

MODERN LUXURY

MICHIGAN AVENUE





**SAVORY
SURPRISE**



SPICY, SALTY, EARTHY, AND HERBACEOUS—UNEXPECTEDLY SAVORY FLAVORS ARE THE NEW DESSERT STARS AT SOME OF CHICAGO'S HOTTEST RESTAURANTS.

BY AMBER GIBSON

When it comes to desserts in Chicago, one thing is certain: Savory is the new sweet—and top chefs are pulling out the stops to explore this buzzy new flavor profile. Like Fifty/50 Group executive pastry chef Chris Teixeira, whose savory s'mores at **Steadfast** (120 W. Monroe St., 312-801-8899; steadfastchicago.com) feature a rosemary marshmallow and rosemary-infused milk-chocolate ganache.

Says Teixeira, "I wanted to show that a flavor as strong as rosemary can still be delicate."

Cheese meets dessert at **Bin 36** (161 N. Jefferson St., 312-995-6560; bin36.com): Pecorino Romano panna cotta is topped with apple- and pink-peppercorn gelée and crunchy candied walnuts for a light transition from savory to sweet.

Even chocolate gets the savory treatment at Old Town's **Cocoa + Co.**

(1651 N. Wells St., 312-624-8540; cocoaandco.com), where Kim Hack spikes her most unique drinking chocolate not with booze but a medley of spices—freshly ground cumin, coriander, ginger, black pepper, cinnamon, and cloves, from The Spice House—for a savory, Moroccan-inspired drinking chocolate.

And at Fulton Market District sizzler **Elske** (1350 W. Randolph St.,

312-733-1314; elske-restaurantchicago.com), Anna Posey's praline-inspired caramelized sunflower seed parfait is kissed with fermented sour honey and finished with licorice crumble and bee pollen, eschewing sweetness for an herbaceous nuttiness. "A well-executed menu can transition easily from savory to sweet," insists Posey. "Using some 'savory' ingredients helps that transition." ■

Not so sweet: Chicago restaurants embracing the savory dessert trend include (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) **Elske**, which features a sunflower seed parfait with sour honey, licorice, and bee pollen; **Cocoa + Co.**, whose Moroccan Spice drinking chocolate is spiked with black pepper and cumin; and new Loop fine dining spot **Steadfast**.