



The Bread Bakers Guild of America
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Fact Sheet

Bread Bakers Guild Team USA 2008 is part of The Bread Bakers Guild of America's effort to improve the quality of bread baking in America through continuing education and training. Techniques learned by team members will be shared with the nearly 1,300 artisan bread bakers in the United States and throughout the world who are members of The Guild.

TEAM MISSION

- To foster goodwill and promote education in the field of artisan baking throughout the world.
- To demonstrate to the world that American professionals have evolved to a high degree of baking ability and have mastered traditional methods while remaining uniquely "American."
- To instill pride and to provide leadership and education to artisan bakers and bread lovers all over the United States.

TEAM USA 2008

The Bread Bakers Guild of America organizes and sponsors Bread Bakers Guild Team USA. The 2008 selection process began in September 2006 when applicants submitted 10-minute videotapes of themselves mixing, weighing, shaping and baking bread. After viewing the tapes, The Guild judges chose 18 contestants who "clearly demonstrated the applicant's familiarity with baking equipment, processes, and finished product within the category for which the baker applied."

The field of 18 was narrowed to nine finalists at three regional competitions in the fall of 2006, which consisted of a short written exam on basic knowledge of baking fundamentals followed by a practical test based on "skills, cleanliness, orderliness, and product organization." Each competitor had eight hours to bake over 100 pieces while judges watched their technique, looked over their formulas, analyzed their final products and made sure that they strictly followed the rules of competition.

The Team USA 2008 Nationals competition took place at Camp Bread 2007 at the San Francisco Baking Institute May 2007. The three winners of this competition make up Bread Bakers Guild Team USA 2008.



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THE COUPE DU MONDE DE LA BOULANGERIE (The World Cup of Baking)

The Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie is an international artisan bread baking competition held every three years in Paris, France. Organized in 1992 by Christian Vabret, president of the Ecole Française de Boulangerie d'Aurillac, the Coupe du Monde is the world's only competition where bakers who practice the craft of artisan baking can compete against the many old-world traditions of the various countries involved. The purpose of the competition is to gather artisan bakers from around the world to celebrate their profession, share knowledge of artisan baking techniques, and reinstate the value and restore the image of the artisan baking professional.

Also known as the World Cup or Olympics of Baking, the Coupe du Monde takes place at Europain—the world bakery, patisserie and catering exhibition in Paris. The exhibition attracts more than 80,000 visitors. Inside the exhibition hall, four of the 12 teams compete daily in individual 12 by 12 foot bakeries. Each team consists of three members representing the best artisan bakers from the 12 countries who qualified to compete. Teams are given eight hours to produce a specific number of baked goods for each of four categories: Baguette, Specialty and Ethnic Breads, Viennoiserie, Artistic Design, and Savory Selection. Team members must carefully choreograph and practice their routines in order to mix, shape and bake the 332 world-class baked goods that they produce in the small bakery in only eight hours. A committee of judges from each country represented then votes on the breads (judges must abstain from voting for their own country). A first, second and third place country is chosen based on the overall team effort.

The Bread Bakers Guild of America fully supports the goals of the Coupe du Monde. The Guild successfully petitioned to send a U.S. team to the international event in 1994 and has continued to send teams ever since. In 1996, the U.S. team upset the French with a first-place win in the Baguette and Specialty Breads category. In 1999, Bread Bakers Guild Team USA stunned the international baking community and brought great pride to the U.S artisan baking industry by winning the Coupe du Monde. Team USA 2002 returned home with the silver and Team USA 2005 again captured the gold—proving that Team USA's 1999 victory was no fluke: Americans *do* make great bread!

The United States will be represented again when Bread Bakers Guild Team USA 2008 travels to Paris to compete for the World Cup title at the next Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie set for March 30-April 3, 2008.



