

# Ellie Schultze

*Chez L'Amour*

At age 7 when Ellie Schultze drew a picture of Ellie's Café, her parents imagined the future that their daughter was destined to be successful in a food-focused career. Her destiny was etched at age four, ordering a shrimp cocktail and dressing up to feel fancy. "I've always loved food, trying anything new as a child that followed throughout my charmed years of global travel and now as a chef. My entrepreneur's heart is still beating!"

Recognizing food as her career during high school at a local eatery in St. Augustine, Ellie envisioned herself as the hostess but was told she didn't smile enough for that position. What followed were degrees in business and art, then an explosion of exciting years when she chose work in Key West restaurants, saving enough money to explore the world. Living abroad in London was her dream. Boundless curiosity about food even surprised Ellie when each night, in her tiny flat, she created dinners for herself and a girlfriend with exotic ingredients and food, spending only pennies daily. In a small green journal, the ensuing three years launched recipes, techniques, and endless ideas from traveling to over 50 countries, taking cooking courses in Nicaragua, China, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and more.

Ellie immersed herself in formal education at the Natural Gourmet Institute in NYC where she trained in classic cooking techniques, focusing on healthy dietary alternatives: vegan, gluten free and auravedic philosophies. New York was magical for this hard-working dynamo whose pedigree grew by toiling under Michelin chef April Bloomfield, working her way up the ranks with Jean-Georges Vongerichten at Mercer Kitchen – the illustrious, legendary world where Ellie's skills, etiquette and sparkling career was fired!

Taking a U-turn from the multicultural cuisines influencing her career and rising star within, Ellie became head of research and development at Van Leeuwen Ice Cream developing 100+ unique flavors for their flourishing ice cream shops. Her favorite flavor was born when Harry met Meghan – the iconic flavor 'Royal Wedding Cake'! Always with a thirst for learning, where Ellie could thrive and stand out – "My education and expansive travel kept me on top of the world wherever I landed – but I still had this feeling of still being a cook." After 11 years in New York, it was time to come home to St. Augustine, now with husband Andrew and little Ezra.

Compelled to tell her own story emanating from the kitchen, Chef Ellie has put Chez L'Amour on the culinary map in Uptown St. Augustine with dazzling dishes. Her 'Highbrow-Lowbrow' cuisine reflects decades of vibrant foods that appear without fanfare yet inspire applause from fans of an elegant, global and playful menu. She composes a melting pot of global cities and adds a dash of southern *savoir faire*. Chef's lobster cake atop sweet potato puree with mango chutney was inspired in Nicaragua. Norwegian salmon with honey yuzu ponzu and a bite of crispy sushi rice is a take from Jean-Georges. And the wildly popular popcorn chicken with four sauces has a Taiwanese spirit (coconut green curry to die for!). Ellie confesses she once took a 3-hour rainy bus ride on an island off Korea to eat in a remote restaurant touted by Lonely Planet. Let's just plan to visit her nearby with a front seat at Chez L'Amour!

*Leigh Cort*

*Chef Ellie's Antiguan Lobster Cakes with pan seared butter-poached lobster meat patty, mango chutney, coconut callaloo greens and sweet potato puree.*

