


press pack



VALRHONA



1989-2019

**L'ÉCOLE VALRHONA IS CELEBRATING
30 YEARS OF COMMITTED PARTNERSHIP
WITH ARTISANS OF TASTE TO PUSH BACK
THE LIMITS OF CREATIVITY**

In 30 years, L'École Valrhona has become the center of expertise and creativity in chocolate. It is where artisans of taste from around the world perfect and connect, revealing their own singularity and developing their network. Behind this collaborative and absolutely unique initiative lies an innovative approach to pushing back the limits of creativity that has been revealing itself over the past 30 years. In 2019, Valrhona reaffirms more than ever its commitment alongside professionals for years to come.

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“For 30 years, L’École Valrhona has been weaving ties. Ties that unite chefs, pastry chefs, cocoa producers and Valrhona. Strong and robust, the ties have become a ribbon that intertwines shared skills and taste experiences around the globe. This ribbon charts the course for a responsible gastronomy that serves artisans of taste in their quest to provide their customers with unique experiences. And it also benefits each professional individually on a daily basis. I am proud that L’École Valrhona brings together so many remarkable talents and makes pastry shine with such creativity and mastery. Among L’École Valrhona’s pastry chef instructors, past and present, are France’s top-ranked Christophe Renou and David Capy (*Meilleurs Ouvriers de France**), as well as David Briand, who won the “One of the *Meilleurs Ouvriers de France*” competition in 2018, and Rémi Montagne and Christophe Domange, winners of the World Ice Cream competition.

These ties, woven with passion for 30 years, today have become a network of excellence, a community of exceptional expertise, recognized by the entire profession.

Everything started with Valrhona’s passion for chocolate as the exceptional raw material for pastry professionals. To imagine the best of chocolate, a chef must know chocolate, know how to work with it, how to reinvent it, how to magnify it. L’École Valrhona’s vocation has always been to promote and encourage passing on knowledge. And there has always been one objective: that each professional may develop his skills and inspiration, that she may express her singularity and identity, so that they meet with success and pass on their own knowledge. Thirty years later, the ribbon that L’École Valrhona weaves continues to be strengthened every day.”

Clémentine Alzial, Valrhona General Director



1989 TWO CHOCOLATE EXPERTS CREATE L'ÉCOLE VALRHONA

Frédéric Bau, a visionary pastry chef, and Paul-Bernard Bret, master chocolatier, founded L'École Valrhona together at the company's historic Tain l'Hermitage site. Conceived as a laboratory providing dedicated assistance to professionals, the school's ambition is to pass on expertise and excellence to the greatest number.

PIERRE HERMÉ, EMBLEMATIC ADVISOR

Frédéric Bau's trusted partner for over 30 years, iconic pastry chef Pierre Hermé was L'École Valrhona's mentor when it was created in 1989.

“Valrhona and the Maison Pierre Hermé share a lot of the same beliefs in terms of quality and passion. I had the pleasure of being L'École Valrhona's mentor when it first opened thanks to my love of passing on my knowledge. For me, the willingness to transmit and share is necessary. In artisanal trades, it's essential. Otherwise the trade doesn't develop. Sharing expertise makes it possible to progress, and progress faster, and to pass on your own knowledge.”

Pierre Hermé



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“Valrhona doesn't do chocolate like others. It's a distinctive, singular company and the training and education had to be the same, going beyond cut-out models.”

Frédéric Bau

“It was visionary and that's what I liked about the idea of L'École Valrhona, the desire to share knowledge and disseminate expertise within the profession.”

Pierre Hermé

“When Antoine Dodet, Valrhona's General Director at the time, talked to me about the L'École project, I suggested Frédéric, who was working with me at Fauchon. He was looking for a young and talented person capable of dialogue and passing on his experience.”

Pierre Hermé

“Thirty years ago, Valrhona was focused only on the chocolatier market and wanted to start working in pastry.”

Frédéric Bau

“Paul-Bernard Bret knew so much about chocolate, you could spend hours listening to him...”

