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Warm Amedei '9' chocolate tart with raspberry sauce and vanilla ice cream

As if a visit to [Paul A Young's last Friday](#) wasn't enough, in the afternoon I went along to a demo given by William Curley for [Amedei](#) at [Westminster Kingsway College](#). This was an event to promote Amedei's couverture for chefs, organised by new Amedei catering distributor Wild Harvest, at the College's Hospitality centre in London's Victoria.

For those of you who don't know, William and his wife Suzue are rapidly becoming famous as London's leading chocolatier couple. They also have a [lovely spanking new website](#) (as I only just noticed.) William has developed a close relationship with Amedei and now exclusively uses Amedei chocolate. Very little Amedei is used by chefs in the UK though, and Wild Harvest are hoping to change this, through a series of four demos by William, extolling the virtues of Amedei to an audience of chefs and students.

Also present was Amedei's Export Manager Karin Mousse, who gave us an introduction to Amedei while William's team served us hot chocolate.

Live dessert demo



Tempering chocolate

Once William got started with the main demo we were treated to our first dessert, a classic warm baked chocolate tart made with Amedei '9' – their 75% 'heirloom' blend – and served with raspberry sauce and William's vanilla ice cream. This was familiar territory, as I've tried this small delight not a few times before. William demoed making the filling, then a batch of tarts was freshly baked and served.

Next we were treated to a tempering master-class as William proceeded to temper a batch of Amedei 65% by hand, then create a range of shiny chocolate decorations and wafer thin slivers and curls, making the whole process look way too easy. These were used as decorations and ingredients for the desserts still to come.

Chocolate mille feuille



Making chocolate sticks from freshly tempered Amedei chocolate

Chocolate mille feuille was the next treat to be constructed before our eyes. This is made up of layers of nutty dacquoise (nut enriched meringue), wafer feuillentine biscuits and piped stripes of chocolate and Toscano Nut Brown crème. This last element is a nut enriched ganache, made with a new product from Amedei – essentially a gianduja, though not by name.

Thin rectangles and curls of shiny, freshly tempered chocolate topped the layers off, and the whole ensemble was served to us in half-size samples with I think mandarin and muscavado ice cream. I should say that at this stage I was getting rather full and overwhelmed with chocolate from the whole day – but this simply wouldn't be true. This was all just too good to turn down.

What made this demo session particularly interesting – for a mere amateur like myself – was the level of technical information we were treated to during the afternoon, much more than I'm used to at consumer oriented events, such as when William has worked with us at Seventypercent tastings.

Chocolate fondant, and making sea-salt caramels look all too easy



Chocolate fondant with cherry compote and pistachio ice cream (photo: William Curley)

After a short break, William poured chocolate into moulds ready to make sea salt caramels, knocking and tapping away at the filled moulds to ensure there were no trapped air bubbles, before pouring out the excess chocolate. Next he finished off the desserts for the afternoon by making a chocolate fondant (a sponge really) with ganache centre, which was served to us with cherry compote and pistachio ice cream.

As we ate the last dessert, William poured sea salt caramel mix into the moulds made only moments before, then capped these. After a little cooling these were knocked out and we were soon eating William Curley sea-salt caramels, made all too easily if you ask me – or any of the mere mortals out there who struggle endlessly to get their tempering and moulding to behave.

All in all it was a privilege to see William and his team in action – and cater for forty of us in the audience at the same time.

And hopefully some chefs out there will have been bitten by the Amedei bug and we'll see a few more establishments move up from standard Belgian type couverture to something created with a great deal more care.

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