



Lia Benedetto
Pastry Chef

Lia Benedetto is the Executive Pastry Chef of The Umstead Hotel and Spa in Cary, North Carolina, where her artistry and precision bring a refined sense of joy to each dining experience. A graduate of The Culinary Institute of America and a New York native, Chef Benedetto began her career in some of the city's most celebrated kitchens, including Le Cirque, Aureole, and The River Café. There, she developed a foundation in classical pastry and a deep appreciation for technique, balance, and creative expression.

Her career spans more than fifteen years and includes leadership roles at distinguished restaurants and luxury hotels across the country, among them Tao Group's Beauty & Essex in both New York and Los Angeles, Jane Restaurant, and The Peninsula Beverly Hills. Through these experiences, she cultivated a mastery of large-scale pastry operations while maintaining an artist's eye for detail and design.

Since joining The Umstead in 2020, Chef Benedetto has redefined the hotel's pastry program with innovation and intention, leading her team through growth, mentorship, and a renewed creative vision that extends across all dining outlets, from Herons to banquets.

Her work has been nationally recognized, including a feature in Pastry Arts Magazine for her signature "Golden Chocolate Raspberry."

Known for her elegant, modern desserts that marry indulgence with inclusivity, Chef Benedetto creates confections that are both visually striking and thoughtfully composed. Each dessert serves as a final note of harmony, an experience that lingers, embodying The Umstead's philosophy of art, nature, and wellness through the language of pastry.