Pierre Hermé

“He was a great chocolate man. He stayed at Valrhona for almost 40 years. He passed on all his expertise and his personal skills to me – he was also a gentle and benevolent man. He instilled L'École Valrhona's teaching method, its generosity...”

Frédéric Bau

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2019 L'ÉCOLE VALRHONA IN WORDS

“ INNOVATION,
CRÉATIVITÉ,
EXPERTISE “
Pierre Hermé

“ SINGULARITY,
GENEROSITY,
TRANSMISSION “
Frédéric Bau



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A creative emulsion, because the creative ideas come out everywhere at L'École Valrhona, and in a collegial way, we try to bring together the best to make them into magnificent creations. “

Philippe Givre, Executive Pastry Chef, in charge of coordinating expertise at L'École Valrhona around the world

“L'École Valrhona is modern pastry. “

Laurent Masse, Pastry Chef Instructor at L'École Valrhona in Paris-Versailles

“Excellence, through L'École's involvement in the trade, the level of its knowledge and expertise. It's a school that must always be at the height of excellence. “

Benoît Moulin, Pastry Chef Instructor at L'École Valrhona in Tokyo

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L'ÉCOLE VALRHONA IN NUMBERS

- **1989**, date established
- **30** pastry chef instructors
- **4** Campuses: Tain l'Hermitage, Paris-Versailles, Tokyo, New York-Brooklyn
- **5** Labs around the world: Budapest, Kehl, Seoul, Barcelona and Milan (2019)
- Almost **15,000** people taught each year
- **100** recipes created each year
- Over **1,000** client phone calls answered and resolved each year in France
- **80%** of activity takes place outside of France
- **1995**, the Essentials created
- **2007**, first Trends notebook published
- **2007**, L'École Valrhona in Tokyo opened
- **2009**, L'École Valrhona in Paris opened
- **2014**, L'École Valrhona in Brooklyn opened

2019

30 PASTRY CHEFS FROM 10 NATIONALITIES MAKE L'ÉCOLE VALRHONA SHINE

Today, L'École Valrhona has become an international network of chocolate expertise that brings together 30 pastry chefs from ten different nationalities. They share passion and knowledge, innovate in techniques and recipes and pass on their proficiency...

This new generation of talents mixing gourmet cultures and horizons imagines the future of chocolate and pastry with artisans of taste from around the world ■



LET'S IMAGINE
THE BEST OF
CHOCOLATE
IN PASSING
ON TASTE
AND
EXPERTISE



ABOVE ALL, SHARING
A PRIVILEGED RELATIONSHIP
WITH PROFESSIONALS

Created 30 years ago with the objective of transmitting expertise and excellence, L'École Valrhona continues to share its passion for chocolate thanks to its Campuses, Labs and online program. The network reaches out to all parts of the globe so that any artisan of taste can perfect his technique and experiment, imagining together the best of chocolate.

Showcasing Valrhona's quality, mastery and creativity, L'École Valrhona functions like a place to share and trade, where abundance springs out of confronting points of view, methods, techniques and inspiration. The approach to sharing occurs at many levels, since clients pass on their knowledge to their own teams. This collaborative and essential vision between passionate professionals is L'École Valrhona's signature.

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“A pastry chef's intrinsic essence is to look deep inside himself about what he wants to create, and know how to express it. Cheating is impossible!”

Thierry Bridron, Executive Pastry Chef
of L'École Valrhona France

“Transmission isn't one-directional at L'École Valrhona. It's also a dialogue to find out about professionals' experiences. We're coherent in our overall approach.”

Pierre Hermé

“When you give, you also receive so much, you learn lots of things, it all adds up and we pass on even more. It's one of the most interesting things about L'École Valrhona.”

Rémi Montagne, Executive Pastry Chef at L'École Valrhona
in Tain l'Hermitage

CONSTANTLY INNOVATING, A PROMISE OF ADDED VALUE FOR ARTISANS OF TASTE

In direct contact with Valrhona's Research & Development service, L'École Valrhona's pastry chefs possess unique expertise in chocolate and constantly question traditional methods. “*Our clients, pastry chefs in general, need to see, to taste and to touch,*” explains Philippe Givre, L'École Valrhona's Executive Pastry Chef. Thanks to ongoing applied research, they reinvent chocolate expertise to always do better. Lighter recipes, optimized storage, easier transport, avant-garde concepts... Their innovations feed artisans' inspiration, providing a springboard to assert their singularity and reinforce their success.