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Biographies

TEAM MANAGERS

CRAIG PONSFORD

Sonoma, California

As a member of Bread Bakers Guild Team USA 1996, Craig Ponsford's breads led the team to win in the Baguette and Specialty Breads category of the Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie—a first for the United States. Since that time Craig has been heavily involved with Team USA and the Coupe, serving as team manager in 1999 and 2002. In 2002 and 2005 he was selected to represent the United States as a judge at the Coupe du Monde, and this year he served as the US judge at the Louis LeSaffre Cup in Buenos Aires, the regional competition that selected the South American team that will compete at the 2008 Coupe du Monde.

Craig started his bakery Artisan Bakers in 1992 with his family in Sonoma, CA. They specialize in handcrafted breads and pastries. In 2003 he entered into a partnership with the historic San Francisco-based Boudin Bakery & Café. Craig currently serves as the Chairman of the Board of The Bread Bakers Guild of America.

JEFFREY YANKELLOW

Phoenix, Arizona

Jeffrey Yankellow was the Baguette and Specialty Breads member of Bread Bakers Guild Team USA 2005, which captured the gold medal at the Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie competition in Paris. Jeffrey started his food career working as a chef after graduating in 1996 from the culinary program at Johnson & Wales University. He worked his way up through the kitchen, eventually earning the rank of sous chef at Charlie Trotter's in Chicago.

Jeffrey left the restaurant business to teach at the San Francisco Baking Institute, where he stayed for four years. He is currently head baker and president of Simply Bread LLC, a wholesale bread bakery that he opened in Phoenix, AZ, in February 2006. The bakery focuses on producing specialty artisan breads for resorts, restaurants and markets throughout the metropolitan Phoenix area.

BREAD BAKERS GUILD TEAM USA 2008

DARA L. REIMERS (Artistic Design)

Auburn, Maine

Dara Reimers was an accountant and income tax preparer before trying her hand at baking in 1989 at The Sweetgrass Bakery in Helena, Montana. She immediately fell in love with baking. Dara later discovered “artisan” baking at Park Avenue Bakery in Helena and became committed to the craft. While living in Vancouver, British Columbia, she worked. She is most recently from Vancouver, British Columbia in Canada where she worked at Fieldstone Artisan Bakery Co. Dara moved to Auburn, Maine in 2003 – in part to open a small bakery. Although those plans fell through, she remains an aspiring bakery owner. In the fall of 2007 Dara studied with Ewald Notter at The Notter School of Pastry Arts in Orlando, Florida. When she is not baking, Dara does income tax preparation work and is dabbling in real estate.

SOLVEIG TOFTE (Baguette and Specialty Breads)

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Solveig Tofte grew up eating well and playing in the woods in the small town of Tofte, Minn., founded by her Norwegian immigrant great-grandparents. The first chance she got, Solveig left Minnesota for warmer climes along the west coast. She lived the good life in Northern California during the dot com hey day, working in sales and marketing until she realized “it wasn’t my thing.” She worked as a production baker at Sconehege in Berkeley in 1996 and later studied baking and pastry at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco. In 1999, she and her husband packed their bags and moved to her home state where she’d lined up a job as production baker at the Turtle Bread Company. She has been head baker there since 2001 and has taught at Cooks of Crocus Hill in Edina and St. Paul. Solveig continued her baking education with courses at the National Baking Center, San Francisco Baking Institute, General Mills, French Culinary Institute and the AIB. Solveig lives with her family in South Minneapolis.

PETER YUEN (Viennoiserie)

Chicago, Illinois

Peter Yuen is a second-generation baker/pastry chef who emigrated with his family from Hong Kong in 1981 at age 11. Throughout his childhood, Peter worked part time at his family’s bakery where he began learning lamination at the early age of 12. He later returned to Hong Kong where he trained in the art of Classical baking as an apprentice to several legendary master bakers. He graduated from the world-renown French Pastry School in Chicago in 2000 where he finished at the top of his class. He was later recruited by Chef Keegan Gerhard to work at the Four Seasons Chicago – the chain’s flagship property. With a growing interest in bread making, Peter took on a second full-time job as head baker of the newly opened Sofitel Chicago Water Tower. He and his wife, Susan, opened their own up-scale bakery – La Patisserie P – in 2004.