro is replaced with air, becoming a crunchy, pillow-like delight with less sugar and fat, that in her words is "totally fun." Artieda's *Soft Cacao* gives more visibility to cacao, again using the natural ingredient as a repository. This time, the cacao pod and a sorbet fashioned from its fermented form are accompanied by soft cacao ice cream, with an optional topping of crunchy cacao nibs.

Artieda also reinterprets traditional Basque desserts in creations like *Turrón de Pantxineta*, composed of fine layers of caramelized pastry, burnt cream ganache, and Marcona almond praline. *Turrón* is widely consumed in Spain at Christmastime, and in recent years, celebrated chefs like Albert Adrià and Jordi Roca have released limited edition turrónes in surprising flavors like gin and tonic. Artieda's take on turrón is, unsurprisingly, even more unique. Her *Turrón Lemon Pie* tastes like a lemon tart but uses the Japanese citrus fruit yuzu in addition to lemon and lime, and inside, the turrón is not crunchy, but creamy. Each year she releases fresh batches of turrón for her exclusive line called "XŌ CŌ LA by JoannArtieda," ordered two months before Christmas by eager clients. Only 50 of each type are produced, with different flavors every year. Made fresh the day before, these turrónes have no additives, and are meant to be consumed only at that time of year. They do not travel on purpose, emphasizing their local and ephemeral flavors.



TURRÓN DE PANTXINETA



AIR CHURRO

SWEET FASHION

Artieda has collaborated on multiple occasions with Fashion Week in Spain, working with designers like Daniel Rabaneda (Seville) and María Barros (La Coruña) to tailor vibrant desserts inspired by their haute couture creations by combining fresh products, bright colors, and textures that reference the designer's textiles.



TURRÓN LEMON PIE

Marcela T. Garcés is the co-owner of La Centralita, a culinary studio located in New York's Capital City focused on gastronomic richness from all over Spain.