

# SWEETMOOD

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FOR INTERNATIONAL BUYERS  
IN GELATO, PASTRY AND  
TRENDY FOOD-AND-DRINK

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**Ilaria Castellaneta**  
*the new queen  
of desserts*



The winner of the 2023 Pastry Queen World Championship held in Rimini discusses memories of her preparation, emotions during the competition and her plans for the future, all in light of her great determination.

***How would you define in a few words the pastry chef Ilaria Castellaneta?***

Creative, passionate and perfectionist. I aim for excellence, and these are fundamental characteristics in the pastry arts which I approached while studying at university. It was love at first sight. It won me over and caused me to leave the Liberal Arts School to go on to study ingredients and dessert recipes.

Image by Studio23 Martina Acanfora Photographer

# Ilaria Castellaneta

the new queen  
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***What motivated you to participate in the Pastry Queen World Championship?***

When I had the opportunity to participate in the selection rounds of the Pastry Queen World Championship, I immediately accepted with enthusiasm. It was an opportunity to challenge myself and my potential, measure my limits and compare myself with other professionals in the industry. When I was chosen to compete in the championship, my enthusiasm and determination skyrocketed, and I was honoured to represent my country. The wait to compete was very long due to the forced pause caused by the pandemic, but that didn't stop my determination. I was able to push through moments of frustration by thinking about the future. I did not give up and I made it to the finals.



***What did the long preparation and the competition leave you as a legacy?***

Preparing for a competition of that level involves great commitment and the right attitude. It's a set of ideas, sleepless nights and a lot of desire to make it happen. My preparation left me with a phrase "Only those who want it win", a phrase that I repeated to myself many times and that will remain with me for my entire career, because it is true. If you have the constancy to study and work hard... in the end, you will win. I was coached by Eugenio Morrone, who, in addition to being very prepared, is a beautiful human being. When I was feeling down, he was always there to motivate me, to tell me: "don't worry". I really found it to be fundamental and helpful.

***What was the most difficult moment of the Championship and the best moment?***

During the competition, there were many difficult and stressful moments that strained my concentration. The most difficult of all of them, where I still having cold sweats just thinking about it, is when the lamp for sugar broke right when I was assembling the statue. And then, it was very difficult to lift the statue to position it on the table. My hands were shaking. The best moment, which may seem obvious, was the award ceremony: "The winner is Italy!". I couldn't believe it; it was an inexpressible emotion. Taking the Italian flag onto the podium was a source of great pride for me. Listening to Mameli's Hymn from the podium gave me goosebumps. After having lifted the trophy together with my coach Eugenio Morrone, I ran to hug my family, who was there to cheer me on and who really supported me during the time I was preparing for the competition.

***What are your plans for the future?***

After the challenge of the World Pastry Queen, since I work in a restaurant, my dream would be to achieve a Michelin star. It will be a very hard and strenuous journey, but I'm ready to work hard and to study thoroughly to make it possible. Pastry arts in the foodservice world can achieve an even greater importance, and I am committed to this goal.

***Regarding your previous experience as a pastry chef in high-level restaurants, which collaboration has been the most formative?***

Over the years I have known many working situations, all of which have been formative each in their own way, but the one that taught me the most was my experience at the 1\* Michelin restaurant in Lugano (Swiss), Artè al Lago.

Working alongside Chef Diego Bertona and Chef Frank Oerthle was an honour as well as a pleasure. Two great professionals and exceptional human beings.







***What features distinguish pastry arts in foodservice?***

Pastry arts occupy significant space when there is a Michelin star, being that the last course on the menu is the course that you remember most. It would be a shame to have a beautiful dining experience, then to make it to the end with a dessert that is not up to par. Pastry arts in foodservice must present harmony between flavours and balance the ingredients well. All elements must be well proportioned in the dish and their freshness and seasonality should be highlighted. Furthermore, it should aim for its final effect to be a positive turn of events. These characteristics differentiate pastry arts in foodservice from the classic pastry arts. The task of a pastry chef is to not disappoint customer expectations. To succeed in this requires a lot of study, preparation and dedication to work.

