



HOME IS WHERE
THE TART IS
The offerings at LA
bakery Pitchoun

MERVEILLES

KOUIGN-AMANN

PAN
BAGNAT

TARTE
TROPEZIENNE

LOS ANGELES

Flour de France

Step aside, croissants! Lesser-known French pastries are ready for their close-up.

BY KIMBERLEY LOVATO | PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL COLLINS

Frédéric and Fabienne Souliès have mastered crusty baguettes and flaky croissants at their Downtown LA boulangerie, Pitchoun, opened in April. But there's much more coming out of their ovens. Here, Fabienne offers a coast-to-coast tasting tour of unsung French favorites—many brand-new to American palates. →

KOIGN-AMANN “It’s a bomb of calories! Kouign-Amann [pronounced *Queen-ab-mahn*] means ‘butter cake’ in Breton, the Celtic language of the Brittany region. Made with croissant dough enriched with butter and sugar, with a dash of salt sprinkled on before baking, the cake comes out with a thick, savory-sweet, caramelized crust. It’s not easy to make, but worth the effort.”

TARTE TROPÉZIENNE “From the chic Riviera village of St.-Tropez comes its simple and tasty namesake dessert: a halved brioche cake topped with sugar crystals and filled with a pastry cream. Alexandre Micka, a Polish pastry chef, sold the *gateaux* from his shop on Place de la Mairie in the ’50s, and it’s believed actress Brigitte Bardot suggested the name: The Tart of St.-Tropez.”

PAN-BAGNAT “This petite sandwich is popular street food in Nice, made with tuna, anchovies, tomatoes, radishes, hard-boiled egg, green onion—no lettuce, no mayonnaise—on a specific round bread. The name in Niçard means ‘bathed bread,’ and it’s often misspelled using the French *pain* rather than *pan*.”

MERVEILLES “Called *merveilles* (wonders) in the southwest of France and *bugnes* in the southeast, this fried dough is thin and crunchy. It was once eaten during carnival time (February), though now it’s found throughout winter. We make them according to my mum’s recipe, with orange blossom and lemon, sprinkled with powdered sugar. So yummy!”



BREAD BRAINS
Frédéric and Fabienne
Souliès at Pitchoun

LONDON

SUBCONTINENTAL SIPS

Mixologists are turning to the Indian spice market for inspiration

Indian cuisine relies on a medley of spices that, like an orchestra, must work together to bring each dish to life; no one flavor can play too loudly, or the whole balance is thrown off. Nowadays, mixologists are beginning to explore these bold, aromatic flavors—cardamom and clove, coriander and cumin—in cocktails that are every bit as complex as the dishes that inspire them.

At London’s Anise, a bar attached to the Indian spot Cinnamon Kitchen, Gianni Albanese relishes the challenge of creating cocktails with aromatic spices. **“Sometimes it can take a few months to fine-tune a recipe that includes cumin, fennel and cloves,” he says. “But if used correctly and in minimal doses, the results can be astonishing.”**

In his white rum-based Devonshire Express, the intensity of cardamom balances perfectly with the richness of espresso. And the Allspice Strawberry Bellini gets its robust, warming notes of cinnamon, clove, star anise, nutmeg and cardamom from Bitter Truth Pimento Dram, a Jamaican-inspired allspice liqueur.

At Bangkok’s Charcoal Tandoor Grill & Mixology, Joseph Boroski created the 1947: Independence cocktail, named for the year India became free from British rule. He credits the drink’s creation to his time spent exploring India’s spice markets. “They’re a heaven for someone like me, who thrives on the bright colors, titillating smells and constant shouting of vendors,” he says. The cocktail pairs mace-and-clover-infused vodka with pomegranate and housemade hibiscus syrup.

To make the Golden Elixir, at Spice Affair in Beverly Hills, Jeremiah Caleb mixes saffron-infused vodka with housemade agave syrup spiced with ginger, cinnamon, star anise and clove. “The beauty of Indian spices is that just a small pinch is sufficient in flavoring the drink,” he says.

—JEANINE BARONE



DEVONSHIRE EXPRESS *Yields one drink*

- 1 cardamom pod
- 3 tablespoons El Dorado Superior white rum
- 1 shot strong espresso
- 2 teaspoons Kahlúa
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla sugar
- ice cubes
- orange zest

Chill a martini glass. Crush cardamom and add to a shaker with ice. Muddle rum, Kahlúa, espresso and sugar with the back of a wooden spoon. Seal and shake vigorously for 30 seconds. Strain into the chilled glass. Garnish with a small piece of orange zest.