“All too often, no one explains expertise. L'École Valrhona's major task has been to explain chocolate expertise and make the verified and proven technical knowledge accessible to the greatest number. Major work has been done on chocolate's technology. L'École Valrhona knew how to invent preparations and spread its skills in whipped ganache or namelaka that I see in different places. Today, they belong to everyone. They are part of pastry cooking's common knowledge.”

Pierre Hermé

“One of the things that makes me happiest is the success of Valrhona's Christmas tree, which will be celebrating its 20th anniversary. You can even see it in Japan, on Instagram... The tree serves as a means for expression. There's a base, and everyone adapts it the way they want. The mold is always the same and yet everyone makes it their own. No two trees are alike.”

Frédéric Bau

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INTERNATIONAL AND CLOSE BY, OUT ON THE GROUND, RIGHT NEXT TO EXPECTATIONS

Created in Tain l'Hermitage in France in 1989, L'École Valrhona has changed dimensions without changing its vision of partnership. Functioning in a completely decentralized manner, with local bases to be closer to professionals everywhere around the world, L'École Valrhona does it all can to bring them personalized services adapted to their needs: demonstrations to discover new products in original recipes, workshops to test products and recipes or advice in reorganizing an offer, technical advice within a company, technical assistance... ■



AN INTERNATIONAL FOR CHO



Campus
Iconic locations



Labs
For meeting
and practicing



**L'École Valrhona
Pastry Chefs**
Helping out on the ground



Four locations dedicated
to training and excellence:
Tain l'Hermitage
Tokyo
Paris-Versailles
New York-Brooklyn

AL HUB OF SKILLS COLATE



Around the world, local labs are available to organize meetings and practical workshops



Digital tools are available to provide daily help to professionals wherever they are, providing access to L'École Valrhona's excellence and expertise.



DEVELOPING TALENTS

Veritable centers of research and creativity dedicated to chocolate expertise, the Campuses are places of perpetual experimentation, where Research and Development, cacao sourcing, sensorial analysis and marketing development congregate. Diverse skills, viewpoints and perspectives produce discussions and ideas that inspire L'École Valrhona's 30 pastry chefs, to create without rest new recipes, new techniques and new products.





“I never have a lot of time. I only ever do L'École Valrhona courses, because I'm very close to the company. They're a partner. And I look forward to the sessions every year because I progress in my own techniques.”

Pierre Hermé



AN EXCLUSIVE PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE

L'École Valrhona uses this wealth of knowledge to help the most demanding professionals through exclusive courses focused on excellence. Artisans of taste all over the world learn to use the products, perfect their technique and magnify their creations. Comparing and learning from their peers, they each reveal their own singularity. France's "Meilleur Ouvrier de France" title is a symbol of excellence and expertise, and L'École is attempting a third recognition among 2019 program graduates.

CONSULTING ON TECHNIQUE AND A HOTLINE

Beyond Campus walls, L'École Valrhona's pastry chefs continue to help artisans of taste everyday, in their laboratories and shops, with telephone assistance in France and consulting missions around the world. Perfecting technique, enriching expertise, developing a network... L'École Valrhona's Campuses are iconic locations for anyone who is passionate about chocolate, making it possible for everyone to learn from each other and progress, to always expand creativity's limits.



“It's training that I really can't find anywhere else.”

Karen Waller, Pastry Chef, London







EXPERTS IN ALL SPECIALTIES: CHOCOLATERIE, PASTRY, RESTAURANT, ICE CREAM AND BAKERY

L'École Valrhona's four Campuses welcome professionals of all levels who wish to progress, whether it's in applying a technique, using a product or exploring a theme. Techno-tactile chocolate, chocolate bonbons, chocolate decoration, travel cakes, Yule log cakes, sweet bistronomy, panettone... There is much to enrich artisans' expertise and inspiration.

