

## **Patricia J. Nash**

### **Executive Pastry Chef, Iridescence at MotorCity Casino Hotel**

Pastry Chef Patricia J. Nash joined the staff of Iridescence in 2007, shortly after she received the American Culinary Federation's Pastry Chef of the Year award. She leads a staff of 25 and oversees the entire pastry program at MotorCity Casino Hotel, including everything from fine dining to room service, banquet halls to bistros and coffee shops.

Nash said she's always had a love of cooking. "I used to watch Julia Child a lot," she admitted, "and I'd play around in the kitchen." As a high school student at Villa Maria Academy, though, she wasn't encouraged to pursue the culinary arts. "You didn't tell the nuns you wanted to be a chef," Nash explained. Instead, she attended the University of Delaware, with intentions of teaching math. She left a year and a half later and never looked back.

Nash earned her associate's degree in culinary at the Academy of Culinary Arts in New Jersey, where she maintained a 4.0 grade point average. She continued her studies at the Culinary Institute of America in New York and later mastered advanced techniques related to color, sugar, shape and design at the Notter School of Confectionary Art in Florida.

She didn't initially intend to pursue pastry as a specialty. When her student team needed a pastry chef to participate in a competition, she agreed to make desserts. That's when Tom Vaccaro noted her exceptional talent and offered her a job as a pastry cook at Trump Plaza Casino and Hotel in Atlantic City. As a member of the American Culinary Federation's National Team USA, she has competed across the globe in culinary showcases.

Nash came to Detroit after serving as executive pastry chef at Westchester Country Club in New York. She was excited to return to a familiar casino-hotel environment. "I was raised in a casino," Nash said. "That's where I was trained."

It's the variety of clientele and work that drew her back. She enjoys the opportunity to cater to high volume, VIP, fine dining and other venues all at the same time. When crafting a dessert menu for Iridescence, Nash focuses on simplicity and flavors that reflect the season.

She knew the moment she set foot inside of MotorCity Casino Hotel she belonged there. "I was kind of in awe," she said. "You just get a feeling about it."

When she dines out around her hometown of Detroit, Nash always checks the dessert menu first. She may even dare try everything on it.