Gluten-Free **Cupcake** Extravaganza!

Chef Kyra Bussanich Wins Food Network's **Cupcake Wars** *and...* *Delight's* **Cupcake Creations**!

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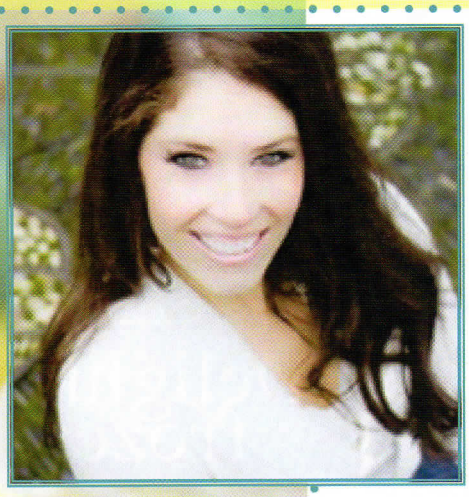

Chef Kyra Bussanich's win on Food Network's **Cupcake Wars** was celebrated throughout the gluten-free community. Her mouth-watering gluten-free **Boston Creme Pie Cupcake** beat out the gluten-filled competition. She has brought mainstream awareness to gluten intolerance along with spreading the messa that gluten-free can taste great! Between cookbook creation anc overseeing her **Crave Bake Shop** located in Lake Oswego, Orego Chef Kyra took a few moments out of her busy schedule to share some insight with our *Delight Gluten-Free* family...here's what she had to say:

DGF: We'd love to hear your gluten-free story. How long hav you been gluten-free?

Chef Kyra: I have been gluten-free for almost 8 years now. Whe first started thinking about a gluten-free diet, I felt very mournf There was not the wide variety (nor quality) of gluten-free products that there is today and it was tough to watch my friends eat bread, pizza, pasta and pastries that I couldn't touch. There were some gluten-free products on the market, but nearly all of them tasted like a modified version o something familiar, and virtually none of these crackers, cupcakes and breads were delicious in their own right. I ate a lot of rice in those early days!

DGF: What inspired you to launch Crave Bake Shop?

Chef Kyra: For health reasons, my mom went gluten-free a year before I did. I was the baker of the family, and always used to make Thanksgiving pies and rolls and homemade breads and birthday cakes. Suddenly, she couldn't eat her favorite birthday dessert (a rich Chocolate Mousse Meringue Pie). I reconfigur the recipe to be gluten-free (which she enjoyed even more than the original), I had one great gluten-free recipe in my repertoire. When I had to go gluten-free, I was suddenly a lot more motivated to expand the breadth of what I cou make. I remember looking around at experts in the gluten-free world and the resounding message I kept seeing was "don't expect a gluten-free cake to taste like a regular cake." That felt like a cop out. There's no reason a gluten-free ca can't taste even better than traditional flour-filled cakes, and my win on the Food Network's **Cupcake Wars** only underscored that point!

DGF: You graduated with honors from the prestigious Le Cordon Bleu pa tisserie program. How difficult was it to be surrounded by gluten each da

Chef Kyra: It was very difficult! Everywhere I looked, I was surrounded by freshly-baked breads, pies, scones, cookies. Despite bringing nuts, dried fruit a gluten-free protein bars with me to class each day, the thought of these health foods I could eat paled in comparison with the scent of warm bread wafting in the air.

DGF: To quote Cupcake Wars judge Candace Nelson, "Tasting is believing and Kyra Bussanich from Crave Bake Shop served up some seriously goo cupcakes - gluten-free or not!" What was the judges initial response whe they found out you were making gluten-free cupcakes? Did you need to elaborate on what gluten-free actually was?