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**Chef Joe Sasto wins StarChefs Goat Cheese Recipe Contest
grand prize trip to Sonoma with dinner at SingleThread**

First runners-up are Erin Kanagy-Loux of Union Square Events and Brandon Kida of Hinoki and The Bird

Sonoma, CA (Nov. 25, 2019) — Laura Chenel, the original chef's goat cheese and a foodservice industry favorite for 40 years, announces the winners of the StarChefs Goat Cheese Recipe Contest showcasing the creative potential of goat cheese in fresh, flavorful and contemporary recipes.



JOE SASTO, a Los Angeles-based chef and a 2018 Top Chef contender, wins the grand prize for his **Goat Cheese Tart with Beet-Poached Figs**. Sasto is known for his signature handlebar mustache and his expert synthesis of California cuisine and rustic Italian style. He based his winning entry on a classic goat cheese tart with hazelnut flour whose nutty, earthy flavors get a boost from beet-poached figs, fig leaf oil and hazelnut crunch. Sasto calls his recipe a savory, nostalgic take on

traditional dessert cheesecake. "I love this dish because it shows the beauty and simplicity of the goat cheese, allowing it to take center stage while also utilizing the bounty of California to accompany the dish," he says, noting a waste reduction philosophy that utilizes the dehydrated pulp from the red beet juice in the hazelnut crunch and the leaves and wood from the fig tree in the fig leaf oil. See Joe's recipe [here](#).





ERIN KANAGY-LOUX, executive pastry chef for Union Square Events in New York City, is the first runner-up in the pastry category with her **Goat Cheese Old-Fashioned Doughnut**. Kanagy-Loux relishes texture and technique and makes her sweet-tangy old-fashioned donut with vanilla bean, goat cheese and buttermilk. She finishes it with a lemony goat cheese glaze. Kanagy-Loux was most recently at Mah-Ze-Dahr Bakery in Manhattan and Reynard at Brooklyn's Wythe Hotel. She honed her managerial and teaching skills as a baking and pastry instructor at the International Culinary Center, California Culinary Academy and Western Culinary Institute of Portland. In 2015, she earned the StarChefs Rising Star Hotel Pastry Chef Award. See [Erin Kanagy-Loux's recipe here](#).



BRANDON KIDA, executive chef at L.A.'s Hinoki and The Bird, is first runner-up in the savory category with **Leche de Chivo (Goat Cheese-Style Ceviche)**. Kida's distinct style melds inspirations from his Japanese heritage with refined French culinary technique. His technique-driven Goat Cheese-Style Ceviche pushed goat cheese into the most daring territory with unexpectedly delicious results. Kida starts with a classic ceviche base of fresh citrus juice, jalapeño, fresh shallots and cilantro, then blends it with the more robust flavors of roasted beet oil and tangy goat cheese. Kida combines the creamy blend with sashimi-grade fish then spoons reserved *leche de chivo* bubbles over the dish. See [Brandon Kida's recipe here](#).

Sasto wins a three-day trip for two to Sonoma that includes a tour of Laura Chenel's LEED Gold certified creamery and dinner at the famed [SingleThread Farm Restaurant](#) in Healdsburg, one of just seven restaurants in California awarded three Michelin stars in 2019. Kida and Kanagy-Loux each receive deluxe care packages of Laura Chenel goat cheese, [Rustic Bakery](#) crackers, and other Sonoma County goods.

Laura Chenel was at the forefront of the California culinary revolution 40 years ago when Alice Waters of Chez Panisse served warm, breaded goat cheese atop mesclun greens for her goat cheese salad that became a quintessential part of California cuisine. The iconic goat cheese brand partnered with StarChefs who encouraged chefs in its blind Goat Cheese Recipe Contest to take artisan goat cheese in a whole new direction with edgier, innovative recipes.

Laura Chenel CEO Eric Barthome says Laura Chenel's role as a legacy brand is well-established and its collaboration with StarChefs enables it to broaden its appeal to a new generation of chefs. "As Laura Chenel celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2019, this new partnership with a leading professional chefs' network encourages the creation of next-generation recipes at a

time when diners are recognizing high-quality fresh goat cheese as a more digestible alternative to cow's milk cheese," Barthome says.

StarChefs CEO and Editor-in-Chief Antoinette Bruno adds, "StarChefs has a thoughtful quality-seeking community of chefs looking for great products to help them succeed. Laura Chenel is a beautiful artisan goat cheese that couldn't be a better match for our audience. It's no surprise that the recipe contest generated so many exciting and innovative uses of Laura Chenel goat cheese on menus from New York to California."

StarChefs selected 100 applicants for its blind Goat Cheese Recipe Contest from its nationwide chef network. The brand name wasn't revealed until the participating chefs received their samples of Laura Chenel **Original Log**, **Original Crumbled Goat Cheese**, and **Original Chef's Chevre**, a trade favorite whose higher moisture content makes it ideal for sauces and dips. More than half of those chefs submitted recipes that prove the versatility of goat cheese in reimaged recipes.

About Laura Chenel

Laura Chenel introduced a new chapter in American cheese in 1979 when she started making farmstead goat cheese with milk from her own goats using techniques she learned in France. Today, Laura Chenel still embodies its founding namesake's pioneering spirit as a leading producer of fresh and aged goat cheeses and goat yogurts crafted with fresh goat's milk from family-owned farms in California, Oregon, Nevada and Idaho. Located in the heart of Sonoma County, Laura Chenel is the first creamery in the U.S. to be awarded the prestigious LEED Gold certification and its commitment to sustainable practices, including solar energy and recycling, helps preserve the terroir for generations to come.

For more information, visit us at LauraChenel.com or follow along on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) @LauraChenel

About StarChefs

StarChefs has supported the restaurant industry since 1995 and serves as an essential resource and platform for restaurant professionals, as well as a backstage pass for food-savvy consumers. StarChefs' original content is driven by in-person tastings and interviews across the world, and its mission is to catalyze culinary professionals' success and give them tools to overcome specific challenges. Now in its 13th year, StarChefs hosts the annual **International Chefs Congress**, an industry-only symposium featuring the world's preeminent culinary talent. Through its **Rising Stars Awards** and quarterly Rising Stars magazine, StarChefs has recognized up-and-coming industry professionals in four markets each year since 2003. StarChefs features top chefs, pastry chefs, sommeliers, bartenders, and artisans in more than 35,000 published pages of original, industry-focused content, generates over 4 million page views annually, and was nominated for "Best Web Site" by the James Beard Foundation. The site also connects hospitality professionals to careers in foodservice through the industry's leading job board, **StarChefs JobFinder**.

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