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Jack Revelle, dessert maker at Ted's Bulletin, has been a pastry chef and contractor for the kitchens of the White House.

Baking that takes the cake

By Alexandra Greeley
Special to The Washington Examiner

In Jack Revelle's case, you can say, "Some people have all the luck." At least, some pastry chefs do.

The pastry chef extraordinaire at Capitol Hill's overtly all-American eatery, Ted's Bulletin, Revelle has not only been a recipe tester and consultant for D.C.'s megachef, Michel Richard of Citronelle, but also has been a pastry chef/contractor for the kitchens of the White House. Gulp.

Daunting and high-end as that all is, Revelle says his beginnings were more common. A native of Annapolis, Revelle graduated from Gettysburg College with a degree in philosophy. Despite taking a job at the Baltimore International College and talking to chefs there, he never dreamed his life would shift into overdrive.

After spotting an opening at a European bakery in Severna Park, Md., to make croissants, he applied for and got the job. There he mixed doughs, made fillings and baked off all the breakfast pastries. "My dad thought I was insane," he says. "That was 10 years ago, and here I am now."

His career path eventually led him to the Borgata Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City and then to the kitchens of the Willard Hotel. Then fate intervened.

"A person I worked for in Atlantic City — Thaddeus duBois — went to work at the White House," he said.

Revelle found himself on call to

What's your comfort food?

Fried chicken and mashed potatoes. The foods of my youth, such as tuna-noodle casserole. Very simple foods from my youth. Crab cakes: I'm a Maryland guy.

What's in your fridge?

Tofu and veggies; my girlfriend is a vegetarian. Also andouille sausages, temari soy sauce, milk, butter, eggs. I never know when I need to bake a cake for a friend.

What's your cooking philosophy?

Make it seasonal, regional and simple. Try not to think too

hard. Just sense what makes sense to me. Start with good ingredients, and it all works out.

What do you do in your leisure time?

Read, go to movies and museums, chat with my girlfriend.

Where do you get the ideas for your recipes?

From where I am geographically and working, my menu at Ted's passes on the whole idea of this restaurant. It is nostalgia for classic comfort food. Then I work with what foods are available.

IF YOU GO Ted's Bulletin

» **Where:** 505 Eighth St. SE
» **Info:** 202-544-8337
» **Hours:** 7 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily

bake for the first family and their family and guests. "It is a dream job of mine," he says. "That was my goal, and I am very lucky. I not only assist in making incredible desserts, but I get to help serve the first family. I was even able to work at the recent China State Dinner."

Reminiscing about that six-year stint, Revelle recalls that his first big party was working the dinner held for Prince Charles. "That was

my second day there," he says. "We served petit fours with frosted grapes, blown sugar and Char treuse ice cream. It's knowing that I was a small part of history. ... It is a magical place to work."

Now at Ted's, Revelle continues making over-the-top pastries, incorporating seasonal fruits and dreaming up modern twists on such classic American faves — think Pop Tarts, Twinkies and SnoBalls. "Our take on what is known as the Twinkie is a real yellow sponge cake with an Italian meringue filling and topping," he says.

Revelle also counts his parents as fans of his concoctions.

"My dad orders a coconut-covered, cream-filled cake," he said. "And my mom loves our homemade toaster pastries."

The Vine Guy » Scott Greenberg Beers for St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick — born Maewyn Succat — is known as the patron saint of Ireland. Even though he was born in Britain, he is credited with spreading the Christian religion throughout the Emerald Isle. That, and driving the snakes out of Ireland. Both, I suppose, are ample reasons to hoist a pint of beer and offer a toast to his name. After all, on St. Patrick's Day, everyone is Irish.

Of course, the No. 1 choice of beer to enjoy on Saint Patrick's Day is the national beverage of Ireland, Guinness stout. As legend has it, Arthur Price, the archbishop of Cashel in the Church of Ireland, bequeathed his godson, Arthur Guinness, 100 pounds and the secret family recipe for stout ale. In 1759, Arthur used the money to start the Guinness brewery in Dublin.

They still pour Guinness in the small pub located in the basement of the archbishop's former home, and claim that there is no greater Guinness poured than at its birthplace. However, Dublin native Cathal Armstrong, chef/owner of Restaurant Eve and several other eating establishments located in Alexandria, declares that Dublin is the finest place on Earth to get a pint of "Uncle Arthur" — as Dubliners affectionately refer to their Guinness. Armstrong goes on to claim that the farther you get from Dublin, the more difference there is in the way the Guinness tastes.

Since most of us can't celebrate St. Patrick's Day in Dublin, here are a few alternatives to consider that are a little closer to home.

Many pubs will be pouring a plethora of Guinness pints this St. Patrick's Day. Guinness derives its toasted flavor of dark chocolate and coffee from the way in which the malted barley is roasted as well as from the amount of hops used. Be sure to let it set a minute or two until all the bubbles have risen to form a head about a half-inch thick. If you can't make it to a pub, pick up a six-pack of Guinness at the supermarket.

Slightly lighter in style and sweeter in flavor than Guinness, Murphy's Irish Stout is deceptively smooth. The body is creamy and elegant and delivers distinctive flavors of malt, dark chocolate and coffee with every sip.

One of my favorite Irish beers is Harp Lager, a smoother-styled beer than the darker stouts. It has a beautiful rich gold color, and the super clean, slightly bitter finish makes this beer easy to drink — which is fun to do on St. Patty's Day, particularly with corned beef and cabbage.

If you're in the mood for an ale (as opposed to a lager or a stout), try

an Irish favorite, Smithwick's Irish Ale. It pours a beautiful amber color and builds up a big creamy head. The palate is a tad soft up front but develops a caramely sweetness on the back of the tongue. Hints of toffee and coffee buoy the smooth, dry finish. Perfect with bangers and mash.

If you want to celebrate the American side of Irish-American, then drink a domestic beer with an Irish lilt. The Samuel Adams Irish Red is a remarkably balanced beer. Pale and caramel malts give this Irish Red ale its deep red color and distinctive caramel flavor. The sweetness of the malt is pleasantly balanced by nice acidity and offers up interesting notes of caramel, cocoa and toffee. It finishes smooth and dry with a malty finish.



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