

Barbara “Bobbie” Lloyd Biography



Barbara “Bobbie” Lloyd, - Class of 1975 - b. 1957

Bobbie Lloyd
Chief Baking Officer
Magnolia Bakery

As Chief Baking Officer and operating partner of the infamous New York City institution, Magnolia Bakery, Bobbie has played an integral role working with teams around the globe to expand Magnolia Bakery from its original location in New York City’s West Village opened in 1996 to its current 10 US locations, 15 international locations and a catering and e-commerce business. She has developed some of the brand’s most notable menu items - like the shop’s line of ice cream sandwiches, new pudding flavors, delicious pies and a savory menu featured in Magnolia’s International locations. She continues to bring the homemade essence of Magnolia Bakery to customers and fans through the creation and development of new recipes and perfection of old favorites.

Lloyd brings to Magnolia Bakery an extensive restaurant background spanning over three decades. Born in Chicago and raised in Elgin, Lloyd began her epicurean journey at the young age of eight with her first cooking class, International Cooking, at the YWCA in Elgin. Her Mother, Grandmothers and Great Grandmother all wonderful bakers, provided constant inspiration with their pies, homemade candies and special family holiday cookie recipes. She knew in the very early stages of her life that cooking was her passion. Upon graduating from Elgin High School in 1975 she continued to cultivate this interest through her formal education at the Modern Gourmet Cooking School in Boston (aka Chef’s & Company) and at Peter Kump’s Cooking School in NYC. Simultaneously Lloyd was honing her skills while working with some of the best chefs in restaurants throughout Boston. Only three short years after finishing her culinary training, Lloyd impressively became a founding member and co-owner of the critically acclaimed restaurant, *American Accent*, in Brookline, MA open from 1984 – 1987.

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Moving to New York City in 1987 as private chef to Calvin and Kelly Klein, Lloyd moved on to the front of the house to learn from the “best of the best”. She worked directly with Union Square Café’s Danny Meyer as service manager for several years as part of the team that saw USC go from a two-star café to a three-star restaurant. Following her time at USC she worked as director of operations for a group that owned several restaurants including Prix Fix and Steak Frites with Chef Terrance Brennan. She partnered with this group to open Au Café, a café with a 200-seat outdoor café in the heart of NYC’s midtown theatre district critically acclaimed for their beignets, breakfast and fresh baked goods from muffins to pies. Over the next few years she worked as a consultant and partnered with Steve Abrams to create Soup-to-Nuts Consulting company.

In 1997 Bobbie opened *It’s a Wrap* with Steve Abrams as co-owner and operating partner; a two-unit gourmet wrap sandwich, soup, salad and smoothie emporium famous for their wrap sandwiches made with Lavash bread. She simultaneously worked as the controller for The Red Cat Restaurant Group with 4 full service restaurants, owned by her It’s a Wrap partners. In 2006 when Steve Abrams bought Magnolia Bakery from the original owner, Bobbie made the decision to follow Steve Abrams as operating partner and CBO.

Lloyd’s passion has taken her on a journey from the kitchen, to front of house management, to the finance office and back. She has been involved in all aspects of the restaurant and bakery business, encompassing the five key areas necessary for success – culinary, design, business development, finance and strategy and operations.

Her roles as Chief Baking Officer is the ideal role to combine her passion, her experience and her expertise.

TV APPEARANCES

Cupcake Wars- Guest judge

Next Great Baker with “the cake boss”, season 4 judge

Frequent appearances on the Today Show with Kathy Lee and Hoda.

VOLUNTEER WORK

On the board of the Lincoln Square Business Improvement district.

Former treasurer and board member of the PS9 PTA as well as fund raising committee.

An avid runner- she has done many races, half marathons and 10 marathons around the country as well as 5 Ragnar races from cape cod to Zion national park. When she’s not running she’s practicing yoga and skiing whenever she can.

She has been married for 20 years to Mark Petracca (aka Dusty Wright) a producer, writer, director and singer/songwriter. They live in New York City with their two children, Luca, 18, a freshman at Ithaca college and Mina, a high school freshman and our English setter, Nikki. (3/17)

She is also working on a cookbook that she hopes to soon get published.

December 19, 2011

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Kitchen Careers on the Food Network is a regular feature that goes behind-the-scenes with chefs, bloggers, critics and others in the food industry to get the inside scoop on what its like to cook, or eat, for a living.

There are many fun careers in food, but not many have a better title than “Chief Baking Officer.” Meet Bobbie Lloyd, who serves in that senior role for Magnolia Bakery. The bakery, which started in New York, but now has locations worldwide, is one of the bakeries credited with launching the cupcake craze, thanks to shoutouts from everyone from Carrie Bradshaw to the Lazy Sunday guys. Bobbie shares what its like to serve as CBO of the famous bakery.

Where did you grow up?

I’m a Midwestern girl through and through. Born in Chicago, raised in Elgin, Illinois. My Midwestern roots run deep as generations of our family on both sides were pioneers.

When did you know you loved baking?

From baking with my mother, grandmother and great-grandmother I developed a love of being in the kitchen. Whether it was picking grapes to make jam with my Mom or picking rhubarb in the early days of spring you could always find me in the kitchen eager to roll some pie dough. When my mom went to work full time when I was eight years old, I became a key kid and offered my services to get the family dinner started when I got home from school.

What is your background? How do you become a Chief Baking Officer? How did you become involved with Magnolia?

