



ABOVE: Kaleidoscopic fruit tarts at Poupart Bakery in Lafayette, Louisiana. THIS IMAGE: Poupart Bakery's fresh-from-the-oven pastries



## The South's Best BREADS & PASTRIES

In the South, bakeries that excel in artisan breads and pastries are scarce. We tend to grow up on plain ol' white bread—an appreciation for rustic loaves can be an acquired taste. And as someone who used to labor over meringues and mousses to construct picture-perfect pastries, I still feel awe for chefs who forge stunners equally pleasing to the eye and palate.

### BLUEGRASS BAKING COMPANY

LEXINGTON, KY

Though they craft lovely Danish and croissants, the centerpiece remains the golden loaves baked in a stone oven that imparts a crisp, chewy crust.

#### WHY WE'RE SWEET ON IT:

They sell magnificently dense European-style breads.

**ORDER THIS:** Raisin-pecan bread—the ultimate breakfast toast.

[bluegrassbakingcompany.com](http://bluegrassbakingcompany.com)

### H&F BREAD CO.

ATLANTA, GA

Co-owned by Linton Hopkins of Atlanta's Restaurant Eugene and Holeman & Finch Public House, H&F has become a darling of the city's burgeoning farmers markets.

#### WHY WE'RE SWEET ON IT:

H&F brings a distinctly Southern lilt to baking, topping focaccia with peaches and elevating glazed apple fried pies into dulcet handheld delicacies.

**ORDER THIS:** Southern sandwich bread, the ideal base for the bakery's pimiento cheese.

[hfbreadco.com](http://hfbreadco.com)

### POUPART BAKERY INC.

LAFAYETTE, LA

Catering to Cajun culture, this bakery serves beignets, lemony Doberge tortes, and puff-pastry King cakes. It also showcases a wonderland of French-style pastries crafted by François Poupart, who immigrated to Louisiana in the early 1960s, and his son Patrick.

#### WHY WE'RE SWEET ON IT:

Vibrant fruit tarts, puffy éclairs,

and meticulous slices of opera cake are as delicious to devour as they are to behold.

**ORDER THIS:** Strawberry Delight, an old-world beauty of fresh strawberries, mousseline (custard and whipped cream) and fraiser (a sponge cake made with almond meal). *Mail order available; [poupartsbakery.com](http://poupartsbakery.com)*

### UPPER CRUST BAKERY

AUSTIN, TX

On a busy corner of the town's park-laden Rosewood area, Upper Crust has been a mecca for Austin coeds, moms, and morning commuters for more than 15 years.

#### WHY WE'RE SWEET ON IT:

This consummate local bakery is as much a breakfast-and-lunch touchstone as a source for fresh artisan breads.

**ORDER THIS:** Brioche, made savory (ham and cheese), sweet (chocolate and raspberry), or stuffed with Swiss cheese.

[theuppercrustbakery.com](http://theuppercrustbakery.com)

### WILDFLOUR PASTRY

CHARLESTON, SC

Lauren Mitterer's neighborhood gem gratifies cravings all day: Mornings begin with scones and turnovers; later in the day, fruit crisps appear.

#### WHY WE'RE SWEET ON IT:

Lauren, previously a restaurant pastry chef, translates her formal know-how to create both sophisticated and homey creations with equal panache.

**ORDER THIS:** Pecan-topped sticky buns, served on Sticky Bun Sundays. *Mail order available; [wildflourpastrycharleston.com](http://wildflourpastrycharleston.com)* ➔