



Photo for the Tribune by Brian Morowzcynski

Pastry chef Veronica C. Miramontes returned to her native Mexico to learn the art of making gelantinas.



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Colorful gelatin flowers, embedded in flavored gelatins, come in eight flavors at DelecToGo.

Artistry in motion

Wielding a syringe loaded with colored gelatin, Veronica C. Miramontes turns dessert into edible if wiggly art. She creates intricately shaped, realistic flowers inside domes of clear, flavored gelatin. The result looks like a classic paperweight but tastes like, well, bubble gum.

Miramontes is co-owner of DelecToGo, a new bakery, catering and takeout food purveyor in Skokie, along with Mark Kwasigroch, a pastry arts instructor at Kendall College, and April Gelber. Miramontes works fast to create her gelatin flowers inside a larger piece of flavored gelatin. First she injects brown lines to replicate a flower's stamens and then she begins creating the petals one by one until the flower is fully formed. A small flower is completed in about 5 minutes.

Her floral *trompe l'oeil* desserts are so realistic you hesitate to wield a spoon for fear of ruining the look. And when you do muster the courage, there's a weird sensation when said spoon glides effortlessly through the flower, for it's gelatin in gelatin with nary a change in texture.

"People will think it is a real flower and ask, 'What's that? Can we eat it?'" she said.

Miramontes, a native of Mexico City, said gelatin desserts are very popular in Mexico and are a must-have at parties alongside the cake. These *gelantinas* can range from simple flavored gelatin to intricately molded assemblies studded with fruits or nuts.

Taken by gelatin flower desserts seen on television, Miramontes went home to Mexico determined to learn how to make them. She hooked up with a family friend who knew the method. After two days of intense practice, she had it down.

She makes her floral gelatin desserts in eight flavors: banana, bubble gum, apple, pineapple, amaretto, peach, tropical punch and tutti-frutti. Small gelatin desserts are \$5 and are available at the store. She hopes to expand the line with new Mexican flavors early in 2007.

DelecToGo is located at 3455A W. Dempster St., Skokie; 847-675-0500, or delectogo.com. The shop is open Monday through Saturday.

—Bill Daley