

# JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

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## ***These Jewish baked goods made the New York Times' list of '25 Essential Pastries' in NYC***

*Jewish-inspired babka, knishes, doughnuts and cheesecake made the mouthwatering roundup published by T: The New York Times Style Magazine.*

By [Jackie Hajdenberg](#) October 22, 2025



Breads Bakery's chocolate babka is one of NYC's 25 'essential pastries' according to T: The New York Times Magazine. (Hip Torres, courtesy Breads Bakery)

*Inspired by the “[bakery renaissance](#)” that’s currently underway across New York City — if you spot a line somewhere, there’s a very good chance there are baked goods at the end of it — T: The New York Times Style Magazine has assembled a list of “[The 25 Essential Pastries to Eat in New York City](#).”*

*Among those on the list are several Jewish treats, including a buttery, chocolatey babka that’s made New Yorkers’ mouths water since 2013 and a tiny knish filled with sauerkraut and dill from a buzzy new bakery on the Lower East Side.*

*To assemble their list of 25 standout pastries — a tough task, we imagine — the magazine assembled a panel of renowned bakers: pastry chef and writer Tanya Bush; pastry chef*

*Camari Mick; chef and Milk Bar founder Christina Tosi; Bánh by Lauren founder and pastry chef Lauren Tran; Shaun Velez, executive pastry chef at Daniel; and baker and cookbook author Melissa Weller.*

*Among the panel's picks are some beloved old-school sweets like Lloyd's Carrot Cake and the sour cream glazed doughnut from Peter Pan Donut & Pastry Shop; upscale creations like the Lysee mousse cake from Lysee and four Jewish-inspired desserts. Keep scrolling to see, in alphabetical order, which Jewish pastries are on the Times' list.*

### **1. Agi's Counter's cheesecake**

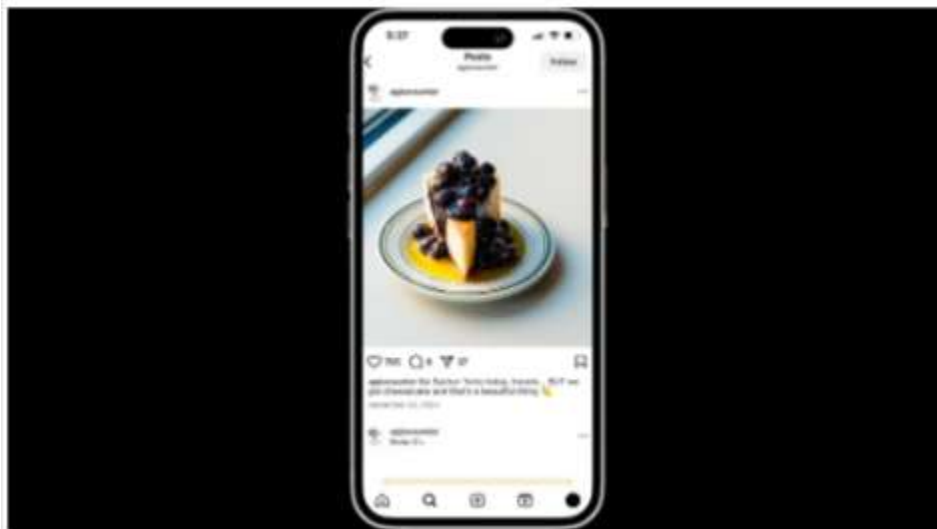
*Opened in 2021 by Brooklyn-based Jewish chef Jeremy Salamon, Agi's Counter (818 Franklin Ave.) was inspired by Salamon's grandmother, Agi, a Hungarian Jew and a Holocaust survivor.*

*"Most people, when they hear Hungarian, if they have any idea the first thing that comes to mind is probably paprika or goulash — maybe chicken paprikás," [Salamon, a James Beard Award-nominated chef, told the New York Jewish Week last summer](#). "The concept is so limited."*

*The cheesecake at Agi's Counter has been on offer since the restaurant opened — in fact, for a while, it was the only dessert on the menu. "A riff on the dense, creamy New York style often credited to Arnold Reuben, who made it a century ago at his Jewish diner, Reuben's Restaurant in Midtown, and later popularized at diners like Junior's, which first opened in 1950 in Downtown Brooklyn, Salamon's version is a thick wedge made with Philadelphia cream cheese on a crushed graham cracker crust," the magazine describes.*

*At Agi's Counter, the "well-executed take on a classic" is served topped with extra virgin olive oil, Maldon salt and a lemon wedge during dinner service. As part of the weekend*

brunch menu, it is topped with a blueberry and coriander compote.



