



ISSUE 65

Slice

THE WINTER ISSUE

Nada Bakery Wins

The Great New Zealand Hot Cross Bun Competition 2025

Celebrating Matariki • Cinnamon Spotlight & New Recipes



NEW ZEALAND'S OFFICIAL
BAKING INDUSTRY
MAGAZINE

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- Mike Meaclem (Christchurch)



THIS PAGE: Nada Bakery's gold award
winning hot cross buns.
IMAGE: Supplied by Nada Bakery.



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WELCOME TO Slice

Kia ora and welcome to our Winter issue of Slice.

Inside this edition, you'll find insight, inspiration, and plenty of proof that great things can take time, effort and heart – with bakeries refining their classics, pushing creative limits, and investing in what matters most.

We spotlight two very different journeys – Nada Bakery's 50-years-in-the-making hot cross bun win, and the breakout success of Cinnamon Squared, a startup winning fans by the hundreds. Together, they show that whether you're building on decades of tradition or starting from scratch, passion, grit, and craft are what make greatness rise.

We also look to the future – with wisdom from the global stage, reflections on food heritage like rēwena bread, and a reminder of the business backbone through tools like Google Business Profile and insurance tips.

There's something quietly powerful about this time of year – an invitation to slow down, sharpen your skills, and reflect on what matters most in your business and baking. Whether you're planning a winter menu, prepping for competition, or just riding the seasonal rollercoaster, we hope this issue brings both warmth and inspiration.

Thanks for reading, and as always, happy baking.

Rose Cawley
Editor

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

We're proud to serve up another great issue of Slice. These are some of the talented minds behind it.



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creatives**
www.thecreatives.co.nz

PRESIDENTS REPORT

A word from Bernie



DEAR MEMBERS AND BAKING NZ PARTNERS AND FRIENDS,

As winter settles in, I've been reflecting on just how connected our industry has become. From local bakeries to global trade shows, there's a shared energy in baking right now – a mix of tradition, innovation, and a hunger for what's next.

WHERE THE WORLD MEETS BAKING

This year has offered some incredible opportunities for me to see our industry in action on the global stage. From Iba in Munich to Bakery China in Shanghai and the upcoming BIBE in Las Vegas in September, these international events are more than just spectacles – they're real-time glimpses into the future of baking.

What's striking is how aligned many of the trends are, no matter where you go:

- A strong push toward sustainable practices
- Continued demand for high-quality, artisan products
- The rise of automation and smart bakery tech
- And a global appetite for unique flavour profiles and health-conscious options

These aren't just buzzwords – they're shifts you can feel, and I've seen them reinforced again and again at each event I've attended.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

I'm especially looking forward to the BAA show in Sydney this July, which will include the Excellence in Baking Awards, ANZBAKE, and an organised Baking Masterclass Tour. It's a brilliant opportunity for Baking NZ members to connect with peers across the Tasman, share knowledge, and maybe even pick up some ideas that'll transform your next product launch or shop fit-out.

If you've ever thought about travelling to one of these events all I can say is – do it! They're as much about inspiration and camaraderie as they are about learning. You'll come back with more than business cards – you'll come back with perspective.

LOOKING AHEAD, TOGETHER

At Baking New Zealand, our goal is to keep supporting this incredible community: through connection, advocacy, and practical resources. Whether it's navigating market challenges, championing apprentices, or simply encouraging bakers to take their next big leap, we're here to help you grow.

In closing, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our members, partners, and dedicated professionals who make the baking industry so vibrant and essential. Together, we will continue to rise to the occasion.

Bernie Sugrue
Baking New Zealand President

To get in touch with Bernie directly, you can email him at president@bakingnz.co.nz



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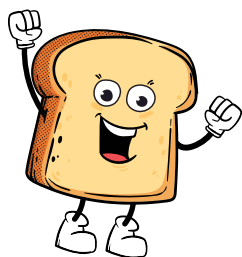
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10.



20.



44.



49.

IN THE MIX

The latest news in the
baking world

OPERATING AS A MOBILE BUSINESS

Some councils have expressed uncertainty about which registration authority is responsible when it comes to mobile businesses. The registration authority involved depends on the type of risk-based measure.

A mobile business is a food seller such as a market stall or a food truck, that does not have fixed premises. They might operate within one council region, or in multiple regions nationwide. The mobile business must register their business address at their "home-base". The home-base could be the home address where the business owner lives, or it could be an alternative business address.

Mobile business operating under a section 39 template FCP (Simply, Safe & Suitable)

The registration authority is the local council of the "home-base". See Food Act section 52.

If the mobile business operates in one council region, that council will also carry out the verification.

But if the mobile business operates in more than one council region, the council will not have the exclusive right to verify that business under section 137 of the Food Act. Therefore, a mobile business that operates in more than one council region must choose their verification agency from the MPI list of recognised agencies.

Mobile business operating under a national programme

The registration authority is the local council of the "home-base". See Food Regulations clause 43. The mobile business must choose their verification agency from the MPI list of recognised agencies.

Mobile business operating under a section 40 template FCP or custom FCP

The registration authority is MPI. The mobile business must choose their verification agency from the MPI list of recognised agencies.

DO YOU HAVE
NEWS?

EMAIL US AT

EDITOR@BAKINGNZ.CO.NZ

TO SHARE YOUR STORY

ARE YOU NZ'S BREAD BAKER OF THE YEAR?

The Bread Baker of the Year competition is run annually by the New Zealand Association of Bakers and is open to bakers in NZ that have completed their qualification within the past two years. Along with gaining the Bread Baker of the Year, and/or Young Bread Baker of the Year, winners will be presented with a research grant up to the value of \$15,000 for research such as overseas travel to look at new technology, ingredients, process or trends in products.

bakeinfo.co.nz

EMERGING FOOD ALLERGY RISK WEBINAR SERIES

Food manufacturers, retailers and foodservice operators will see a continuing increase in the number of consumers who are managing food allergies. This year, the NZFS Emerging Risk team will host a series of webinars on emerging allergens and food allergies, inviting leading experts to present their research. You can join the Emerging Food Allergy Risk Webinar Series:

- Wednesday, 23 July at 11am-12pm
- Thursday, 14 August at 12-1pm

HOW MUCH IS FOOD WASTE COSTING YOUR BUSINESS?

The Food Waste Rapid Review is a simple, 3-step tool designed to help businesses identify food waste hotspots, measure their impact, and take practical steps to reduce waste. Whether you're just getting started on food waste action or looking to improve your existing efforts, the Rapid Review will help you unlock opportunities for cost savings, sustainability, and smarter resource management.

kaicommithment.org.nz/tools/

IMMEDIATE TAX DEDUCTIONS FOR NEW EQUIPMENT

The 2025 Budget introduces the "Investment Boost" policy, allowing small businesses, including bakeries, to immediately deduct 20% of the cost of new machinery, tools, and equipment from their taxable income. This initiative aims to encourage investment in productivity-enhancing assets.

SAY *hello* TO OUR NEWEST BAKING NZ MEMBERS

- **Rosedale Bakery & Café**
Samraksmey So, Auckland
- **Don Rodrigo Sourdough Bakery**
Rodrigo Ardiles, Nelson
- **Authentic Bakery**
Auckland



ANZBAKE 2025 MASTERCLASS TOUR NOW OPEN FOR REGISTRATION

Kicking off on Tuesday 15 July, the ANZBAKE 2025 experience begins with a full-day pastry masterclass hosted by Tracy and Josh Nickl of the award-winning Gumnut Patisserie. Participants will enjoy a behind-the-scenes kitchen tour, hands-on learning, and detailed recipes to take home. The day continues with a visit to Snake Creek Cattle Company, offering insights into ethical paddock-to-plate production.

The following days include access to the BAA Baking Industry Trade Show at Wentworth Park, the Excellence in Baking competition, an Artisan Bread Masterclass, and the BAA Awards Dinner.

Coach transport and refreshments are included for the masterclass. Flights and accommodation are self-booked.



Scan to find out more
and book your ticket

CAKE PICNICS TAKE THE WORLD BY STORM

From TikTok to the lawns of San Francisco, Cake Picnics are capturing global attention. The signature event saw over 1,000 people bring more than 1,300 cakes – homemade, store-bought, and wildly creative – to share, photograph, and devour. With just one rule ("No cake, no entry"), these picnics are joyful, sugar-fuelled celebrations of community and creativity. Organiser Elisa Sunga calls it a "slice of life." With more picnics planned in London and New York, the cake craze shows no sign of slowing.