***At an international level, how are Italian cuisine and pastry arts perceived today and what future do you see for them?***

Everywhere in the world if we talk about Italy, we think of its cuisines and its pastries. The reputation is of excellence, authenticity and sophistication. However, when something becomes so popular, there is a risk of imitations. We must aim to defend Made in Italy products, our local products of excellence, of which Italy is rich. I see the future based on innovation and creativity, but with more consideration for sustainability, health and environmental impact. These issues are becoming increasingly important in the contemporary food world, and I believe that Italian cuisine and pastries will follow this trend, highlighting fresh, seasonal and sustainable ingredients.

***Women are still a minority at the top of the culinary and pastry worlds. What qualities does a woman have to rely on to succeed in these industries?***

Women were a minority, it's true, but the situation is changing. Women are finally establishing themselves in the foodservice industry. The qualities to focus on are the same as their male colleagues: passion, dedication, discipline, commitment. The chef's hat is one size fits all. It looks good on all heads, without distinction of gender, and the world is noticing that. Reconciling work and family is possible, even for women.





### ***What is your favourite dessert recipe?***

The cold bases such as mousses, semifreddoes and creams are my favourite preparations for many reasons. First, they offer a wide range of textures that make them interesting and pleasant to taste. Then, they lend themselves to being customized because they are dynamic. I can test new pairings and combine flavours and textures, stimulating my creativity. I don't have a favourite flavour because I am excited more by the texture rather than the taste, which allows me to play with pairings. I am

a person who likes to experiment, I have a lot of fun. If you don't feel like experimenting, if you are not curious, you will not get ahead in many different areas, not just in pastry arts.

### ***What space does artisanal gelato have in your creations?***

Artisanal gelato, including savoury versions, has ample space in what is my idea of pastry arts. Playing with temperatures and textures, while being attentive to the seasonality of the ingredients, make the sensorial experience of tasting it even more intense and pleasant. Based on the preparations, I pair the type of gelato, which has become an important component in desserts thanks to the contrast between hot and cold. This contrast is interesting for the palate and requires careful studying of

how to balance the ingredients.

### ***Would you like to deepen your study of artisanal gelato? Can this "cold dessert" conquer more space in foodservice pastry arts?***

In the months leading up to the Pastry Queen Championship, I was lucky enough to get closer to the world of artisanal gelato with my coach Eugenio Morrone, World Champion of Gelato 2020. I discovered new techniques, balancing and theories on coldness, that encouraged me to study this fascinating world in even more detail. "Cold desserts", that is, granita, sorbets and gelato, occupy a large space in the foodservice world even during the winter months. Italian-style, artisanal and high-quality gelato is fundamental, both when served alone or when used to complete a dessert.





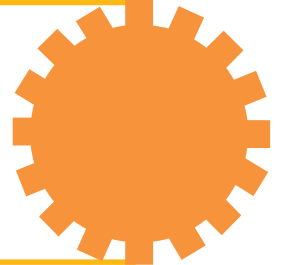


By Ilaria Castellana

## SWEET PROPORTIONS



Aesthetics and taste come together in an admirable balance, just like the circle and square in which Leonardo's Vitruvian man is inscribed. With this cake, Ilaria Castellaneta triumphed at the 2023 Pastry Queen World Championship.



The Vitruvian man is one of Leonardo's most famous drawings and represents the study of human proportions. The ideal proportions of the human body are inscribed in the two perfect figures: the circle, which symbolizes Heaven, divine perfection, and the square, which symbolizes the Earth. This dessert, round on the outside and squared on the inside, represents a proportion made dessert and combines aesthetics with taste.