The cheesecake at Agi's Counter with a blueberry compote. (Screenshot via Agi's Counter Instagram)

*“It was like \$18, and I was there for lunch, so the dessert was actually the most expensive part,” said Tran. “I thought, ‘Oh, bold.’ And then I was blown away.”*

*While you’re there, don’t miss Agi’s Counter’s tuna melt, which features “oily, slow-cooked tuna, alpine Cheddar, pickled peppers, celery, dill and Kewpie mayo. Last year, it was [one of 11 Jewish sandwiches on the New York Times’ list](#) of “57 Sandwiches That Define New York City.”*

## **2. Breads’ chocolate babka**

*The chocolatey, buttery, braided babka at Breads Bakery has been delighting New Yorkers since 2013, when the Israeli-inspired spot first opened near Union Square.*

*Breads’ buttery, laminated dough — “crispy-edged, springy and oozing with a Nutella-and-chocolate filling” per the Times — [reignited the popularity of this Ashkenazi dessert across the city](#) (and eventually [in Paris](#), too.)*

*Today, Breads has six locations around the city, and its babka has become a New York icon — the bakery reportedly sells over 1,000 babkas a day during the winter holidays, per the Times. Co-founder and owner Gadi Peleg refers to his baker as “the house that babka built.”*

*According to panelist Weller, Breads “started a trend of babka, and also the trend of laminated doughs being used in different ways.”*

*Added Tosi: “He really defied the odds of how much chocolate one could put in babka.”*

## **3. Elbow Bread’s potato sauerkraut knish**

The Lower East Side's buzzy Elbow Bread (1 Ludlow St.) opened last October, where baker Zoë Kanan has been busy creating old-school Jewish baked goods with a modern twist.

Backed by partners Eric Finkelstein and Matt Ross, [the founders of the popular Flatiron Jewish luncheonette S&P](#), Kanan — who's been called “a baker's baker” by New York Magazine — turns out delicacies like bialys and rugelach, as well as contemporary hybrids like a challah honey bun, which is part croissant, part challah and [“our sweetest ooey, gooey item,” Kanan told the New York Jewish Week.](#)

“There aren't many Jewish bakeries here anymore,” Kanan said. “I saw an opportunity to do something here [on the Lower East Side], in a location with so much Jewish history, and bringing my own personal style to it, which borrows from a lot of different techniques and ingredients. I love the classics and tradition is important, but what I find myself thinking about is ways to reinterpret.”

The pastry that made the *T Magazine* list is a savory one: a tiny sauerkraut knish, made of flaky laminated pastry wrapped around mashed Yukon Gold potatoes “flecked with crunchy salt and flavored with sauerkraut, onions, sour cream and fresh dill.”

“Knish was this thing that you just didn't want,” panelist Weller said of the small pastry. “I love that she decided to reinvent it. Because it needed that.”

#### **4. Fan-Fan Doughnuts' guava and cheese fan-fan**

After successfully launching the NYC mini-chain Dough Doughnuts and ice pop company La Newyorkina in 2010, Mexican-Jewish pastry chef Fany Gerson opened her Brooklyn doughnut shop Fan-Fan Doughnuts (448 Lafayette Ave.) in the fall of 2020. Despite launching during the pandemic, lines formed out the door.

In her work, as in her life, Gerson enjoys reflecting on the richness of her Jewish and Mexican heritages. “I feel like through time I've explored it through food and [I'm kind of bridging the two worlds,](#)” Gerson told the New York Jewish Week in 2021.



A close-up of the guava and cheese fan-fans at Fan-Fan Doughnuts. (Screenshot via Fan-Fan Doughnuts Instagram)

*During Hanukkah, Gerson sells delicious and inventive sufganiyot, which are traditionally fried, round jelly-filled doughnuts that are enjoyed during the holiday. But the pastry that made the Times' list can be enjoyed year-round: an éclair-inspired doughnut, known as a fan-fan, that's filled with cream cheese, glazed with guava and topped by a brown butter walnut cookie crumble.*

*The treat is "inspired by the guava cheese roll from one of her favorite Mexico City bakeries," according to the Times.*

*"That's the thing about food, it's not ephemeral," Gerson told us. "How many memories are tied to food? A smell can take you back."*