ENTRIES OPEN FOR THE 2025 ARTISAN BREAD COMPETITION

Think your bread is the best? The BNZ Artisan Bread Competition is here for 2025, calling on New Zealand bakeries to enter their best artisan-style loaves. Entries must be received at Fine Food Show Auckland by 11:00am, Monday 30 June.

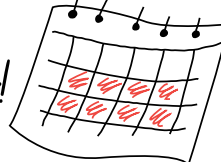
Find out more at:
bakingnz.co.nz

GET YOUR
ENTRY IN

MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN
THE NEXT BAKING NEW
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CHECK OUT THE DETAILS
AT: BAKINGNZ.CO.NZ

SAVE THE

date!



BAKING NEWS

JUNE

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1.
2. King's Birthday	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
16.	17.	18.	19.	20. Matariki	21.	22.
23.	24.	25.	26. Entry forms are due	27.	28. School Holidays Start	29. Fine Food New Zealand
30. Fine Food New Zealand	 ARTISAN BREAD COMPETITION All entries must be received at Fine Food Auckland 2025 by 11:00am, Monday 30 June.					

JULY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1. Fine Food New Zealand	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13. School Holidays End
14.	15. Baking Industry Trade Show Australia	16. Baking Industry Trade Show Australia	17. Baking Industry Trade Show Australia	18.	19.	20.
21.	22.	23. Pies are due for judging	24. Judging takes place	25. The Food Show Auckland	26. The Food Show Auckland	27. The Food Show Auckland
28.	29. Results are announced	30.	31.			

AUGUST

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				1. International Beer Day	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
11.	12. International Youth Day	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.
18. Bread Baker of the Year Competition entries open	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.
25.	26.	27.	28.	29.	30.	31.



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INGREDIENTS

BASE

GFIG Premium Flour	0.450
Tararua Butter	0.300
Chelsea Caster Sugar	0.170
Vanilla Essence	0.005

CARAMEL

GF Food Service Condensed Milk	0.670
Chelsea Golden Syrup	0.215
Tararua Butter	0.120

TOPPING

Chocolate Budlets	0.100
TOTAL (kg)	<u>2.030</u>

BASE

1. Cream butter and sugar together until light and creamy.
2. Add vanilla essence and flour and mix until crumb texture is forming, do not over mix.
3. Keep approx. 200g aside of crumb mix to sprinkle on top of the caramel. Press the remaining crumble mixture into a lined baking pan (approx. 34cm x 24cm x 5cm) with a consistent thickness.

CARAMEL

1. In a saucepan place the condensed milk, golden syrup and soft butter.
2. Over a gentle heat, stir the mixture until the butter has melted and all ingredients are combined. Do not over heat.

ASSEMBLY

Pour the caramel mixture over the crumble base, spread evenly and then sprinkle over the remaining 200g crumble mixture. Sprinkle over 100g chocolate budlets.

BAKING

Bake at 170°C to 180°C for 25 to 30 minutes until caramel is set and base is baked.

Baking time and temperature may vary from oven to oven.

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Winners



Nada Bakery



Volare Bread



Michaels Bakery



Piefee



Richoux Patisserie



Topstar Bakery



Knead on Benson



U-Bake Bakery



The Clareville Bakery



Fairlie Bakehouse



The great NZ **HOT CROSS BUN COMPETITION**



This year's Baking New Zealand competition drew entries from across Aotearoa, each one hoping to take the top spot in this beloved Easter ritual. After plenty of spice, fruit, and spirited debate, the judges crowned the country's best buns. For the winners, it's more than just a title – it's a sweet reward that's driving sales, building loyalty, and turning new customers into hot cross converts.





FROM GOOD TO GOLD

Nada Bakery's 50-Year
Journey to the Best Hot
Cross Buns in New Zealand



IMAGE SUPPLIED. Michael Gray of Nada Bakery

The winners of this year's Great New Zealand Hot Cross Bun Competition prove that greatness isn't rushed – it's refined.

After placing second and third in recent years, Nada Bakery rose to the top in March's hotly contested competition, taking out first place. Volare in Hamilton claimed second, with Michael's Patisserie in Christchurch rounding out the top three.

The win comes in a milestone year for Nada Bakery, which celebrates 50 years in business. Founded by Michael Gray's father in 1975, the bakery's hot cross bun recipe has been decades in the making – carefully evolved and perfected over generations.

"Going back about 30-35 years ago, my father really decided to up the ante on how we were doing hot cross buns," he says.

"He upped the weight and looked at a different spice blend, and that was the start of the evolution that has got us to where we are now. About 10-15 years ago it was just sultanas and mixed peel but now it's a variety of fruit. Five years ago we changed how we were glazing the bun incorporating a variety of citrus fruits.

"That's food for you - it's like fashion. It's always evolving. You take the element of what's classic and you put a spin on it to make it desirable to customers."

Michael and head judge Patrick Welzenbach both say the secret to making a hot cross bun for a competition (or any product for that matter) is to look for new ways to take it to the next level.

THE PERFECT RECIPE

Having finished on the podium in the last two years, the Nada Bakery team knew they were doing something



IMAGE SUPPLIED

right. Michael says this year was about tweaking the recipe to improve the flavour.

"We built on a diverse flavour profile; we're not just using a bit of cinnamon, we've got 9-10 different spices in the bun. It's about layering them to build something special."

How exactly do you do that? Again, Michael and Patrick are in agreement - they both say it's about really honing in on the little things that make the bun better.

"To be honest, you can't just take a bun from the shelf and enter it and expect it to win," Patrick says.

"With a competition bun, you might do it slightly differently or put more focus in and make it as close to perfect as you can."

"It's just building from one year to the next," Michael adds.

"For example, we concentrated on making sure we had the crosses looking extra straight this year, and making sure they were placed nicely on the baking tray to get an even bloom.

"Everything you're producing for a competition should have the foundation of the recipe and the process, and it's executing it to the ultimate level. You should be producing a really good product in your shop everyday already, then it's just polishing it up for the competition to go that one step further.

"We did a practice run two weeks prior to the competition to make sure we were on the right page. Did them in exactly the same way with the perfect tray, proving, moulding, making sure ovens were dialled in...everything."

STANDING OUT

When you're entering a competition, one of the first decisions you have to make is, what direction do you want to go in?

Do you want to perfect a traditional recipe, or do you want to reinvent it with a touch of your own flavour?

There's no right or wrong answer - it's about delivering the very best of whatever approach you pick to make your bun memorable. Smashing a traditional recipe or wowing with something judges haven't seen before are both ways of doing it.

"In people's eyes, what makes a hot cross bun is fruit and spice and a cross. How you execute that can be totally different," Michael says.

"It's about how you take those basic ingredients, maybe add something or maybe not, and then how you combine them, the process you go through and the refinement you put on them to hopefully stand out from the others."

While the winning Daily Bread hot cross buns of the past have been more traditional, Nada Bakery's champion bun is a bit more unique, with a large variety of spices including such as pimento pepper and cassia.

"What we're doing is a little bit different," Michael says.

"It's more punchy, it's very fruity; we're running a significant fruit to flour weight, so there's a lot going on in the bun. They're large buns too - a six pack weighs about 850 grams."

First impressions matter as well, so it's crucial you select the best-looking buns for judging. For Michael, that means a slightly different cooking process.

"Normally we'd bake a whole rack of buns once with 12 trays, but for the competition we just did six. It helps to have a more even cook. When you bake with fewer trays it's a slightly quicker cook and a softer crust - you have to learn how to take that into account as well."

THE BENEFIT OF COMPETITION

There are plenty of good reasons why entering a competition is worth your time.

For Michael, he says competitions are a helpful trigger for figuring out ways to make standard baking even better.

"They really make you analyse what you're doing and say, 'Can we do it better?' Competitions give me inspiration to drive our business and go, 'Are we doing a good job of this? Would it be considered a great bun, not just a good one? And how could we make it even better?'"

Patrick says winning competitions is a good way to get your name up in lights, but it's not a golden ticket - the challenge is to continue to delight and impress customers.

"Winning competitions can be very good for the business immediately afterwards - it promotes your product and people. But it's more important to have consistent quality and good customer service.

"Every day is a challenge. Even if you win a competition but your product in the shop is average, customers aren't coming back."

