

# Cupcakes Are Here To Stay

Two years ago, Bill Jones was a man with a dream to be a successful baker of little cakes.

Today his store, Jones Bros. Cupcakes, bakes a wide variety of cupcakes, macarons, cakes, cheesecakes, cookies and other items for its customers daily. He's competed and won on the Food Network's "Cupcake Wars," served the winning cupcakes to superstars at the Country Music Awards, and competed in Food Network's "Cupcake Champions."

Who'd have thought a little cake batter could be so much fun? Probably Jones, who did a ton of research on America's ongoing affair with cupcakes before opening his shop in Aksarben Village.

Jones said he had a successful career in marketing and was looking for something else to start his own business. His ultimate inspiration fermented in visits to restaurants. "I'd get a dessert and found I didn't enjoy it," he said. "I started making my own desserts and doing it for a number of years – and friends would show up and eat them all."

He had an idea to open a dessert and wine bar and traveled to cities like New York, Washington D.C. and Los Angeles to examine trends. Along the way he fell in love with cupcakes.

Jones said cupcakes are more than a trend on the coasts. "They've been around for ten years there – I think they're here to stay," he said. Disdaining any mixes for the treats, Jones said his family recipes are from

scratch all the way. "We use sugar, butter, flour and eggs," he said. "People do taste the difference."



Bill Jones with assortment tray

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Lest anyone think this is a made-up corporate name like "Mom's Pies." There really are Jones brothers running Jones Bros. Cupcakes. Bill's brother Brad lives in New York as a banker (and is in Omaha virtually

every weekend), while parents Elizabeth and Jerry (he's a retired pathologist) are also in the business.

Jones, an Omaha native and graduate of Westside High School, wanted the business to start in his hometown. "I was looking at a number of locations and my father said 'This is the spot (Aksarben Village) – don't look anywhere else,'" Jones said.

Omaha architects Leo A. Daly helped with the design of the 4,700 square foot store, which seats 100 inside and has additional seating for 70 on its outdoor patio. It has 7 bakers and approximately 30 employees.

Getting the business off the ground is where his bank came in. "First National is the one who talked to us," Jones said. "They've turned out to be very easy to work with, in credit card processing, in working with other companies, in handling all the 'busy work' and giving good rates. Cindy Balzer handles my small business account and I have a direct line to her. They've been really good for us."

Since opening two years ago, Jones Bros. Cupcakes has entered into wedding cakes, tarts, macarons, yogurts and catering. "Sometimes this is rocket science," Jones jokes. "It's hard to promote so many things, but our head chef (Nate Steinbach) can



Renan Rieur, Executive Pastry Chef, is decorating chocolate mint cupcakes

do great food and soups from scratch using high-quality ingredients. I never planned on this being a restaurant – there are already so many in Omaha of high quality – but we get a lot of word-of-mouth and requests for catering."

The store has caught on in a big way. "We've already got more than 20,000 Facebook subscribers after two years," Jones said. There are expansion plans for a couple more stores in Omaha, hopefully within a year.

"We see a lot of smiling faces," he adds. "Cupcakes are here to stay."

[www.jonesbroscupcakes.com](http://www.jonesbroscupcakes.com)



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