

Local vendors who think outside the pie box

BY ANGELA HAUPT

No offense to pumpkin or pecan pie — they're classics for a reason. But if you're looking for something more inventive, or even daring, this holiday season, you're in luck. At these eight spots, finding an option that's creative and tasty is easy as, well, pie.

Bayou Bakery

Forget "sweet as pie" — Bayou Bakery's bacon, cayenne and pecan pie (\$25) has serious kick. Chef David Guas blends the unexpected flavors with chocolate for a dessert that's crunchy, salty, smoky and sweet — with heat. Also on the holiday-pie menu: roasted sweet potato, lemon chess, bourbon chocolate pecan and Virginia peanut butter pie, among other options. Order by Nov. 23 for pickup on Nov. 25.

1515 N. Courthouse Rd., Arlington. bayoubakeryva.com.

Centrolina

For alternate, pie-like dessert programming on Thanksgiving, try a pear frangipane tart (\$40) from Centrolina. It's made with pasta frolla, almond frangipane and poached pears. Also on the Thanksgiving-to-go menu: classic apple pie made with a flaky butter crust, coconut cream pie with a generous serving of whipped cream and ciambellone citrus tea cake. Pair your pastry with a \$9 pint of housemade vanilla gelato.

Thanksgiving preorders need to be in by Nov. 23, for pickup on Nov. 25.

974 Palmer Alley NW. centrolina-dc.com.

Bakeshop

Switch things up for the holidays and get your daily recommended dosage of Nutella via a pie rather than straight out of the jar. Bakeshop's scrumptious Peanut Butter Nutella pie (\$30) — a crowd-favorite — is served cold on a chocolate cookie crust and is available year-round. There's a layer of peanut butter, Nutella and whipped cream.

PSL die-hards might prefer the bakery's new pumpkin spice latte pie (\$30), which is piled high with thick, sweet icing.

1025 N. Fillmore St., Arlington; 100 E. Fairfax St., Falls Church. bakeshopva.com.

Baked & Wired

For 20 years, the Georgetown staple — perhaps best known for its oversize, indulgent cupcakes — has offered handcrafted pies for pick up the day before Thanksgiving. This year's selections include such classics as ap-



Bayou Bakery in Arlington gives its pecan pie a kick with bacon and cayenne.

BAYOU BAKERY



D.A. PETERSON

The Pie Shop's Samoa Cookie Pie is a riff on the beloved Girl Scouts cookie.

ple crumb and pumpkin, and a tempting twist on an old Southern favorite: pecan-Kahlua-chocolate chip. The \$55 pie is splashed with Kahlua and topped with bittersweet chocolate.

Operations director Tessa Velazquez recommends preordering your holiday pies as early as possible; only a limited quantity will be available. If you return the glass dish it's served in, you'll get \$10 back.

1052 Thomas Jefferson St. NW.



BONHEUR

If your pie tastes expand beyond pumpkin, Bonheur in Easton has a fig and ricotta dessert.

bakedandwired.com.

Pie Shop

This H Street spot specializes in fresh pie and concerts — but the music came to an abrupt stop when the coronavirus crisis shuttered most live events in March. Fortunately for dessert lovers, the kitchen is still cranking.

The Samoa Cookie Pie (\$36) is a tribute to the beloved Girl Scouts cookie: "We take a chocolate cookie crust and pour in a

creamy cheesecake-type filling, and then add a generous layer of shredded toasted coconut mixed with our homemade caramel sauce," owner Sandra Basanti says. It's drizzled with dark chocolate, and Basanti recommends serving chilled. "It's drool-worthy."

Or dig into the Chuck Brown (\$36), an homage to the Godfather of Go-Go. It's a traditional pecan pie made with nuts sourced from a family farm in

Georgia. "We top it with a decadent dark chocolate ganache and finish it with a homemade caramel drizzle," Basanti says.

1339 H St. NE. pieshopdc.com.

Pie Sisters

Thanksgiving pies are already sold out at this Georgetown shop — a testament to its popularity. Start planning what you'd like post-Turkey Day now: Perhaps a rich, crumbly apple sour cream pie (\$37), or a s'mores pie (\$37) made with layers of chocolate ganache and topped with toasted meringue.

If you're not in the market for a whole pie, Pie Sisters offers plenty of smaller options: Most flavors can be purchased as a "cuppie," which is around \$4 and ideal for one person, or as snacky pie bites, which are typically about \$2. It's also a convenient way to sample various flavors.

3423 M St. NW. piesisters.com.

Dangerously Delicious Pies

Why settle for a good pie when you can have a "dangerously delicious" pie?

This Baltimore shop — founded by Rodney Henry, a rock-turned-baker — has an extensive menu of savory and sweet pies. Henry recommends the Baltimore Bomb (\$28), which is a mix of butter, tangy vinegar, sugar, corn meal and Maryland-famous Berger cookies. "We bust the cookies up into the vinegar chess, and the cookies bake through the pie," he says.

Or try the Mobtown Brown (\$28), a pecan pie made with dark chocolate; homemade caramel is poured on top. "A killer pie," Henry says.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the shop launched its Pie Valet: free delivery service for eight Maryland counties, the District and Northern Virginia. Ordering opens at 8 a.m. every Sunday morning for delivery the following week.

810 W. 36th St., Baltimore. dangerouslypies.com.

Bonheur

At this artisanal ice cream parlor on Maryland's Eastern Shore — about a 90-minute drive from the District — pastry chef Glenn May prepares a rotating selection of pies daily. Try something new this year with a fig and ricotta pie (\$48), a dreamy, earth treat. Naturally, it's best a la mode: Add a pint (\$6.50) or quart (\$13) of vanilla ice cream to pair with the warm pastry.

5B Goldsborough St. Easton. bonheureaston.com.

goingoutguide@washpost.com