Winning can also help businesses to push out margins. Michael says even in today's economy, customers are willing to pay for quality.

"Ours are not the cheapest bun on the market - they're \$17.50 for a pack. It's about making sure you're delivering a great product - people remember the quality long after they've forgotten the price."

There's also the effect of entering and winning on team culture. Michael says winning is the icing on the cake, but the collective effort that goes into putting an entry together can really bring a team together.

"Everyone in the team had something to do with it this year. Mathew, one of our longest-standing bakers, took the lead, I pitched in, and we had bakers in charge of the crosses and the proving. Even in selecting the perfect six buns for judging, the team from the shop came through and picked the ones they thought looked best.

"When we got the call to say we'd won, we were all so excited and proud - not just to win something but to climb to the top of the mountain as a team. It was awesome."



Nada Bakery



@nadabakerynz



64 Johnsonville Road, Wellington

BAKING NEW ZEALAND – COMPETITION TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

1. ELIGIBILITY TO ENTER

- 1.1. Entry is open to all individuals or businesses involved in the baking industry, unless otherwise specified in the individual competition's Entry Schedule.
- 1.2. Baking NZ reserves the right to verify the eligibility of any entrant at any time and may request supporting documentation.

2. ENTRY PROCESS

- 2.1. Each competition will have an accompanying Entry Schedule, which outlines categories, product requirements, key dates, submission instructions, venue details, and entry fees (if applicable).
- 2.2. All entries must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided in the Entry Schedule.
- 2.3. All entries must be registered prior to the entry cut-off date stated in the Entry Schedule. Late entries will not be accepted under any circumstances.
- 2.4. On successful registration, entrants will be issued a unique Entrant Identification Number via email. This number is essential for submission.

3. ENTRANT IDENTIFICATION AND LABELLING

- 3.1. The Entrant Identification Number must be clearly and securely attached to each product or display board submitted.
- 3.2. No branding, logos, business names, personal names, or identifying marks are permitted anywhere on or with the product.
- 3.3. Any entry submitted without the Entrant Identification Number or with any identifying information will be automatically disqualified without refund.
- 3.4. It is the sole responsibility of the entrant to ensure the correct and compliant labelling of entries.

4. JUDGING PROCESS

- 4.1. All entries will be judged anonymously and solely on the quality, appearance, taste, and technical merit of the product.
- 4.2. Judges are appointed by Baking NZ and are qualified experts in the baking and food industry.
- 4.3. All judging decisions are final, and no correspondence will be entered into.
- 4.4. Scores and feedback may be provided at the sole discretion of the judges and Baking NZ but are not guaranteed.

5. DISQUALIFICATION AND REJECTION OF ENTRIES

- 5.1. Entries may be disqualified at any stage if:
 - They are submitted after the cut-off date.
 - They are not labelled in accordance with section 3.
 - They do not comply with the product specifications in the Entry Schedule.
 - They are deemed unsafe, spoiled, or improperly handled.
- 5.2. Disqualified entries are not eligible for a refund of any fees paid and will not be returned unless otherwise agreed in writing.

6. DELIVERY OF ENTRIES

- 6.1. Entrants are responsible for the timely and safe delivery of their entries to the specified venue and time.
- 6.2. Baking NZ takes no responsibility for entries that are delayed, lost, or damaged in transit.
- 6.3. Delivery instructions, including exact date, time, packaging requirements, and location, will be detailed in the Entry Schedule and must be followed strictly.

7. OWNERSHIP AND USE OF ENTRIES

- 7.1. All products submitted become the property of Baking NZ upon delivery and will not be returned.
- 7.2. By entering, you grant Baking NZ the right to photograph, sample, display, publish, and promote your entry for promotional or educational purposes.
- 7.3. Any use of entrant names or business names for promotional purposes will only occur with express permission.

8. LIABILITY

- 8.1. Baking NZ accepts no responsibility for any loss, damage, or injury arising from participation in the competition or from the handling or preparation of entries.
- 8.2. Entrants enter and deliver products at their own risk.
- 8.3. It is the responsibility of the entrant to ensure that all products are safe for handling and consumption.

9. PRIVACY

- 9.1. Personal information collected during the registration process will be used solely for the purposes of administering the competition and communicating with entrants.
- 9.2. Your information will not be shared with third parties unless required by law or with your consent.

10. CONDUCT AND FAIR PLAY

- 10.1. Entrants are expected to behave professionally and in the spirit of good sportsmanship.
- 10.2. Any attempt to influence judges, breach anonymity, or manipulate outcomes will result in immediate disqualification and potential ban from future events.
- 10.3. Any concerns or issues must be submitted in writing to Baking NZ within 7 days of the competition. Verbal complaints or public online criticism without prior contact will not be entertained.

11. ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS

- 11.1. Submission of an entry constitutes acceptance of these Terms and Conditions.
- 11.2. Baking NZ reserves the right to amend these terms at any time, with notice provided on the official Baking NZ website or Entry Schedule.

ISSUED BY

Baking New Zealand Incorporated

Contact: competition@bakingnz.co.nz

Website: www.bakingnz.co.nz



HOW WE RUN BAKING COMPETITIONS

WORDS Patrick Welzenbach



PATRICK WELZENBACH
CHIEF JUDGE, BAKING
INDUSTRY NZ

IT ALL STARTS WITH A CONVERSATION

The Baking New Zealand executive team meets in person to plan what competitions are coming up. Once the focus is agreed, I draft the judging criteria. Together, we fine-tune what matters most — flavour, texture, presentation, and consistency. Once everyone is on board, we publish the criteria so every bakery knows exactly what is being judged.

HERE TO SUPPORT EVERY STEP

Once entries open, I'm the main point of contact. I help answer questions, solve issues, and make sure every product is properly entered. Each one gets a randomly assigned number to keep it anonymous — no bakery names, no hints, just the product itself.

JUDGING DAY SETUP

On the day of judging, I prepare the space. I place every product on the table, assign fresh judging numbers, and make sure the room is closed until judging starts. This keeps the process neutral and gives every entry the same chance.

HOW JUDGING WORKS

Our judges use a custom-built app to scan or enter the number of each entry. They score based on the agreed criteria. Once everything is judged, I get the results straight to my phone. It's quick, clear, and locked in.

WHAT IF THERE'S A TIE?

If two entries end up with the same score — and it hasn't happened yet under my judging — I'll decide whether to re-judge or pick a winner based on consistent performance across all criteria.

MY ROLE IS TO RUN THE PROCESS, NOT JUDGE IT

I don't score any products myself. I stay out of the judging and focus on making sure everything runs smoothly and fairly. That's the whole point.





FROM SOLDIER TO SWEET SUCCESS

AUCKLAND'S CINNAMON
ROLL OBSESSION

WORDS Nick Walker

It only took a few weeks for a small, niche bakery in downtown Auckland to build a fanatical following.

Cinnamon Squared opened in February, specialising in high quality cinnamon rolls. Soon after, they were selling out within hours - their biggest issue was dealing with disappointed customers who came too late.

It's a fascinating story of how a former soldier and hospitality veteran has dedicated himself to perfecting one product, and has ridden the twists and turns to make it successful.

BACKGROUND

If you rewind two years, you wouldn't find Cinnamon Square owner Minseok Lee anywhere near a kitchen. Of all things, he was working in the army as a LAV (light armoured vehicle) operator.

He'd worked in hospitality through high school and in the last two years since leaving the army. He's the first to admit he hasn't followed the textbook path to owning a baking business, but believes all his different jobs and circumstances have taught him valuable lessons for where he is now.

"I've had that exposure to people and lessons around me. Owning a bakery is not just about baking, there are a lot of different factors in running a business.

"It's also not just me; I have my fiancée, who is great with money - she handles all financials and business projections, and was also a key factor in starting this business."



"The best way to grow the business is to focus on quality over quantity, and that's how we see ourselves growing into the future."

- CINNAMON SQUARE OWNER MINSEOK LEE



Minseok says he would have been happy opening a Korean restaurant, but fiancée Suyeon Bae's favourite food is cinnamon rolls, so he decided to start a bakery that specialises in them instead.

He's thought about opening a business for many years, but started looking at it in earnest in early 2024.

"Our business planning took 12 months, and nine months of that was just looking for a good lease. That wasn't just about the location, but a lot of lease agreements didn't have good terms.

"I looked everywhere from Albany to Manukau and couldn't find a better place than the one we found on Victoria Street in the CBD. There's no coffee shop, no bakery around here and I've lived in Auckland central so it was ideal."

