



# Pastries Beat Pork Bellies

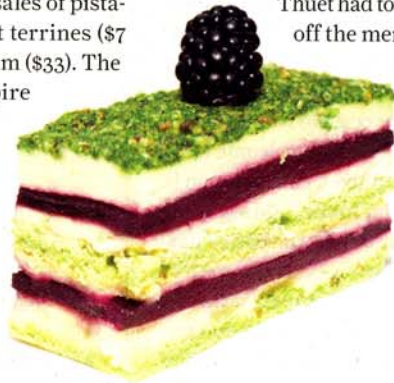
*Bay Street's recession blues were a good reason to stock up on sweet nothings*

**THE NEED TO INDULGE DIDN'T GO AWAY;** the indulgences just got smaller. We cancelled gym memberships and skiing in Vail, eschewed Kobe beef and water sommeliers, and rediscovered the pleasures of cake (and cookies and pâtés). **In the past months, a baker's dozen of high-end bakeshops and cafés opened up—Nadège Pâtisserie, LPK and La Bamboche among them—each offering its own spin on edible solace, from gin and tonic marshmallows to spicy chèvre noir shortbread. French-style macarons, once rare imported treats, are as common as doughnuts—the tiny \$2 bites of meringues and ganache are the new gold standard for economies of scale. Marc Thuet sells about 200 of the pastel-hued beauties**

a day at his two new food emporiums—an affordable luxury for stressed-out wage slaves and weary execs. For Thuet, they are a gateway treat that leads to sales of pistachio tortes (\$6 a slice), rabbit terrines (\$7 a slice) and wild raspberry jam (\$33). The restaurant arm of his empire saw Atelier Thuet close in June, but the Petite

Thuet outlets are bustling with sugar hounds. The clearest sign that the dessert culture of the mid-'90s recession is back?

Thuet had to take the fruit salad off the menu—it didn't sell.



## Rye's High

*Students and moneyed donors can't get enough of the school's job-promising programs*

**STUDENTS WHO ARE EAGER TO** stay off the dole are lining up to enrol in Ryerson's employer-friendly programs; a record 70,000 applied for 5,000 slots this academic year, the highest per-space application rate in Ontario. It helps that Ryerson is flush with cash: the school's conservative investment strategy meant it lost only 15 per cent of its \$70-million endowment, and the province has been throwing money at new buildings, scholarships and programs that emphasize technology and entrepreneurship—\$250 million to Ryerson in the past year. There's even more money to help hard-up students, after former Barrick Gold exec William Birchall and his wife, Katharina, made an unsolicited million-dollar donation this past summer. So, despite years of clawing its way to accredited university status, Rye High's poly-technic past is what's keeping it relevant (and solvent).



## Charitable Misgivings

*Fundraising balls aren't much fun when the glitter girls stay home*



**ONLY A YEAR AGO, THE ANNUAL FASHION CARES FUNDRAISER** for the AIDS Committee of Toronto came back bigger than Mickey Rourke. David Furnish took time off Elton John duty to co-host, and Katy Perry sang her song about kissing girls before everyone was sick of it. Most importantly, the event raised \$306,000 for ACT. All of which was great news for Michael King, nightclub impresario, professional socialite and Fashion Cares' newly appointed chair, who drew on his considerable Rolodex to ensure just the right mix of debs, biz knobs and topless dudes. But his high was short-lived. Last March, King announced that the festivities would be taking a year off (a "bridge year," he called it) in order to rally a suitable stable of sponsors and volunteers. King didn't come out and say the R-word, but ACT had to admit the economic downturn made for some serious challenges. Other balls also saw the recession cut into profits (the Brazilian went from \$7 million in 2008 to \$2.7 this year), but a full-stop cancellation sent a chill through the social set. This wasn't a year to spend big on partying, even for charity. King promises that Fashion Cares will be spectacular in 2010. Furnish has signed on again. If he ropes Elton into performing, the crowds might return, too.