CAPE COD HOME
MARTHA’S VINEYARD & NANTUCKET

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Young Barnstable entrepreneur brings the garden to you

Osterville bakery offers tasty treats—and cooking classes
“Baking is not complicated . . .” says Amie Smith, the owner of Amie Bakery, “if you know the secrets.”

In a recent cooking class held in Smith’s bakery on Wianno Avenue in Osterville, the baker shared some of the secrets she has gathered during her culinary career to a small crowd of students. Gathered around her were three local women, all students of AMIE Academie—a series of classes Smith offers at the bakery where attendees can learn some of the tricks of the baking trade, and try their hand at preparing some of the recipes firsthand.

The two-hour classes, which start at $50 per person, are held throughout the year and cover unique baking topics such as Valentine’s Day cookie decorating, cupcake decorating, and the fine art of piping buttercream flowers to beautify cupcakes and other confections. The schedule for upcoming classes can be viewed at amiebakery.com.

During the class mentioned above, Smith instructed her charges on the art of baking homemade bagels. As she gathers the ingredients to be used in the class, she talks about the simplicity of making these breakfast staples in the comfort of one’s own home. “I had guests staying at my house,” Smith tells her students. “I got up one morning and rather than go out and buy bagels, I decided to make them instead. All of the ingredients are things I had on hand, so it was easy.” Reaching for a whisk and a sheet pan, Smith offers additional inspiration: “Bagels are simple,” she says, “and can be made all within an hour. My guests loved waking up to the smell of the warm, fresh bagels coming out of the oven.” Bonus: check out Smith’s three bagel-related recipes following this article!

To start the class, Smith, an Osterville resident and a 2009 graduate of the Institute of Culinary Education in New York City, shares that most professional bakers use weights rather than volume—ounces and pounds, rather than tablespoons and cups—to measure out ingredients because they are a more accurate form of measurement. Note: in the recipe we have converted the measurements to cups and tablespoons for the home baker.

Smith opened Amie Bakery in December of 2014 and says it is part of the “second phase” of her career. Back in 2008, she was working as a corporate writer in Manhattan, but when the economy took a downturn she decided to pursue her passion for baking, a
love instilled in her by her father. With her degree in hand in 2009, she began baking up confections professionally, first taking private orders while she searched for a sweet location to open her own bakery.

As mentioned, Smith formerly worked as a marketing writer as well as a part-time writing teacher at Northeastern University; she continued her role as an educator when she opened AMIE Academie in her bakery last August. Her goal for the classes is to share some of what she has learned, and to encourage people to bake their own delicious treats at home using fresh, quality ingredients. “The whole mission behind my bakery,” she says, “is to reacquaint people with the way things used to taste.”

In a time when so much of what we eat is being mass-produced or super-sized, Smith is rejecting that trend, and her recipes are inspired from simpler times when baked goods like pastries, cakes and pies were made using natural, authentic ingredients. “I make everything from scratch and in small batches,” Smith says, adding that there is a significant difference in the taste and texture of a pastry cream, for example, when it is made fresh on the premises and from quality ingredients.

Visiting Amie Bakery, customers can choose from a variety of cookies, bars, muffins, pies and tarts, as well as croissants and homemade rolls. Amie’s also sells sandwiches, soups and a special
blend of coffee, Amie Blend, which is made by Cape Cod Coffee Roasters.

In addition to quality foods, the bakery’s interior design has also been attracting customers. The café features attractive white beadboard on the walls, bistro-style tables and chairs imported from Paris, and a counter with round, chrome stools. Smith says she wanted the café area to be a warm and welcoming place—a throwback to simpler times—where customers would feel as comfortable as if they were sitting in her kitchen. Customers can even order an ice cream float or a homemade soda, and enjoy it in a setting that Norman Rockwell himself may have enjoyed painting.

Returning to the class in progress... As the students form the dough into pretzel-like shapes, they laugh and tease each other about their bagel-making skills. They are all friends and enrolled in the class not only to learn how to make and form bagels, but to have some fun as well. As they prepare to drop the doughy shapes into the boiling water, Smith shares yet another secret with them: “Add a little sugar to the water,” she says. “It helps in browning and forming the skin of the bagel.”

Amie Bakery is at 3 Wianno Avenue in Osterville. The store is open daily. For more information, visit amiebakery.com, or call 508-428-1005.

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Jo Goldenberg’s Parisian Bagels

Provided by Amie Bakery of Osterville, this recipe is adapted from a recipe prepared at Chez Jo Goldenberg, a famous restaurant and delicatessen once located in the Le Marais area of Paris.

This recipe is really simple—it’s a matter of a one-bowl mix of ingredients, and a short bench proof (dough rise); then boil and bake. Amie Bakery adds sugar or barley malt to the boil to promote browning and flavor. The texture of the crust is more a product of gelatinizing the starches by boiling, using a high oven temperature and a good amount of steam during baking. Optional: Most of us don’t have steam for our ovens and can do without it, but you can create it by putting a cast iron pan in the oven, getting it very hot, and then pouring water into it during the bake.

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Prepare a large pot of water for boiling the bagels by adding 1 tablespoon of sugar or barley malt to the water; bring to a boil.
3. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper and dust with cornmeal (cornmeal is optional but adds a nice crunch).
4. Mix the dry ingredients to disperse evenly.
5. Dissolve 2-1/2 tablespoons dry, active yeast in 12 ounces of warm water, and add to dry ingredients. Use your hands, or a mixer set on second speed with a dough hook, to mix everything together. The dough should come together and it should be a little sticky. Knead for a few minutes until smooth.
6. Divide dough into 9 or 10 portions.
7. Shape into 8- to 10-inch cylinders and moisten end to form a ring.
8. Bench proof (let them sit) for about 10 to 15 minutes on an oiled surface (spray Pam on parchment, or your counter, so bagels do not stick).
9. Drop three to four bagels at a time in the boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds. Take out with a slotted spoon or mesh spider and place on sheet pan with parchment and cornmeal.
10. An egg wash sprinkled with seeds is optional. (To make an egg wash, whisk egg until well blended, but not foamy. Whisk in 1 to 2 teaspoons of water.)
11. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Place bagels on a cooling rack.

Store in a paper bag, and place this bag in a plastic bag to keep fresh. Yields 9-10 bagels.

Cream Cheese Spreads

Vegetable Cream Cheese
Adapted from Barefoot Contessa Family Style by Ina Garten

Vegetable cream cheese can be left to one’s imagination so use any combination of your favorites, but this one combines a nice flavor and crunch.

16 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
2 tablespoons minced scallions, white and green parts, or substitute and use chives
2 tablespoons finely chopped carrot
2 tablespoons finely chopped celery
2 tablespoons finely chopped red pepper
2-3 pinches kosher salt
pinch of finely ground black pepper

Place all ingredients in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment and mix on low speed until blended—or blend all ingredients by hand. Serves six.

Cinnamon Raisin Cream Cheese

16 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
1/2 cup raisins, roughly chopped
2 tablespoons cinnamon
4 teaspoons honey, to taste.
Optional: add 1/4 cup walnuts, chopped

Place all ingredients in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, and mix on low speed until blended—or blend all ingredients by hand.