The shop itself is fairly small (just 40 square metres) but it's plenty big enough to attract a crowd.

OPENING

You can never truly know what to expect when you open a bakery. Minseok knows this as well as anyone, having agonised over preparations and still been taken by surprise.

Opening day was February 25. That was delayed by two months because they wanted to feel more prepared. In hindsight, Minseok says that wasn't necessary.

"We were thinking of every scenario - what if this happened or that. We realised we actually just had to open and run the business to learn from experience. We still thought we weren't ready for it but we always were.

"Experience is the best teacher. You should just expect to make mistakes, accept that you can't be perfect and become better."

Cinnamon Squared kicked off fairly quietly in the first couple of weeks as people slowly discovered them. It was a solid start, and it all changed with two customers one Thursday afternoon.

"Heart of the City helped us to get up and running, and they'd posted on their social media about us. That helped to get a couple of Instagram influencers to come through and post.

"We went from having 50 customers on the Thursday to 300 on the Friday - it was the most chaotic day. From then on we've been running off about two hours sleep a night, it's just been crazy."

As well as scrambling to try and meet demand, it meant having to hurriedly hire more staff. They needed people to start immediately, and to train them up while also being under pressure with lines out the door and inevitable complaints when they sold out.

"The plan was to start quietly and slowly pick up, but it was a completely different story. It was chaos, actually," Minseok says.

"We had people telling us we weren't well prepared. Customers came from as far away as Hamilton and Whangārei and missed out. They were upset and we felt sorry for them, but we couldn't produce any more without compromising the standard of our rolls and we're not prepared to do that."

At one point, they started doing free coffees for people who turned up after they'd sold out. Minseok says they gave away 50-60 coffees for six days, before it became obvious they couldn't sustain it.

He agrees there's an up-side if the scarcity of the buns fuels greater demand, but he still doesn't like letting people down - even if it's become a part of his daily routine.

"We can do up to 700 rolls on our busiest days now, and sometimes even that isn't enough. We've got seven staff in our tiny shop on those days - it's packed. I'd apologise to maybe 200 people who miss out some days, but the most important thing is to keep up our standard."

SPECIALISING

Minseok isn't interested in offering a variety of products; he's driven by mastery. He wants to specialise in one thing and be the best at it.

"There could be 20,000 different cinnamon roll recipes, but I couldn't use one that's originally from someone else. I wanted to incorporate the best parts of a couple of different recipes and make it my own. I'm still learning, still tapping into different ways of doing things to make my rolls better so other people can't be better at it."

Naturally, he doesn't want to give away too many secrets. But he's open about his special ingredient - high quality, imported Ceylon cinnamon from Sri Lanka.

"It's a purer quality and a milder flavour," Minseok says.

"I get a lot of compliments that the scent isn't too strong or too sweet, but the flavour is really nice."

Minseok was fortunate to have a connection to a manufacturer in Sri Lanka, which means he can get Ceylon cinnamon imported for less than the usual rate (it typically retails for three to four times the price of common cinnamon). This discovery was a key factor in deciding to open the Cinnamon Squared in the first place.

They also hand make all their own sauces and toppings for the seven different flavours on offer. Cream cheese, apple and pistachio are the most popular.


It's been such a whirlwind opening that it's easy to forget the business has only been going for a few months. Minseok is mindful of building Cinnamon Squared for long term success, rather than cashing in on their 15 seconds of (relative) fame.

"We're looking at increasing our capacity because we don't want to make people wait or miss out, but we're proud to say that we have a strict amount of numbers to serve.

"The best way to grow the business is to focus on quality over quantity, and that's how we see ourselves growing into the future."



Cinnamon Squared

 @cinnamonsquared_nz

 41 Victoria St West, Auckland

SAVOURY FILLINGS TO INSPIRE

Ready-to-use, colourful and versatile, providing flavour or a base to build from.

IDEAS FOR USE:

Mix through savoury breads, scrolls, muffins and scones.

Use as a pop of flavour on top or on the base of quiche, pies or pizzas.

Delicious mixed through pasta or plant-based meat alternatives.

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| ✓ GLUTEN FREE | ✓ DAIRY FREE |
| ✓ HALAL SUITABLE | ✓ VEGAN SUITABLE |

Flavours:

- Basil & Garlic
- Capsicum & Apricot
- Caramelised Onion
- Chilli & Red Onion
- Hawaiian
- Spicy Vegetable
- Sundried Tomato & Olive
- Tomato & Mushroom



Available in 1.25kg piping bags





Savoury Scone Scroll with Basil & Roast Garlic

Serves: 8 to 10

INGREDIENTS

- 300g plain flour
- 5g salt
- 5g sugar
- 15g baking powder
- 85g butter
- 80g grated cheese
- 180g milk
- 120g **Barker's Professional Basil & Garlic Savoury Filling**
- 100g extra grated cheese

METHOD

Sieve the flour, salt, sugar and baking powder together. Add the butter and rub into the sieved dry ingredients until the butter is mixed through completely.

Add the grated cheese and milk. Mix together until just combined – be careful not to over mix the dough at this stage.

Turn the dough out onto a well-floured bench and dust with flour. Lightly mix the dough until it is no longer sticky.

Roll out the dough into a 5mm thick triangle.

Spread the **Barker's Professional Basil & Garlic Savoury Filling** over the surface. Sprinkle the extra grated cheese on the top.

Roll up the dough. Cut into desired portions and place onto a prepared baking tray. Lightly egg wash.

Bake at 200°C for approximately 12 to 15 minutes.

Basil & Garlic Pain D'Epi

Makes: 2 loaves at 440g each

INGREDIENTS

- 500g strong flour
- 15g gluten flour
- 20g olive oil
- 12g salt
- 22g fresh yeast (or 8g of dried yeast)
- 320g water (28°C)
- 150g **Barker's Professional Basil & Garlic Savoury Filling**
- 200g grated cheese
- fresh ground black pepper

METHOD

Develop the dough and place into a lightly oiled, covered bowl. Allow it to ferment in a warm place.

Knock back the dough after 40 minutes. Cover again and allow the dough to rise for a further 20 minutes.

Roll the dough to a thickness of 5mm. Spread a layer of **Barker's Professional Basil & Garlic Savoury Filling** onto this, followed by the grated cheese and black pepper.

Roll up the dough then cut with scissors to form the Epi design.

Allow the dough to prove, then bake at 200°C for approximately 15 minutes.

Brush the Epi with olive oil immediately after removing from the oven and place onto a cooling rack.



PIES GLORIOUS PIES!

It's time to begin the search for the best pies in New Zealand with entries now open for the Bakels NZ Supreme Pie Awards.



When it comes to pies, New Zealand stands tall on the world stage – and much of that reputation can be traced back to the bakers who continually raise the bar through one of the country's most beloved culinary competitions: the Bakels New Zealand Supreme Pie Awards.

Now in its 27th year, the competition has become a fixture of the national food calendar. And according to NZ Bakels managing director Brent Kersel, it's more than just a contest – it's a celebration of local pride and innovation.

"They love encouraging their local bakery to enter; they follow the process closely and then they celebrate the success of the competitors, even if it's not their local bakery," says Kersel. "We're proud to be part of that. There's such a feel-good factor around the Pie Awards and it starts building before we've even announced that entries are open."

The awards have come a long way since they began in 1996 with just a couple of categories. Today, there are 11 distinct categories, spanning from Kiwi staples like Mince and Cheese to more experimental options in the Gourmet Meat, Café Boutique, and Vegetarian ranges.

"It does us proud to see how far the competition has come and the huge difference it has made to pie production in New Zealand. People talk about our pies all over the world now!" says Kersel.

Kersel is particularly excited about the potential for cafés to stand out this winter. "Cafés can really attract some reasonable winter sales by creating a special pie flavour. That pie gives people an incentive to go out in winter weather to have a coffee and a pie at your café," he says. "But are you game to put your pie to the ultimate test and potentially add your business to the list of the best pie makers in New Zealand? With a Café Boutique pie you don't have to make your own pastry. That allows you to focus on the filling. What would you choose for your filling, savoury or sweet?"

Entries for the 2025 competition are now open, and the categories are structured to accommodate a wide range of bakeries – from small local cafés to large commercial producers making more than 60,000 pies a week. Whether you make your own pastry or use bought-in, there's a category to suit.

