

MODERN LUXURY

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Clockwise: Inside Ladurée; Buttercream Bakery Valentines-inspired cupcakes; Ladurée confections; a Lil' B king cake creation.



SWEETER IS BETTER

Rise to the occasion with a delicious gift from a local bakery.

New Orleans native David Guas knows dessert—his cookbook *Dutch Good Sweets* was a James Beard Award finalist. For Valentine's Day, Guas' **Lil' B** (1515 Rhode Island Ave. NW, DC, 202.521.7181, lilbdc.com) offers a New Orleans king cake with a festive twist—instead of a circular confection in Mardi Gras green and gold, you can give a heart-shaped version with a dusting of pink and red sugar. **Buttercream Bakeshop** (1250 Ninth St. NW, DC, 202.735.0102, buttercreamdc.com) wants you to show some love in February by participating in its #RememberToBeKind campaign. When you buy a confection for another customer—like a

Buckeye (a rolled blend of peanut butter, cocoa powder, Rice Krispies and honey-roasted peanuts)—you get 15 percent off plus the priceless chance to make a stranger's day. When you step into **Ladurée** in Georgetown (3060 M St. NW, DC, 202.737.0492, laduree.com), with its white marble counter, antique furniture and multihued macarons stored under glass, you can't help but fall in love. Channel that armor into a gift of éclair chocolat au lait (a chocolate choux pastry with Jivara milk chocolate cream and milk chocolate icing) or try the galette des rois cake (a French king's cake made of crispy puff pastry and garnished with almond cream and almond pieces).