

National Festival of Breads baking competition

Merry Graham of Newhall, California, and RaChelle Hubsmith of North Logan, Utah, are the grand prize winners in the 2019 National Festival of Breads baking competition, sponsored by Red Star Yeast, King Arthur Flour and the Kansas Wheat Commission.

Judges selected Graham's Blackberry Ginger Speculaas Danish Wreath from among four finalist recipes in the Food Blogger Division and Hubsmith's Chai Ube Rosette Rolls among the four finalists in the Home Baker Division. All eight finalists baked their recipes at the public competition on June 8 in Manhattan. The National Festival of Breads is the America's only amateur bread-baking competition.



This was Graham's third time competing in the National Festival of Breads as a finalist. Competitions like the National Festival of Breads are actually what sparked her interest in food blogging. Graham began competing in cooking contests in 2009 and became hooked. Graham's blog, "A Merry Recipe," showcases her recipes and recommended ingredients. She sees her blog as a way to have fun, compete and to connect with bakers and food enthusiasts from around the world. Her readers and followers are those she had met through culinary adventures and on airplanes! Graham also blogs so that her family and friends can have an "online" collection of her recipes and experiences.

Hubsmith was a first-time finalist in the National Festival of Breads. Her recipe, Chai Ube Rosette Rolls, came from a variety of inspirations. Her first inspiration was purple sweet potatoes that she saw at a farmer's market, and she instantly knew she wanted to make a bread with them. She used chai because it is her family's favorite spice, and she enjoys putting it in many different recipes. The look of the rolls came from her love for baking cakes. Using fondant techniques, she rolled the dough to resemble a rose. All of her ideas came together to create a masterpiece and earned her the title of Home Baker Champion.



As the 2019 National Festival of Breads champions, Graham and Hubsmith both receive \$1,500 cash, plus a trip to attend a baking class at the King Arthur Flour Baking Education Center in Norwich, Vermont. In addition, they will each receive a year's supply (120 envelopes) of Red Star Yeast.

The champions and all eight finalists' recipes are available at <http://nationalfestivalofbreads.com>.