KEY DATES:

- **ENTRIES ARE NOW OPEN**
- **JUNE 26 ENTRIES CLOSE**
- **JULY 24 JUDGING DAY**
- **JULY 29 BAKELS NZ SUPREME PIE AWARDS**

**WANT TO
KNOW
MORE?**

**ALL THE ENTRY
DETAILS ARE AT
PIEAWARDS.NZ**



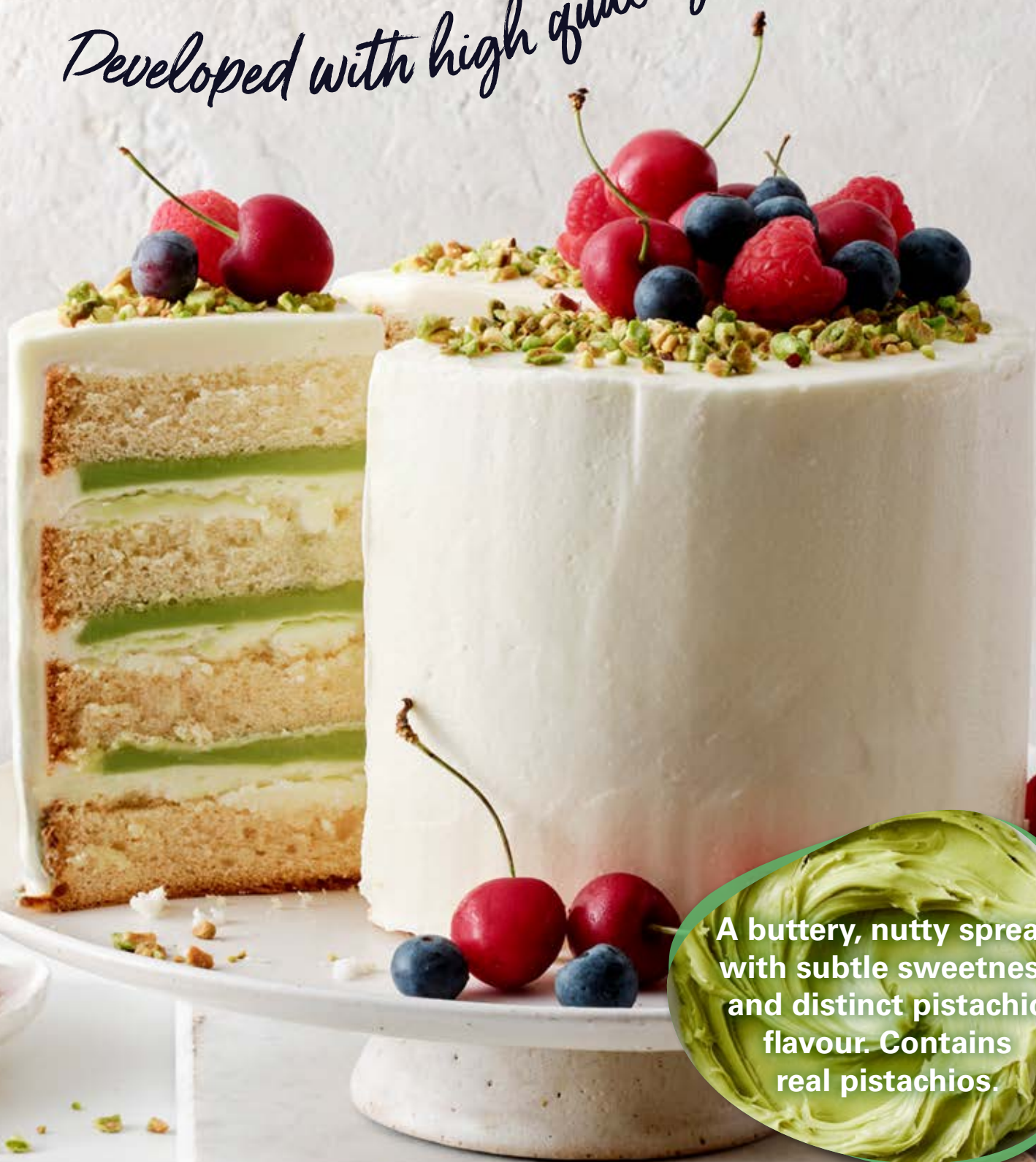
NEW PISTACHIO SPREAD

PRODUCT CODE: 514131 6KG PAIL

- ✓ Versatile: Use as a spread straight from the pail or heat to required temperature for dipping, pouring or drizzling.
- ✓ Rich and indulgent flavour.
- ✓ Smooth and velvety mouthfeel.
- ✓ Ease of use.
- ✓ Freeze thaw stable: maintains quality and consistency after freezing.
- ✓ Contains premium ingredients - uses real pistachios.



Developed with high quality ingredients



A buttery, nutty spread with subtle sweetness and distinct pistachio flavour. Contains real pistachios.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

APPARENTLY, EVERYTHING - WHEN IT COMES TO SOURDOUGH STARTERS

Naming your sourdough starter might seem like a quirky side quest, but for many bakers, it's a rite of passage. Giving your dough companion a name adds a little heart, humour, and personality to the process. From celebrity puns to full-blown absurdism, here are 40 weird and wonderful names we've kneaded together to inspire your next fermentation fixation.

Whoever first named their sourdough starter surely would never have dreamed how common it would become. Many pursuits have little oddities and traditions to add a bit of fun or meaning, and it seems now that if you haven't named your starter, you're probably in the minority.

But why not?

Sourdough starters can survive many, many years, and be the secret ingredient in family baking that's passed down the generations.

Why not give your starter its own moniker?

What might start out as a bit of a joke could very easily become surprisingly meaningful.

You might go with a fun, baking-related pun, you could deadpan a human name for no apparent reason (there's something inherently funny about a starter called Greg), or you might name it after someone meaningful in your life.

You might also be inspired by the 'personality' or characteristics of the bread you make.

In the interests of providing some inspiration, these are some of our favourite creative options.



ONE NAMERS

1. Doughleen
2. Breaderick
3. Crustina
4. Breadward
5. Doughvid
6. Bradley
7. Kneadrick
8. Margarise
9. Crustopher

HISTORICAL FIGURES

10. Crust-opher Columbus
11. Leonardo Dough Vinci
12. Dough-seph Stalin
13. Bread-jamin Franklin
14. Juli-yeast Caesar

OLDER MUSIC VIBES

15. Bread Zeppelin
16. Lucy in the Rye with Diamonds
17. Bready Mercury
18. Crusty Springfield
19. Gluten John

MODERN CELEBRITIES

20. Dua Loaf-a
21. Dough-ja Cat
22. Billie Rye-lish
23. Taylor Sift

24. Zendoughya

25. Knead Sheeran

SPORTING NAMES

26. Dough-nah Lomu
27. Roger Bread-erer
28. Rory McIl-Rise
29. Wayne Roo-Knead
30. Cristia no Ronal-Dough

SLIGHTLY OLDER NAMES (FOR THOSE WITH LONGER MEMORIES)

31. David Hassel-Loaf
32. Bread Pitt
33. Crust Crust-offersen (bonus points for doubling down)
34. Crust-in Timberlake
35. Barbra Strei-Sandwich

A LITTLE BIT 'OUT THERE'

36. Sherloaf Holmes
37. Vol-dough-mort
38. Doughnald Trump
39. Fro-dough Baggins
40. Loaf Vader

Got a starter with a name too good not to share?

We'd love to hear it! Email your best sourdough starter names to editor@bakingnz.co.nz or tag @bakingnz on social media with a photo of your bubbling buddy. Bonus points if it's punny, or unexpectedly heartfelt.



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flour that consistently delivers
exceptional dough strength,
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Anzbake Masterclass

Sydney, 15-17 July 2025

Tuesday 15th July

7.30am Coach departs for a Masterclass with Tracy & Josh Nickl from the multi-award-winning Gumnut Patisserie.

Visit to Snake Creek Cattle Company for a tour of their paddock to plate butchery, bakery and bar.

Wednesday 16th July

Attend the BAA Baking Industry Trade show at Wentworth Park.

Thursday 17th July

Join the Artisan bread masterclass at the BAA Tradeshow and watch the ANZBAKE 2025 competition.

Register Now!

Visit **totalbaking.co.nz** to reserve your masterclass experience. Please note that spaces are limited. A special discount is available for BakingNZ members!

Arrange your own flights and accommodation, and join us for an inspiring experience.