PRESTIGIOUS AND INSPIRING GUESTS

Through exclusive collaborations with rising and iconic pastry chefs, such as Claire Heitzler in 2019, for example, Valrhona brings excellence to the added value in its courses. Other well-known names in international pastry are also part of this exceptional network, such as Pierre Hermé, Luc Eyriey, Jean-Philippe Walser, Antonio Bachour, Ron Ben Israël, Norihiko Terai, Oriol Balaguer and William Werner... Every year, they lead classes at each of L'École Valrhona's four campuses ■



“ I am completely thrilled by this course's feeling. There are professional techniques, but there is also soul, there is generosity, there is something much greater, self-sacrifice, a real desire to pass knowledge on. “

Frédéric Pommier, Pastry Chef Anglet

“ It's simply a magical moment, because it is full of sincerity, of sharing, between people who are passionate about what they do. “

Christophe Renou,
Meilleur Ouvrier de France Pastry Chef, Carouge, Geneva

“ We work 365 days a year, and sometimes we need renewal, and these courses, they give us different ideas, different possibilities. “

Fabien Fayolle, Pastry Chef, Dubai



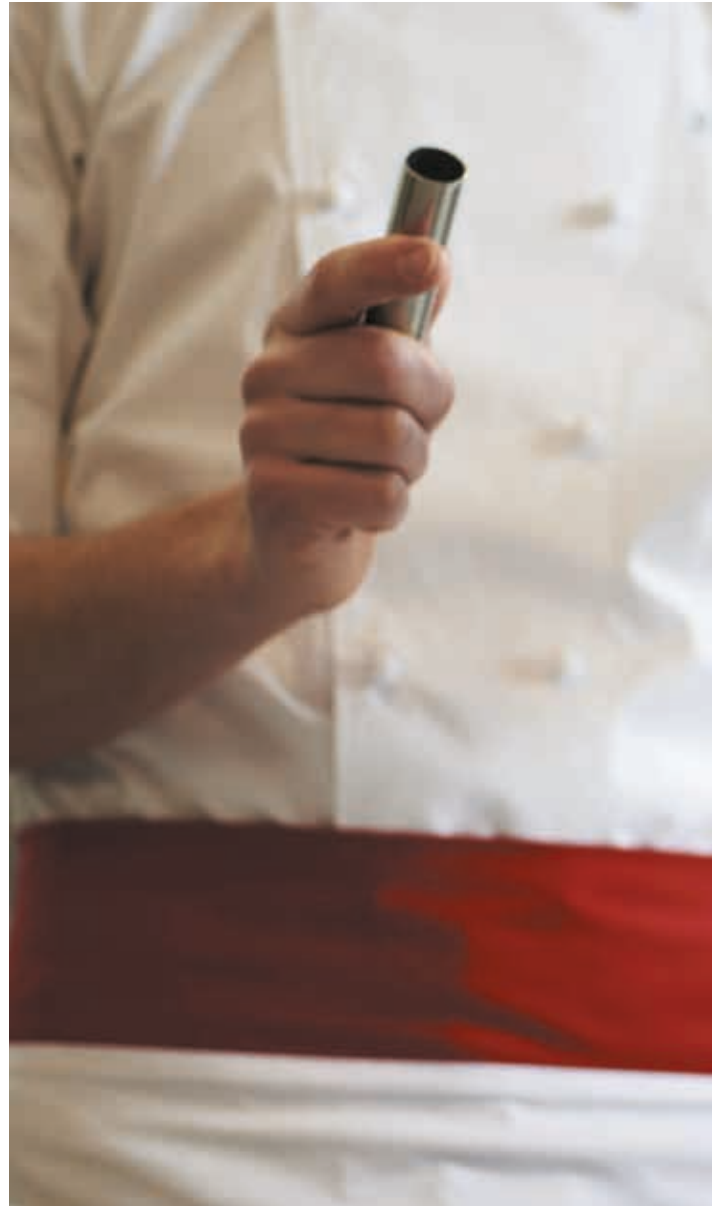


PROMPTING MEETINGS

Created as a way to make L'École Valrhona's expertise accessible around the world, Labs are already present in Budapest and Kehl, and will be in Barcelona and Milan in 2019.