#### COMPOSITION

- Mascarpone Mousse, Vanilla
- Italian Meringue
- Gianduja Cremeux
- Crème Anglaise
- Citrus Cremeux
- Raspberry Gel
- Crunchy
- Milk Chocolate Biscuit

#### MASCARPONE MOUSSE, VANILLA

##### INGREDIENTS

- |                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| • mascarpone           | 500 g |
| • cream                | 500 g |
| • Italian meringue     | 320 g |
| • powdered jelly       | 12 g  |
| • cold water for jelly | 60 g  |
| • vanilla pod          | 1     |

##### INSTRUCTIONS

Whip the cream and the pulp of a vanilla pod together with mascarpone. Rehydrate and dissolve the gelatin. Dilute the gelatin with a little of the whipped mixture and add it to the mass again. Add the meringue to the mascarpone mixture, dress in the mould.

#### ITALIAN MERINGUE

##### INGREDIENTS

- |             |       |
|-------------|-------|
| • egg white | 110 g |
| • dextrose  | 35 g  |
| • sugar     | 185 g |
| • water     | 50 g  |

##### INSTRUCTIONS

Bring the water and sugar to 121°C and pour slowly over the egg whites which are being whipped with the dextrose in the planetary mixer. Whip until cool. Hydrate the gelatin, whip the mascarpone with the cream and vanilla, add the melted gelatin diluted with a little of meringue, add the meringue mixing with a spatula.

#### GIANDUJA CREMEUX

##### INGREDIENTS

- |                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| • crème anglaise | 250 g |
| • gianduja       | 225 g |

##### INSTRUCTIONS

Pour the crème anglaise over the chopped chocolate and emulsify.





