



**Yigit Pura**  
Chef/owner,  
Tout Sweet Pâtisserie  
San Francisco, California  
toutsweetsf.com



**Yigit Pura** began his training in the pastry arts at The Meetinghouse in San Francisco, and gained further experience at such other local meccas as Postrio and Gary Danko. He moved to Manhattan in 2003 and worked at Le Cirque 2000 and the Four Seasons Hotel, both under executive pastry chef Luis Robledo-Richards. Under the tutelage of renowned chef/owner Daniel Boulud, Pura served at both Restaurant Daniel as pastry sous chef, and at Daniel Boulud in Las Vegas as executive pastry chef

Pura joined Taste Catering & Event Planning as Executive Pastry Chef in Spring 2007, and with them recently opened the high-end pastry shop, Tout Sweet Pâtisserie in San Francisco's Union Square. Plans are in the works to expand nationally as well as into Asia.

Culinary television aficionados might recognize this passionate pastry chef as the winner and fan favorite of the first season of Bravo's *Top Chef Just Desserts*, though he has also been featured in magazines, such as *Food & Wine*, *Sunset*, *People*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *OUT magazine*, and *GQ Turkey* (Pura is Turkish in origin). Pura is proud to use his celebrity to advocate causes close to his heart, among them the Human Rights Campaign, The Trevor Project, Meals on Wheels, the Matthew Shepard Foundation, Project Open Hand, and the ASPCA. His first cookbook, *Sweet Alchemy*, is due out this September. ✨

## Cheeky raspberry tart with upside-down berries

SERVES 8 TO 10

**1 cup raspberry jam**

**1 10-inch tart shell**

**2 cups Vanilla bean pastry cream (see recipe at right)**

**2 to 3 pints raspberries**

**¼ cup lavender honey agar agar gems, optional\***

**1. Set** baked tart shell in center of serving platter. Fit one pastry bag with #1 plain tip and fill with raspberry jam. Fit a second pastry bag with a #3 plain tip and fill with pastry cream. Pipe pastry cream into tart shell, smoothing out with a small, offset spatula.

**2. Meticulously arrange** raspberries, face down, in a circle at outer edge of tart shell. Nestle next circle of raspberries close to the first and continue until tart is covered with interlocking raspberries.

**3. Pipe** raspberry jam into bottom of 15 firm, ripe raspberries until each is plump. Randomly distribute filled berries, jam side up, atop berry-lined tart. Tuck lavender honey agar agar gems between gaps in berries. Slice tart and serve.

*\* Find the recipe for lavender honey agar agar gems in Chef Pura's upcoming book, Sweet Alchemy.*

## Vanilla bean pastry cream

MAKES 4 CUPS

What's not to love!?! When I was a little kid my aunt would make fresh pastry cream, layer it over strawberries, and give it to me as an after-dinner treat. I loved the way it filled my mouth with silky, rich, vanilla sweetness and brought extra notes to the strawberries. To this day I have an intense love of a great French éclair filled with the luscious custard.

If there were a class called "Pastry 101," a great pastry cream would certainly be among the first things taught, and I am grateful for my early introduction to the recipe. It's as essential to a pastry chef's repertoire as a good tart dough, and acts as a base for a variety of fillings, whether in cream puffs or wedding cakes.

**½ vanilla bean (or 2 tsp. vanilla bean paste)**

**2 cups plus 2 tbsp. milk**

**½ cup plus 1 tbsp. sugar**

**7 egg yolks**

**¼ cup cornstarch**

**2 tbsp. unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch dice and brought to room temperature**

**1. Use** a paring knife to cut bean in half lengthwise. Holding knife perpendicular to bean, scrape blade across each half to remove seeds. Set seeds and bean pod aside. Set out a separate bowl with a fine mesh strainer placed over it.

**2. Combine** milk, vanilla seeds, and vanilla pod in a stainless steel or ceramic-coated saucepan. Whisk mixture together and bring to a boil. Cover saucepan and remove from heat, allowing vanilla to infuse milk for 1 hour.

**3. Meanwhile, combine** sugar, egg yolks, and cornstarch in a separate bowl and whisk together until smooth.

**4. Return** saucepan of milk and vanilla to cooktop and return to a boil. Add hot milk mixture to sugar-egg mixture ¼ cup at a time, until contents of bowl are warm to the touch. (This will temper the eggs so that they will not scramble when cooking.) Add bowl contents to saucepan. Use a whisk to stir mixture over medium heat while it comes to a boil. Boil for 1 to 2 minutes. When the first large bubble appears, whisk for another 30 to 45 seconds until mixture is glossy, light yellow, and is beginning to noticeably thicken.

**5. Remove** saucepan from heat. Strain thickened custard through prepared fine mesh strainer into clean bowl. Allow custard to cool to room temperature. Place plastic wrap directly on surface of custard to prevent a skin from forming, and allow custard to cool to between 95° and 104°. (To speed cooling, place bowl over an ice bath).

**6. Add** room-temperature butter cubes to custard, and using a hand-held blender, emulsify butter into custard. Place plastic wrap directly on top of custard and chill for 2 to 3 hours or overnight. Once cooled, the Vanilla bean pastry cream can be kept, refrigerated, in an airtight container up to 7 days. ✨

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