SCAN ME



@thegumnutpatisserie



@snakecreekcattlecompany



PROUDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY



ENTRY RULES

One entry per bakery.

Open to any artisan-style bread: white, wholemeal, seeded, rye, or mixed flours; sourdough or yeasted.

Final baked loaf weight must be between 750g and 1000g.

No sweet, filled, or decorative breads.

Bread must be baked by the entering bakery in New Zealand.

Submit two full loaves: one for judging (slicing), one for display.

Include a printed A5 description card with:

- Bread name (e.g. Sprouted Spelt Sourdough)
- Ingredients
- Fermentation method (e.g. sourdough, yeast, or hybrid)
- Short product description or inspiration

No bakery name, logo, or identifying marks on the card or bread.

All entries must be received at Fine Food Auckland 2025 by 11:00am, Monday 30 June.

Judging Criteria (100 Points Total)

Appearance (15 pts): Shape, scoring, crust colour. No decorative elements.

Bake & Crust (20 pts): Even bake, caramelised crust, no underbaking.

Crumb Structure (20 pts): Open/even crumb, good fermentation and hydration.

Aroma & Flavour (35 pts): Depth, balance, clean finish.

Technical Skill (10 pts): Execution, shaping, use of flour types, and difficulty.

Clarification – No Decorative Breads

Not allowed: shaped loaves (animals, symbols), decorative scoring, painted or coloured designs.

Allowed: traditional shapes (round, loaf, batard), functional scoring, light flour dusting.

Judging will focus on bake quality, flavour, and skill – not art.

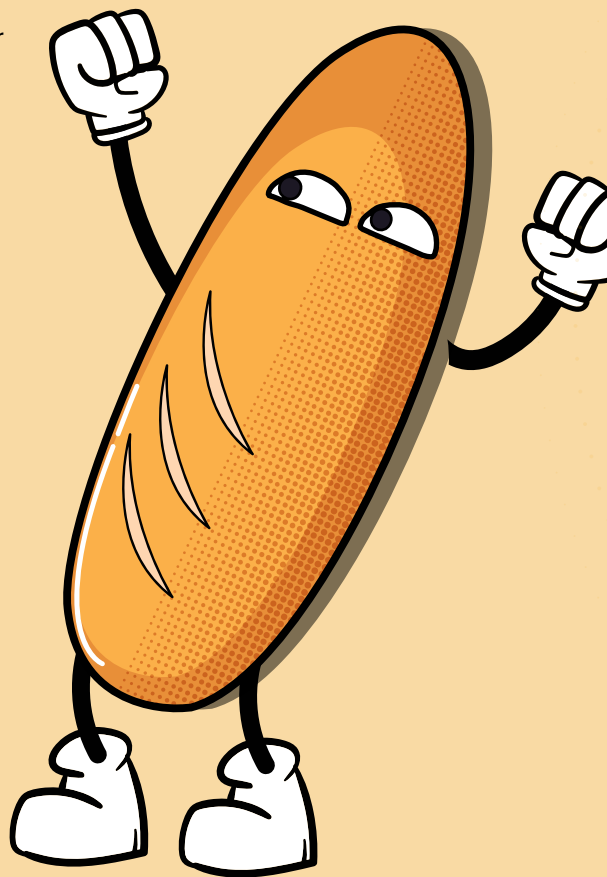
Prizes

1st Place: One full pallet of Champion Beta Flour, Trophy, and Award Certificate

2nd & 3rd Place: Award Certificates

Top 10 artisan breads will be ranked and recognised.

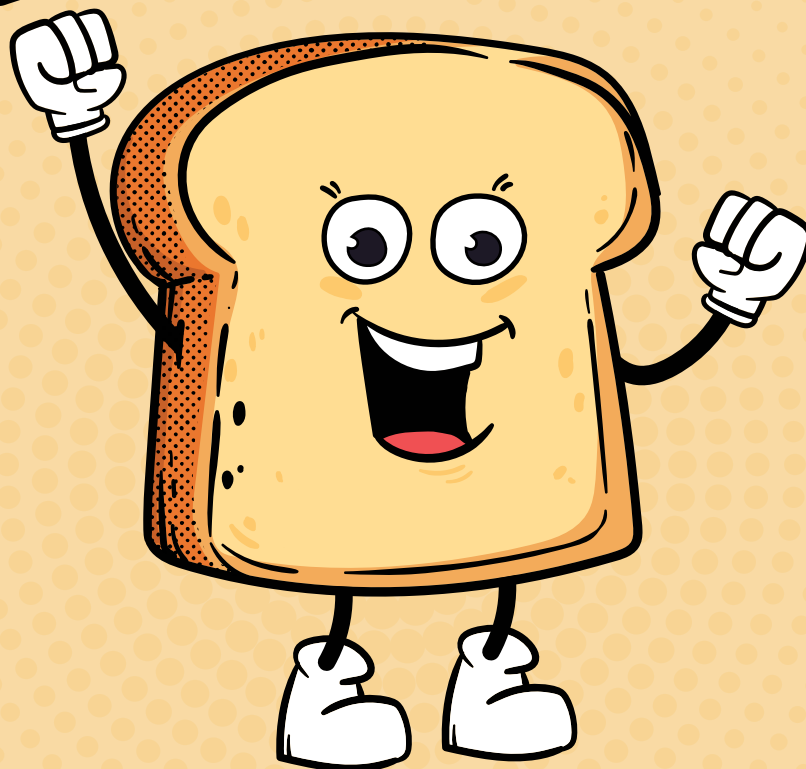
Judging is conducted blind by respected industry professionals.



VISIT [BAKINGNZ.CO.NZ](https://bakingnz.co.nz) FOR MORE INFO



ARTISAN BREAD



COMPETITION

Fine Food Show 2025 – Auckland

ENTRIES OPEN NOW!



RISE & SHINE ONLINE:

A BAKERY'S GUIDE TO GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE AND REVIEWS

Whether you're known for buttery croissants or that legendary sourdough, getting your bakery noticed online is just as important as what's coming out of the oven. Google Business Profile - formerly known as Google My Business - is one of the easiest, free tools you can use to boost visibility, connect with local customers, and build trust; especially through reviews. Here's how to get set up and make the most of your digital window display.

WHY GOOGLE MY BUSINESS MATTERS FOR BAKERIES

When someone's craving a cinnamon scroll or looking for a birthday cake near them, guess where they go first? Google. A Google Business Profile listing helps your bakery show up in local search results and on Google Maps. It gives potential customers key info at a glance - like your opening hours, location, menu, photos, and reviews. You can also link directly to your website, social media, and contact information; making it even easier for customers to connect with you.

For New Zealand bakeries, where community is everything, this tool helps connect with both neighbourhood regulars and out-of-towners looking for their next sweet fix.

SETTING UP YOUR GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE



STEP 1: CLAIM OR CREATE YOUR BUSINESS

Go to google.com/business and sign in with your Google account. Search for your bakery. If it's not there, click "Add your business."

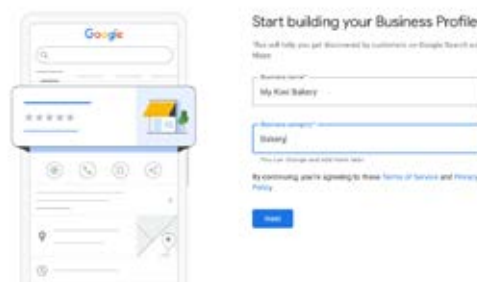


KYRA CORRIGAN is a digital marketer with over a decade of experience in the FMCG and food & beverage world. She's worked with all sorts of tasty brands and loves helping local businesses get noticed online. Big on strategy but never too serious, Kyra believes good marketing (like good baking) should be equal parts smart and satisfying.



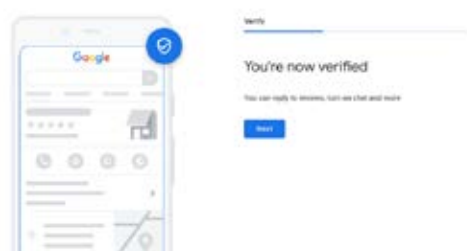
STEP 2: FILL IN YOUR DETAILS

Add your business name, category (e.g. "Bakery" or "Cake Shop"), physical address, service area (if you deliver), contact information, and website.



STEP 3: VERIFY YOUR BUSINESS

Google will send you a postcard with a verification code. This step confirms your location and is key to getting your listing live.