DISCOVER THE VALRHONA WORLD OF CHOCOLATE

Imagined as local laboratories, the Labs are places to meet and discuss. As an extension of the Campuses, L'École Valrhona's pastry chefs offer workshops and tailored training at Labs, especially about basics, for distributors, hotel groups, restaurants and future professionals. They are responsive places where everyone can be trained, inspired, develop their expertise and learn how to better use Valrhona products.



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“ L'École Valrhona has contributed enormously, and not just with recipes, but also in taste knowledge, all the different nuances of taste in chocolate. I'm not referring to the percentage of cocoa, but of tastes, textures, things that make sense and make you think. A recipe is only the end result of this approach. “

Pierre Hermé

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A WINDOW ONTO EXCELLENCE

L'École Valrhona's pastry chefs also spread this willingness and openness to share chocolate expertise out in the world by participating in trade fairs and different major pastry, brand and client events. The strong local connections of L'École Valrhona's pastry chefs also make it possible for the Campuses to grow their training programs, staying close to artisans' daily needs. As places to share and discuss that are open to all, the Labs make L'École Valrhona's mastery shine internationally and provide artisans of taste from around the world with opportunities to develop their culture of chocolate. ■



HELPING OUT DAILY

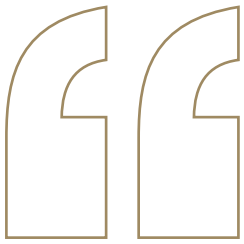


L'École Valrhona has become digital, so that all of chocolate's culture and expertise can be accessible to all and at any moment. So that everyone, according to their rhythm and capabilities, can benefit from pastry chefs' expertise.

This change makes it possible for artisans of taste around the world, and in particular those who have already attended a course at L'École Valrhona, to find advice, recipes and inspirational content on the Valrhona.com web site or on L'École Valrhona's social media accounts.

DIGITAL TOOLS DEDICATED TO SUCCESS

The Essentials guide shows all the basic techniques for pastry. There is also Exercices de styles, veritable little capsules of chocolate creativity, where the greatest names in pastry appear. In the future, L'École Valrhona will continue to provide richer and more immersive content about chocolate, including creating online courses and providing mobile tools. Whatever their needs, for those who wish to perfect their knowledge, these digital courses and new content formats will be a first tie to L'École Valrhona's expertise and excellence. Across its range of online services, L'École Valrhona continues its mission of passing on and sharing with as many people as possible its unique chocolate culture and expertise.



“ At the beginning, the idea behind the Essentials was to provide a Valrhona pastry client with an assembly kit that she would use not to imitate, but to reveal herself and realize her ideas. It took us a thousand tests to create the kit. Now everyone uses it to obtain the same texture with a different chocolate, and make their own pastry. At first only a printed document, the Essentials are also available in a digital version. They are used around the world, and I really feel like we've done something useful. ”

Frédéric Bau

“ It's very important to guide pastry chefs in using chocolate, and the Essentials embody the basic rules. Everyone can decide to follow them or not, but there are many of us who refer to them to start a recipe with a specific chocolate. That way we avoid making fifteen trials. ”

Pierre Hermé



LET'S IMAGINE THE BEST OF CHOCOLATE FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS...

As the world changes faster and faster, L'École Valrhona will always be here to work with taste professionals and help them adapt to new consumer expectations ■

“ At L'École Valrhona, we will keep our philosophy but will change our viewpoint. Professionals need to move with the times, and the future won't be like the past. ”

Frédéric Bau

“ New needs are appearing (vegan, allergies, natural food...) and we will have to pay attention to them. They're a creative opportunity to challenge ourselves, to start some exhilarating research that opens up all kinds of opportunities. L'École Valrhona is in the best position for taking into account these changes and enriching the profession's expertise. The best is yet to come! ”

Pierre Hermé





VALRHONA

