

When I was growing up, gourmet food was a luxury we simply could not afford. My mom's idea of gourmet was tuna casserole once a month. We did not have the money to live high on the hog. My parents tried to feed us in a healthy manner, and we grew up strong and fit, but I couldn't help but feel like I had missed out a little bit. That is why I decided to go to culinary school. Now that I had the chance to make my own way in life, I wanted to know everything I could about gourmet food. I didn't know it at the time, but gourmet candies would become my specialty. They would soon be at the center of my life.

At the time I entered chef school, I had no idea that there were such a thing as gourmet chocolate candies. When I thought of gourmet, I immediately pictured steaks and French cuisine. Gourmet candy was beyond the scope of my limited world. After all, what could be better than a Hershey's chocolate bar? Quite a bit, it turns out!

During an apprenticeship to a chocolatier following my culinary education, I became enamored of gourmet chocolate candy. Every day, I would spend morning till night making gourmet candies. It was a lot of work, and it would have burned some people out, but I was loving every moment of it. Although the hours were long and the job did not pay very well, I didn't mind. I was learning a valuable skill, and I got to eat all the gourmet candies I could possibly want. It wasn't until later, however, when I discovered my true love.

Don't get me wrong, gourmet chocolates are good. Gourmet hard candy, however, is even better. I was hired by a toffee maker, and was exposed to tastes that completely blew my mind. The gourmet candies we made were like nothing I had ever imagined. Soon, I was coming up with my own recipe ideas and they were selling like hotcakes. After a while, an idea occurred to me. Although I liked my job, it didn't make sense to stay on and work for the candy maker when I could use my own recipes in my own shop. I quit as soon as I could scrape some funds together, and started a gourmet candy store of my own. It has done very well.