STEP 4: OPTIMISE YOUR LISTING

Add high-quality photos of your baked goods, your team, and your shopfront. Write a warm, simple description of what you offer, highlighting specialities like gluten-free treats or custom cakes. If you offer online ordering or have a menu, include links so customers can explore your offerings. Adding your social media channels is also a great way to keep people engaged beyond the search page.

THE POWER OF REVIEWS

Online reviews are the modern-day word of mouth. For bakeries - where taste, quality, and service matter - reviews help build credibility and trust. A glowing five-star review of your salted caramel tart might do more to fill your bakery than any full-page ad.

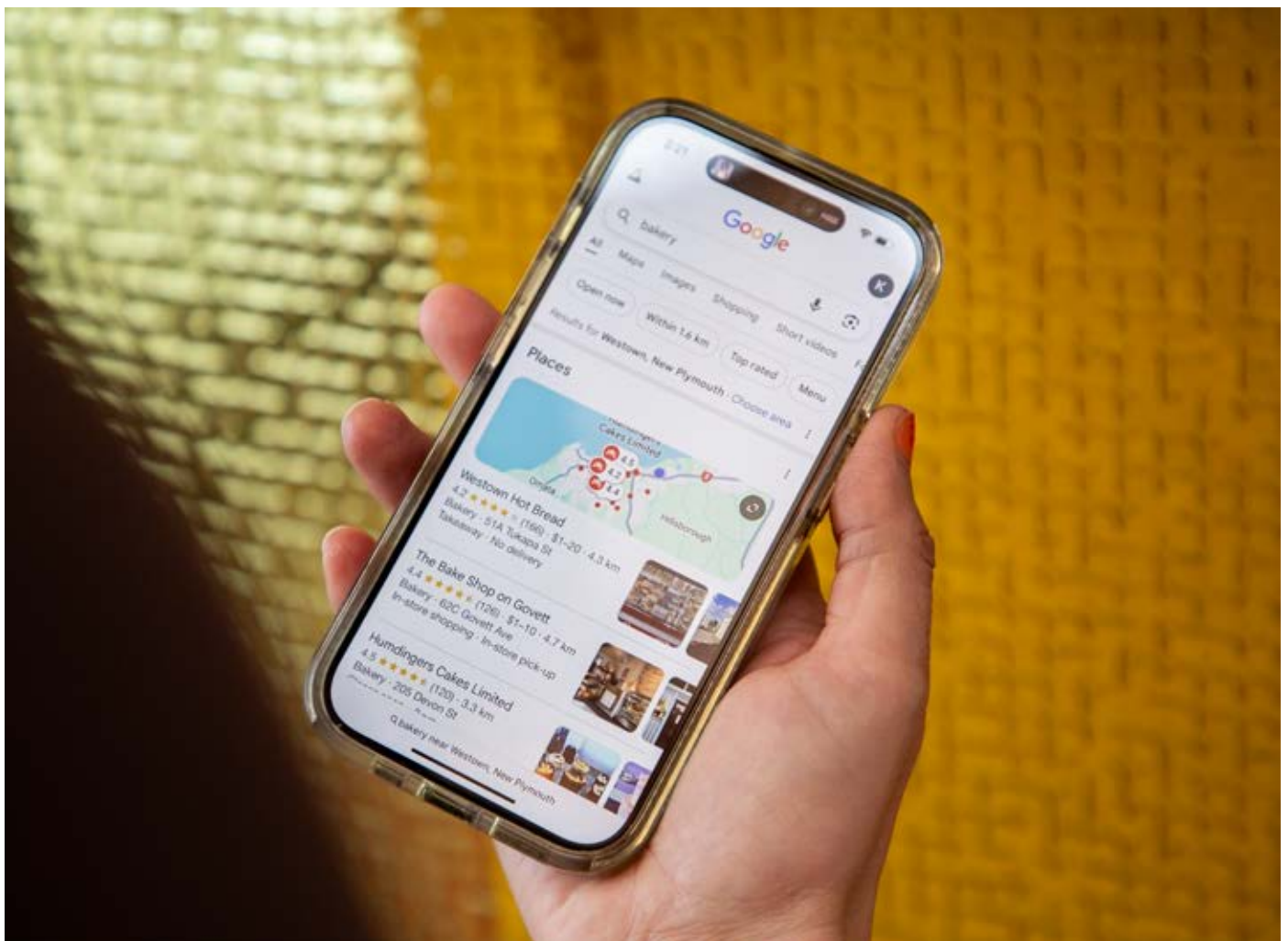
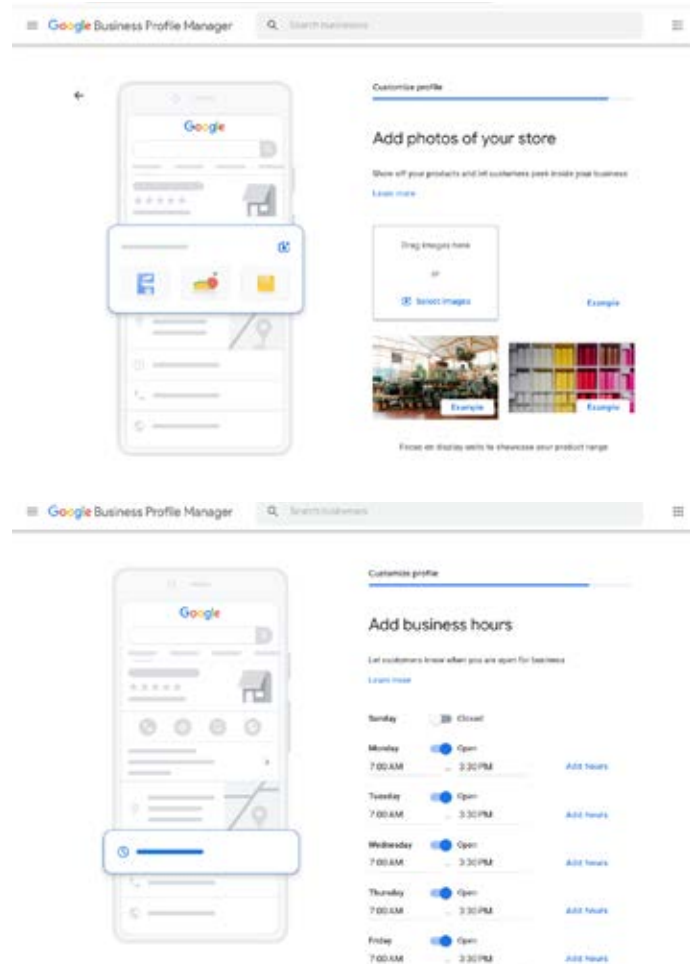
Google also considers your review volume and average rating when deciding how often to feature your bakery in search results.

HOW TO GET MORE (GOOD) REVIEWS

Ask! Train your staff to encourage happy customers to leave a review.

Include a short message on packaging or receipts: "Loved your bake? Leave us a review on Google!"

After online orders, follow up with a thank-you email and a direct link to your review page.



Display a QR code on your counter or menu for easy access.

Make it feel like a friendly nudge, not a pushy request. People love supporting small businesses - they just need a reminder.

HOW TO RESPOND TO REVIEWS

FOR POSITIVE REVIEWS:

Always reply. Thank your customers and personalise your reply where you can.

“Thanks so much, Hana! We’re thrilled you loved the lemon meringue tart. Hope to see you again soon!”

FOR NEGATIVE REVIEWS:

Stay calm and professional. Acknowledge their experience, apologise if needed, and invite them to continue the conversation privately.

“Kia ora Matt, we’re sorry to hear about your experience and appreciate your feedback. We’d love to chat further - please reach out to us at [your email].”

Avoid being defensive. Even one-star reviews are a chance to show you care and turn things around.

A NOTE ON REVIEW INTEGRITY

While it might be tempting to drown out a negative review with a flood of glowing ones, authenticity is key. Customers are savvy - they can often spot when reviews feel forced or too good to be true. In fact, customers don't expect perfect reviews. A mix of positive and negative reviews appears more trustworthy.

Rather than trying to bury the bad, focus on responding with care and improving where needed. A thoughtful, genuine reply can often do more for your reputation than five suspicious five-star reviews ever could.