I have always loved being in the kitchen and took my first cooking class at age eight. To pursue my dream of becoming a chef, I moved to Boston to attend the Modern Gourmet Cooking School. Two years after graduation, I opened my first restaurant, American Accent, in Brookline, MA. Since moving to NYC, I’ve had the pleasure of working as a private chef for Calvin and Kelly Klein, as a service manager at Union Square Café and working for and with famed restaurateurs at Prix Fixe, The Screening Room and Tribeca Grill.

I first met the Abrams, Magnolia Bakery’s owners, in 1996. That year, I partnered with Steve Abrams to form “Soup to Nuts Consulting.” Together, we launched *It’s a Wrap*, the first gourmet wrap sandwich shop in NYC. In 2004, I moved to a new position with The Beanstalk Restaurant Group (The Red Cat, The Harrison, The Mermaid Inn and PACE), a company owned by Steve’s brother, Danny Abrams, and Jimmy Bradley. In 2006, Steve and Tyra Abrams purchased Magnolia Bakery from its original owner, Allysa Torey. I was thrilled to accept the role as President and CBO (“Chief Baking Officer”) in the company. I’ve been creating new recipes for the company and lots, lots more ever since!

Who are your culinary icons?

My favorite cookbook writers and bakers are: Carol Walters, Martha Stewart, Dorie Greenspan, Marion Cunningham and Maida Heatter.

I really like old-fashioned cookbooks that you get at fairs and flea markets, written by women who have been baking for their families for generations. I even have a collection of the original Pillsbury bake-off cookbooks from the 1950’s that were my mother’s.

Can you describe a typical day in your role as Chief Baking Officer?

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As President and Chief Baking Officer, my job changes throughout the day. I may be working on a new recipe with our production team, or opening a new location, most recently Chicago and Bloomingdale’s.

I work very closely with our management team on a retail level as well. As our company grows, we continually search for ways to be more efficient and cut costs, yet deliver the same customer experience no matter what market.

For those who don’t know, what is the story behind Magnolia Bakery?

Magnolia Bakery opened its first location on a cozy street corner in the heart of New York’s West Village in the summer of 1996. From its inception, Magnolia has been cherished for its classic American baked goods, vintage decor and warm, inviting atmosphere. In 2007, Magnolia’s original owner passed her oven mitts to Steve and Tyra Abrams. Together, with the Abrams, we have thoughtfully expanded the bakery from its first West Village shop to its current eight locations worldwide.

What’s your favorite Magnolia Bakery recipe you’ve created?

Over the years I have introduced more and more pie recipes. I would have to say these as a whole are my favorite. My favorite single item right now is the coconut cream pie and the sea salt caramel chocolate chunk cookie.

Did you always know you wanted baking to be part of your career?

I knew that food would be some part of my career, but I didn’t know what direction I would take until I went to culinary school and began working in restaurants. I was fortunate enough to work for some wonderful places in my early days.

What makes your desserts special?

Each and every recipe is unique unto itself. We don’t use a base or a mix and just add a flavor. When we are creating something new, we start with our flavor profile of a cupcake or cake, or look for the texture we are trying to create in a bar or cookie. We work from this principle and then start creating. We also bake in small batches all day using small mixers. Baking this way ensures that our products will be fresh.

What’s your favorite dessert of all time?

Pie, I love PIE! Every kind of pie. Pie is like my own nirvana. I love cream pie, fruit pies, open pies, hand pies – you name it, I love it.

Does Andy Samberg really come by to “mack on some cupcakes?”

He certainly did! He came by our Bleecker Street location in NYC’s West Village to shoot the “Lazy Sunday” video.

What’s your favorite cupcake?

It changes all the time. Currently, I love the pistachio cupcake. I’m more of a cookie person, though, and will always go for the lemon shortbread. It’s a perfect little melt-in-your-mouth cookie that is so versatile.

What three PBS personalities would you invite to dinner?

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We’re in the process of opening more stores internationally, so I would love to talk with Rick Steves about his favorite destinations. I’d also love to chat with Cookie Monster and get his take on his favorite Magnolia treats! And, though she is sadly not on air anymore, I would absolutely love to dine with Julia Child.

If you could choose any event in the world to cater with Magnolia desserts, what would it be?

Magnolia caters many different types of events, from the Oscars and movie premieres to baby showers, birthday parties and weddings. If I could choose one, we would love to cater the Presidential Inaugural Ball. Internationally, it would be fun to cater Kate and William’s baby shower!

It’s hard to eat a cupcake without making a mess, what is the best way to eat a cupcake?

I’m one of those odd people that prefer cake to cupcakes. Why? Because I like the cake part more than the icing part. When eating a cupcake I like to break mine in half and flip the icing to the middle.

What advice do you have for aspiring bakers?

Bake, bake and bake some more. The best way to learn is to understand your ingredients and your oven. The more you practice, the more you will understand the variables.

What is your favorite aspect of your job?

I love the team that I get to work with. We have fun every day, even in the face of a demanding schedule. Staying true to our mission and having the opportunity to mentor a new up and coming generation of bakers, managers and people passionate about the food industry keeps me motivated every single day.

What are some exciting recipes you’re working on now?

Coconut cream pie, ice cream sandwiches, more hand pies and open face pies (Crostadas).

In her own words in 2017:

I wanted to add a few things.

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(as of 2017) I’ve been married for 20 years to Mark Petracca (aka dusty Wright) a producer, writer, director and singer/songwriter. We live in New York City with our two children,

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