

Dear Pascal's Pastrylovers,

You know I couldn't not give you the long read with your pastries, could I? So here it is!

I hope you appreciated our little newsflash recently about being celiac-friendly; we're so excited to have at least 3 celiacs who we know of enjoying our pastries along with one gentleman who has actually lost the ability to both taste and smell who enjoys our pastries based on the fact he can remember how good quality pastries taste from a memory - that to me is really something, don't you think so? I know we're always challenging you with new ideas about pastry and we are happy to be the disruptors pushing the envelope outside the box. Rebels at heart, that's us!

### **COMING TO CALGARY?**

As you know, we've been very focused on keeping small and sustainable in our second incarnation here in Cochrane. However, we've been toying with the idea of possibly being available in Calgary - if some place really wanted us. That's why we're asking for your input: if we could be anywhere in Calgary, where would you like us to be? Do let us know.



*Ten minutes to Paris with Pascal's signature pastry: our classic croissant.*

### **FRENCH BUTTER: Is it Better?**

Ask anyone and they'll tell you a good croissant is all about the butter. Well, we've always begged to differ: we believe it's all about the flour, the primary ingredient. So to test our theory, we recently went to the expense to experiment with French butter - just to confirm our suspicions. One of the nice things about this experiment was that the French butter was already purpose-made flattened to be more easily integrated into the *détrempe* which avoids having to bash blocks of butter with a rolling pin which is what Pascal has always

done as Canadian butter in that format costs 50% more. It was of course more expensive but we were always curious since the beginning when we first started back in 2011 to see how French butter would perform under frozen conditions.

Suffice to say, Pascal tried a lot of different variations; a lot of the time the butter would just run out on the tray after baking leaving a greasy calling card. He adjusted his recipe numerous times and somehow, the French butter just didn't stand up to our frozen process. It was great tasting on its own but it just didn't accomplish for us what Canadian butter can. So, no, French butter didn't make our pastries taste any better, it was the taste and performance of the Canadian butter with our amazing new flour that won the day.

As you may remember me saying, making this type of pastry fresh is one thing, making it frozen is an entirely different methodology. Pascal had to adjust and re-learn everything he thought he knew about pastry-making to accommodate how dough performs and evolves in a frozen format. Canadian butter won the contest - thanks Canadian cows!

### **PASCAL'S CROISSANT MEMORY**

The other holy grail Pascal keeps up his pastry chef sleeve is the *memory of how croissants used to taste 30 years ago* - that is his bar - to achieve a croissant that is all about balance: crust, crumb, crackle, a soft and elastic interior that bears a fruit with multiple dimensions no other pastry can. A weightless delight on the plate and palate we never get tired talking about, experimenting with and enjoying! That is his guiding principle obsessing him and to achieve it, that consistency each and every time for his pastrylover, is his mission. There is something about the last bite of our croissant that leaves you with something: some kind of inexplicable story...this is what we find for ourselves and it never ceases to fascinate us.

### **THE POWER OF FLOUR - The Only Flour of Its Kind in Canada**

We are not a bakery as you know but often we are perceived/judged the same way even though we don't bake. We display our flour to our customers as we're very proud of the flour we use to create our vintage-tasting pastries of yesteryear, created from a old food memory from another time and place and from a specialist of handmade doughs (*tourier*) who is celebrating 30 years of pastry making this summer! Way to go Pascal! Keeping this heritage trade alive. It is challenging to relinquish the end results to the customer as it is a delicate pastry and has a mind of its own under different baking conditions as all ovens vary slightly in their heat but it seems if people love our pastries, they love them back!

*Pastries are only as good as the flour used to create them.* And it's not just what is in the flour or where it came from (yes, flour has *terroir* just like wine) but what's not in it. Canadian flour [Les Moulins de Soulanges](#) is a milling company that even [Bien Cuit Bakery](#) in New York City celebrates. Les Moulins de Soulanges is the only flour of its kind in Canada and we are thrilled with its taste and its commitment towards a cleaner way of wheat production, transitioning to organic and eliminating the use of glyphosate, pesticides and other chemicals in production and harvesting.

