



In an effort to reconcile the conflicting demands of teaching, researching a book, raising a child, and earning our master's degrees, we brainstormed new and innovative ways of educating our students that also yielded some of the results you read in this book. The lecture portions of our classes were four hours long, and no matter how entertaining a teacher is, there is only so much you can say about making a pie. To make the lessons more interesting and interactive, we began assigning research homework. Each student was given a specific dessert or pastry to research and asked to prepare a presentation for the class. Though it was a challenge for the students to uncover quality facts, many came through with fascinating, educational reports that we were able to include here. Although there are many books on the subjects of baking, pastry, and the confectionery arts, there has been no single, comprehensive resource devoted to the topic. It is our hope that *The Pastry Chef's Companion* will be that resource.

We trust chefs, pastry chefs, bakers, confectionery artists, and pastry enthusiasts will relish the wealth of information here, and that it will satisfy their sweet tooth for knowledge.

From us to you—read, learn, and enjoy.

The Rinskys