

40 Restaurant Stars on the Rise

A GENERATION OF FOODSERVICE PROFESSIONALS—ALL UNDER THE AGE OF 40—ARE HELPING DEFINE NEW EXPECTATIONS FOR THE INDUSTRY.

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Tracy Wilk

“Kale, Quinoa, and Community since 1977.” That’s the slogan of New York City’s famed Natural Gourmet Institute, a leader in health-focused cuisine. Don’t be surprised if they add Warm Drunken Donuts and Toffee Monkey Bread to the tagline in the near future. Alumna Tracy Wilk, in a sweet twist of irony, transformed her education at the renowned institution into a career as one of the city’s brightest pastry chefs. Working with Executive Chef Raoul Whitaker at David Burke Kitchen in the James Hotel New York, Wilk has earned a fervent following for her playful creations as well as her celebrated assortment of breads and pastries. This past fall, she offered a personal take on two American favorites: apple pie and the Twix bar. This kind of innovative spirit has come to define her career in the short, but poignant, time she’s been working in the kitchen. Wilk started as an extern at the city’s iconic ABC Kitchen before joining the restaurant as senior pastry cook in early 2011. She accepted a job with David Burke Kitchen in February 2013 as a line cook and has been rapidly ascending ever since.

“I love my craft because I feel like the true purpose of my job is to create joy,” Wilk says. “I became a pastry chef to make people happy, and every day, with one of my desserts, I can make someone’s day a little brighter, a little better, and a little more fun.”



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Tracy Wilk

EXECUTIVE PASTRY CHEF

DAVID BURKE KITCHEN

NEW YORK CITY

AGE: 27