### **CURATED INGREDIENTS - (we're working on a dedicated ingredients page for our website - stay tuned!)**

You probably hear the word 'curated' a lot but we just wanted to remind you about how we choose our ingredients. We often choose ingredients that are not produced locally unfortunately as they simply do not stand up to our strict standard of what is safe and healthy and flavourful. Can we talk? Just because something comes from vegetables doesn't mean it's good for you. Take the white poison that is sugar from sugar beets, one of the most highly refined and processed and genetically modified 'foods' there is, with virtually no nutritional value except empty calories and which is addictive as a drug like cocaine and sorry to say, just about single-handedly responsible for the obesity crisis and poor health in our society. It is super

hard to avoid as it's in everything from soup to nuts. But don't listen to me, research it yourself and discover what you think. We believe white sugar is also trashing people's palates too, so they're not able to appreciate the nuance of something made simply and beautifully and not drenched in overly sweet additions and what tastes to us as 'chemically.' When we look at things with way too much sugar, well, our teeth hurt just looking at it. :) So that is why we use imported organic cane sugar at nearly 3 times the price of locally produced white sugar from sugar beets. It was a tough decision as we think about the 'cost' of transportation (and not just the financial cost but also the environmental cost of transportation.) Sorry. But we just had to. Instead of empty calories, it is possible to enjoy good pastry without the guilt. <https://www.thehealthyhomeeconomist.com/beet-sugar/> Once again, do a little research of your own and see what you learn, this is simply one article that resonated with us. All pastry gets a bad rap but it is not all created equal: I was somewhere recently where their frozen croissants were 580 calories apiece! That's nearly a third of your daily allowance and you don't even want to know what it was made of! Ours are a slim 184 calories of bliss made of gorgeous ingredients. Do you see why I'm keen to share our differences? Genuine artisans care deeply about how they do what they do. Our choice of superior ingredients as well as our methodology allows us to provide people with real food that does not make them sick. This is so very rewarding to us and what keeps us going doing this demanding but beautiful type of pastry!

### **WE ARE CELIAC-FRIENDLY (Gluten is Not the Enemy)**

In case you missed our little recent newsflash: *"After being diagnosed with Celiac Disease, I thought I would not be able to eat wheat again. I tried your pastries and had no reaction. I've recommended it to other friends who suffer from the same issue and they have had no reaction either."* Jon Hamm, a local firefighter from Cochrane.

Gluten is a naturally occurring protein that has gotten a bad rap since the industrialization and mass production of baked goods. Does anyone remember one's grandparents suffering from 'gluten-intolerance'? Has anyone heard of people (or experienced this yourself) who can eat bread in Europe and not here? It is not the gluten: it's how our food is PROCESSED AND CHEMICALIZED. Gluten is the scapegoat in our humble opinion. But I don't think our voice will be heard against the multi-billion dollar gluten-free industry, do you?

### **NEARLY 10 YEARS AGO, WHEN WE WERE ALREADY IN BUSINESS FOR A YEAR, OUR LANDLORD GAVE US THIS ARTICLE RE: PREMADE FROZEN CROISSANTS VS HOUSEMADE IN FRANCE**

<https://archive.canadianbusiness.com/lifestyle/the-croissant-war-in-paris/>

And this is how they do it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXLCA47sq-w>

We are the frozen micro-pastry makers handcrafting croissants for your home and heart. Thank goodness!

Pascal and I have somehow cracked the code to create fine French pastry you bake which is also celiac-friendly due to:

- . quality flour
- . long fermentation
- . short kneading time
- . bespoke frozen to fresh methodology
- . 30 years experience with over 2 million pastries crafted by hand
- . secret ingredient: obsession with authenticity and honouring classical tradition
- . great customers to share it with!

## **SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR STAMPEDE**

Bake some of our pastries and have a pastry party!

Or, discover [ROARR](#) River Cross Ranch, a newly discovered treasure for us and maybe you too! They do the very important work of engaging both youth and seniors in horse therapy and are having a really cool old-tyme carnival Stampede Breakfast Fundraiser for kids 2-92, 11 AM to 3 PM, Sunday, July 3!

It's a gorgeous location with mountain views just off Springbank Rd west with a beautiful old ranchhouse onsite left over from the CBC series *Wild Roses*. There's even a lovely labyrinth to walk. A great family story and a wonderful mission of bringing the beauty and the soul of horses together with youngies and eldies. They're also looking for volunteers to help with this worthwhile fundraising event. There will be fun to be had, guaranteed! And a really nice way to get out of the city and meet some super friendly people and animals: two words, miniature horses! As well as wonderful gentle retired ranch horses. A true treasure worth the seeking; a bit like us! ;)



[River Cross Ranch](#), Springbank - ROARR Stampede Fundraiser Breakfast, Sunday, July 3, 11 AM - 3 PM. All welcome.

