

Kings of pastry review



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Kings Of Pastry Throughout history the French have maintained a culture that, when viewed by the outside world, is synonymous with fine cuisine, artistically beautiful architecture, and the overall presence of an elitist attitude to the folks who simply don't belong within their borders. When discussing artistic craftsmanship and French cuisine in the same note, it is impossible for those who are aware of its existence not to mention the, Meilleur Ouvrier de France.

Commonly abbreviated, MOF, the Meilleur Ouvrier de France, is a prestigious award that is earned by only the best pastry chefs in the business. To win the collar awarded to MOF's is the ultimate acknowledgment of a pastry chef's skills. Chris Hegedus and D. A. Pennebaker's film, King's of Pastry, speaks to the artistic genius in all of us, delving into the mental, physical, and creative ability required to win such a competition. This revealing film leads viewers to the realization that becoming an MOF is to win the most difficult competition in the entire cooking realm.

Following expert French pastry chef's Jacquy Pfeiffer, Sebastien Canonne and Philippe Rigollot, the viewer is placed in the passenger seat on their obsessive quest for the quaint yet distinct collar that represents more than just a prestigious award. Though universally bided together by the competitions regulations, the candidates experience uniquely different trials and tribulations on their endeavors to have the chance to be declared forever one of the best in France.

Not an aluminum, Iron, or any type of malleable metal Chef, not the winner of the fouled mouthed Gordon Ramsay's train wreck of a show, Hell's Kitchen, but a Meilleur de France. King's of Pastry begins with various scenes

<https://assignbuster.com/kings-of-pastry-review/>

from French cities accompanied by subtitles that function as vocally silent narration. The opening narration is utilized to give background to the award, Meilleur Ouvrier de France, and the environment in which the competitions are held. As the opening scenes of French architecture and culture subside, the film transitions into an introduction of the French chef Jacquy Pfeiffer.

Pfeiffer manages the The French Pastry School in Chicago. Considered to be one of the most prominent cooking schools in the country, and the only one that exclusively teaches pastry, The French Pastry School thrives itself on engaging students while they learn the techniques necessary for mastering the art of French Pastry. As the camera follows Pfeiffer at work, the viewer is exposed to the surgeon like dexterity required to craft tasty and aesthetically pleasing pastry dishes.

Along with the help of already renowned MOF's, Pfeiffer and his team not only teach daily classes but are also in the midst of training for the upcoming MOF competition. In Olympic style, this three-day competition is held every four years and is a mental and physically draining process. After a somewhat long-winded introduction, Pfeiffer finally bids his family adieu and embarks on his journey to France. As the film brings the audience back within French borders, a faster paced tempo is desired but not delivered. At this point in the film, we are introduced to more competitors of the MOF competition in a tangent like manner.

Hardly any background is given to these competitors, which makes it difficult for the viewer to feel empathy or any other emotion towards them. Moreover, if it weren't for the collars on the MOF's it would be near impossible to differentiate which chefs are actually competing due to the

plethora that appear in a single kitchen at any given moment. This middle part of the film also leads the viewer to realize how much preparation goes into such a competition. While I retained respect and understanding of this notion, I still found myself rolling my eyes every so often at the dragging manner in which the film presents itself.

Despite the slow tempo and mono-toned commentaries, the breathtaking sugar sculptures and mouth-watering pastry dishes suffice as a motive for the audience to be drawn into the film and left in awe at the craftsmanship required to create these dishes. Furthermore, these dishes more aptly resemble art sculptures that would be found in an art gallery rather than something on the desert menu at a restaurant. Consequently, it becomes apparent through commentary that transporting these sculptures is half the battle.

At one instance Pfeiffer and company is seen moving one of the sculptures and at an erroneous placement the sculpture crumbles. Why these competitors would have to haul these magnificent sculptures anywhere was elusive at first. However, in light of the fact that the competition does in fact require the competitors to move their sculptures from the kitchen to the gallery was enough to rationalize how the entire competition could be reduced to a balancing act. It is for this reason that the MOF is a long-shot of a competition; one that requires dexterity and creativeness to craft the pastries, but also luck when required to move them.

As the practice and preparation stages come into cessation, the competitors are eager for the anticipated three-day event to begin. As the first day of competition commences the competitors are required to work in the same

kitchen at different stations. Cheating is unthinkable and impossible as countless MOFs pace about the kitchen scrutinizing every move the participants make. As the film finally transitions into a speedy pace it greatly exposes that in order to succeed, time management, efficient skills, and quickness are all equally imperative factors when creating dishes.

The implication is surely one that speaks to most high-level competitions. An implication that a lifetime of skill and practice is not enough, rather a competitor's entire repertoire is tested within a matter of hours. The competitors must obtain perfection that day, a task that requires both proficiency and chance. The second day of the competition entails the competitors to create ten cupcake resembling pastries called, "verrines." Five of these must have the bride's name, the other five must include the groom's. The final day consists of creating the fragile sugar sculpture and then transporting it to the gallery room.