## MASCARPONE AND VANILLA MOUSSE



CHOCOLATE DECORATION

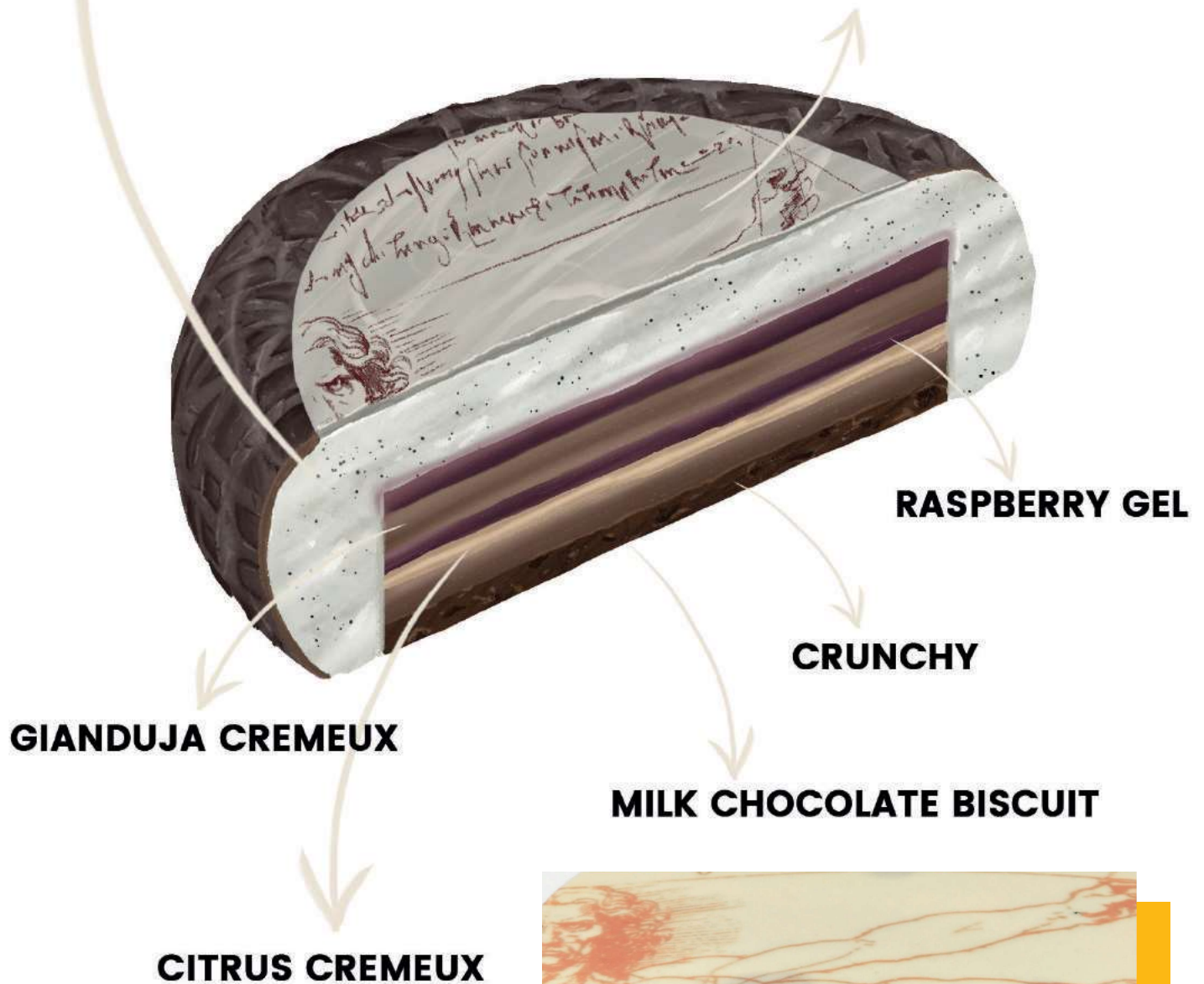


Image by Peppe Snake

## CRÈME ANGLAISE

### INGREDIENTS

• fresh cream 35%	125 g
• whole milk	125 g
• egg yolks	50 g
• sugar	25 g
• granular gelatin	2,5 g
• hydration water	12,5 g

### INSTRUCTIONS

Bring milk and cream to the boil. Mix the egg yolks without whipping them, pour the hot liquid onto the egg yolks and mix. Bring to 82°C, stirring constantly with the help of a maryse, making a figure of 8 and avoiding incorporating air. Remove from heat and add the hydrated gelatin melted in the microwave, pass the cream through a sieve.

## CITRUS CREMEUX

### INGREDIENTS

• lemon juice	115 g
• yuzu	40 g
• sugar	15 g
• eggs	180 g
• gelatin mass	18 g
• white chocolate	130 g
• butter	35 g

### INSTRUCTIONS

Bring the eggs to the heat with the lemon juice and the sugar at 85°C. Add the gelatin mass and pour over the white chocolate and the butter, below 30°C add the yuzu, put in the mould and cool.

## RASPBERRY GEL

### INGREDIENTS

• raspberry purée	115 g
• lemon purée	5 g
• sugar	12 g
• dextrose	12 g
• gel mass	18 g

### INSTRUCTIONS

Heat the fruit purée with the sugars up to 40°C and add the gelatine mass previously melted.



## CRUNCHY

### INGREDIENTS

• Paillettes	540 g
• Muscovado sugar	75 g
• powdered glucose syrup	55 g
• sweet almond paste	40 g
• melted Dulcey chocolate	200 g
• peanut oil	160 g

### INSTRUCTIONS

Melt the couverture at 45°C and add the oil and almond paste. Matching sugars and mixing well. Finally add the shortbread grain. Spread a very thin layer, place the biscuit on it and chill everything in positive.

## MILK CHOCOLATE BISCUIT

### INGREDIENTS

• butter	375 g
• sugar	375 g
• egg mixture	525 g
• milk chocolate	300 g
• flour	210 g
• almond powder	270 g

### INSTRUCTIONS

Whip the butter cream with the sugar, add the egg mixture and melted chocolate and whip again. Add the mixed powders and roll out on a baking sheet. Bake at 160°C for 13 minutes.