

# San Francisco Chronicle

## FOOD

### THE BAY AREA'S VISIONARY CHEFS

**California is a culinary gold mine.**

The state grows the food that feeds the world, and the Bay Area nurtures the chefs who prepare it. Many national dining trends have their roots here, and it's where dedicated food lovers and chefs from around the country come to play and get inspired. Great cooks are everywhere — at a neighborhood bar, in a modest storefront restaurant and at haute cuisine white-tablecloth venues. But the Bay Area's visionary chefs are more than great cooks; they are people who have made Northern California an epicurean epicenter. Today and in the next two Food sections, I'll profile 20 of these innovators who have helped change the way we eat. — *Michael Bauer*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CRAIG LEE/ THE CHRONICLE



Many of today's desserts are more appealing to the eye than to the taste buds; flavor has been sacrificed for over-the-top presentations and outlandish savory add-ons. Emily Luchetti's creations are the antithesis of that style. Since she took over the pastry department at Stars in 1987, Luchetti has been crafting some of the best desserts in the Bay Area, concentrating on taste rather than bells and whistles. In 1994, she opened StarBake adjacent to the restaurant; it was one of the first restaurant-bakery offshoots in the United States. For the past decade, she's been the executive pastry chef at Farallon, Nick's Cove and Waterbar; has advocated her flavor-over-presentation philosophy in four cookbooks; and is one of the most recognized pastry chefs in the United States. While pastry chefs are often overlooked for leadership positions in the restaurant industry, Luchetti is currently vice chairman of the James Beard Foundation board of trustees and chairman of its awards committee.

Emily  
Luchetti

*Brings flavor back  
into desserts*

GLADOW NEAD  
COMMUNICATIONS

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE  
AUGUST 13, 2008