## **SMALL AND SUSTAINABLE IS BEAUTIFUL (and costly)**

Are you tired of hearing that if a business is not in growth mode, it's in the business of dying? This is simply not true and is an old outdated way of thinking. There are plenty of small and micro-businesses that are not in it for world domination and are thriving. The model that bigger is better is *passé* and dangerous. (Where has that vision got us? It has put us all in a very precarious

position in this world.) A new world order calls for a different vision of growth for growth's sake (which is the prime directive of the cancer cell.) We need to be open to and encourage other ways of doing business. Small and mighty can be enough to support a family or a community. Small can keep one from working for 'The Man' and the vulnerability that entails. It can give meaning and focus and beauty to people who care and are considerate of the big picture. We also strongly believe food production equates with [food sovereignty](#) which means putting the power to feed ourselves back in the hands of people who are not in it for the profit but the purpose: local boutique regenerative farmers (like our neighbour [Blue Mountain Biodynamic Farms](#) who are doing it right) ... as well as genuine artisans like us and small and conscientious food producers obsessed with genuine quality and not fake quality like Canadian micro-batch chocolate makers [DesBarres](#) creating single origin direct trade dark chocolate for choco-connoisseurs. (Now available at our shop, the only location in western-Canada.)

One must be vigilant, as unfortunately there are a lot of duplicitous large enterprises that have no problem masquerading as small business when what they're really doing is running numerous small businesses with different branding which belong to a bigger interest. It is not easy for the average unsuspecting consumer to realize this (we get duped all the time) and that is why the genuine artisan is not only at risk but is judged by all the same criteria that they judge Big Business by (such as being expected to be open all the time.) If I had a dollar for every time someone said to me "I came by your store but you weren't open"...I'd be able to have a nice vacation as we never even get long weekends as we work Saturdays and take Sunday Monday as our weekend.:)) I joke and say "you should come when we're here as it's much more fun!" But seriously it is part of a much larger problem where we all expect everything 24/7 and there is a much bigger price to pay for that than any of us ever thought possible. Who knew pastry could be so political? ;)

Even though we are small, we are part of a much larger and complex picture. We use two of the world's biggest commodities: flour and butter. As we curate all our ingredients individually, it costs us more to receive them as we don't do the 'one call does it all' to a food distributor because they're not selling what we want: a lot of people may not realize but the food business is usually about how cheap you can get something because it's based on waste. We have to drive to Calgary to get fresh yeast at retail cost because no one will supply us. We approached 4 businesses in Cochrane to see if we could piggyback a fresh yeast order on theirs (as well as the yeast factory in Inglewood directly.) No and no. So we pay a price to do what we choose to do but we wouldn't have it any other way: that's real quality and craftsmanship.

So that said, our last word is going to be about value. What are you willing to invest in the best? Hopefully an extra dollar as we are compelled, along with everyone else, to have to raise our price somewhat, the first time in nearly 2 years. Do we think it's worth it for the organic almonds Pascal imports from Europe (Italy and Spain) which he grinds himself to get the right balance of natural almond flavour in our almond croissants? Yes. The organic raisins imported from California not coated in oil for our pain aux raisins and cinnamon rolls? Yes. Organic cane sugar? Yes. Organic local milk from Vital Green Farms for our pastry cream? Yes. Local Man's free-range eggs? Yes. Even organic cinnamon? Yes. Our beautiful transitional-organic flour from Quebec? Yes, yes and *encore oui*.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts to enjoy our obsession for fine pastry along with us. Sometimes it truly feels like we're shuffling deck chairs on the Titanic in these times as maybe I'm feeling a bit pessimistic about things lately but creating these pastries alongside one of the most disciplined hard-working genuine and committed individuals who walks and talks integrity and compassion whom I've ever met, well - it's about one of the only things that is meaningful to me in

these often dark and deceptive days...I do have to remember I'm in the business of joy though, so don't hesitate to remind me, will you? :)



*The master in his atelier.*

Questions? Comments? Thoughts? We're always happy to share our passion with everyone!

Yours in pure pastry pleasure,

Lison & Pascal

PS: Are you a [croissant connoisseur](#)?

To unsubscribe, simply email us back to let us know. Alternately, please feel free to share this email.

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***Bake breakfast beautiful.***