



Andrea Upchurch

EXECUTIVE PASTRY CHEF,
MAGNOLIAS AND BLOSSOM

Andrea Upchurch approached pastry as a way to be a good artist in a different medium. Trained as a ballet dancer, she was used to connecting to the audience through movement and expression, and baking at home “was just what I was doing,” she explains. “It was just something that you ‘did,’ like my mom and grandma.” However, when she began pursuing the pastry arts professionally, she approached it as another form of creative expression and gained inspiration from and connection to another audience—the people for whom she was baking. “What I was making was often the part of people’s special moments: birthdays, holidays, engagements. I realized there was a connection there. People don’t have dessert every day, so you have to figure out how to push creatively but still get them to connect,” Upchurch says.

taco, the chicken drumstick that is actually ice cream covered in waffle bits, or the meat cake for her son’s birthday. “I like that surprise, that element of fun,” she says, “and I love the idea of contrast, something that looks heavy but tastes light and refreshing.” She’s also known for keeping things light in a kitchen with a staff who respects her skills and jumps in on the creativity, proving that the precise art of pastry need not be pretentious.