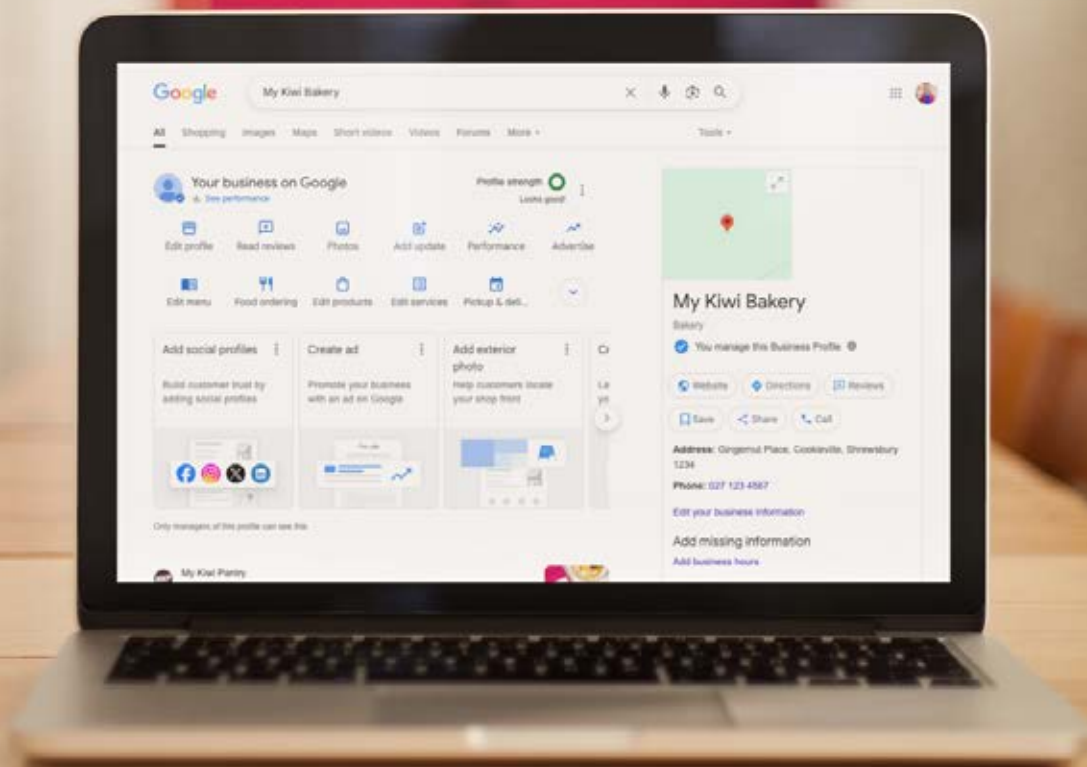
KEEP IT FRESH

Google likes active listings. Update your hours for public holidays, share photos of your latest creations, or share updates on market stalls and pop-ups. An active listing signals to Google (and your customers) that you're open and ready to serve.

FINAL WHISK

For Aotearoa's talented bakers, Google Business Profile is one of the most valuable (and free!) tools for local bakeries. With a well-maintained listing and thoughtful approach to reviews, you can attract new customers, build community, and keep your ovens (and POS) busy.

It's quick to set up, easy to manage, and could be the cherry on top for your bakery's success.



The Machine Manufacturer with a

Passion for Dough



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For a gentle and uniform sheeting of the dough.



- ✓ Gentle and consistent dough sheeting of dough blocks up to 20 kg
- ✓ Flexible dough thicknesses due to roller gap adjustment with millimetre precision
- ✓ Easy to clean due to hygienic design and good accessibility
- ✓ Intuitive operation thanks to modern control concept
- ✓ Robust stainless-steel construction ensures stability and a long service life





Baking In Protection

What Every Bakery Needs to Know About Insurance

Insurance might not be the most exciting line on your budget – but when things go wrong, it's one of the most important. For bakeries balancing rising costs and evolving risks, having the right cover can be the difference between a minor setback and a major loss. We spoke to two experienced brokers about how baking businesses can protect what matters most – and why a one-size-fits-all policy just doesn't cut it.

WORDS Nick Walker



RUNACRES INSURANCE
is an award-winning
insurance brokerage with
40 years' experience
business insurance
solutions for our clients.
MATTHEW CONNOLLY
is a Senior Broker.



**MCDONALD EVEREST
INSURANCE BROKERS**
specialise in Business,
Rural & Domestic insurance
and have over 30 years
experience in the industry.
TINACA PARKES is a Director.



At first glance, insurance is one of those business necessities that you don't really want to spend much time on.

While you know you can't go without it, it does add to your overheads each month. It's even worse getting a letter in the mail to say your premiums are going up (again).

But it's worth taking the time to make sure your insurance is right for you, both now and into the future.

We spoke to two insurance brokers to understand the critical parts of insuring a baking business.

Q: HOW SHOULD A BAKING BUSINESS APPROACH GETTING INSURANCE?

Runacres senior broker Matthew Connolly (MC): "The important thing is to take the time to understand your risks and your needs - it's not just about getting certain policies, there are varying factors that come into play that influence the kind of insurance that's best for you.

McDonald Everest director Tinana Parkes (TP): "Insurance is really a balancing act. It's about matching your priorities and appetite for risk with the cost. It's not one-size-fits-all. Getting the right advice means having cover that fits your specific circumstances, rather than just ticking boxes. That's where professional advice makes all the difference."

Q: WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF USING A BROKER, RATHER THAN GOING DIRECT TO AN INSURANCE COMPANY?

MC: "We're working for the client, where someone from an insurance company is just looking to sell you their product. We have access to different insurers and can tailor a package that best suits your needs - someone that's best for motor vehicle insurance may not be best for liability insurance, but with a broker you can get one package from different providers."

TP: "A broker can break down the terminology so it actually makes sense. We can advocate on your behalf during a claim and even challenge a rejected claim if needed. You also get one consistent point of contact for all your insurance, including personal policies like home and contents, which makes life easier.





"IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH - YOU CAN HAVE A DISGRUNTLED EX-EMPLOYEE WHO GOES TO IMMIGRATION NEW ZEALAND AND ALLEGE YOU HIRED THEM KNOWING THEY DIDN'T HAVE THE CORRECT VISA. STRAIGHT AWAY THAT COSTS MONEY.

– Matthew Connolly, Senior Broker at Runacres Insurance

"We always say to our clients, if there's a potential claim that you think could eventuate, tell us at the start because we can help guide you through that process. A lot of the time people just need a sounding board - there's never a silly question with insurance."

Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MORE CRITICAL TYPES OF INSURANCE COVER THAT MOST BUSINESSES SHOULD HAVE?

MC: "All businesses should insure assets like your machinery and stock, and your building if you own it. Public liability insurance and statutory liability insurance are must-haves. Even if you're not at fault, they can provide cover for a defence if you're alleged to have broken the law."

TP: "Nothing is compulsory, but good cover should reflect the specific needs of your business. For baking businesses, it's common to include product liability and employment practices insurance, and cover for plant and contents. These all help protect what matters most in day-to-day operations."

Q: WHAT ABOUT OTHER TYPES OF INSURANCE THAT ARE LESS COMMON?

MC: "Insurance is covering you for the sudden or unexpected, and by that nature you wouldn't expect to need it either, so it can be a catch 22."

"Statutory insurance covers you from allegations of breaches of NZ law that the authorities could go after you for. Things like health and safety breaches, or any other legislation that affects your business."

"You don't have to necessarily break the law, you just have to be alleged to break the law. Often, it's not the fines or penalties that are the most expensive thing, but the lawyers fees and cost of defending yourself that add up."

"It doesn't take much - you can have a disgruntled ex-employee who goes to Immigration New Zealand and allege you hired them knowing they didn't have the correct visa. Straight away that costs money."

"Other fringe liability policies like directors and officers insurance, employment disputes and taxation investigation insurance can all have their place too."

TP: "Cyber insurance is more important in today's world, especially in businesses that store customer data or take payments online. Public liability insurance helps to protect you if there's an injury to a person or third party damage - for example, if you have a cafe and someone slips on the floor and hurts themselves."

"You can have insurance to cover product recalls if you're a big manufacturer. Or if you transport goods and there's a road closure that means you have to take a big detour and that causes business interruption, you can get cover for that. If you have a commercial vehicle, refrigerators, or even if you use a deep fryer, for example, there are specific insurances to cover them."

"It's about assessing the risks; what are your risks physically, your legal risks, operational risks. That's why it helps to have a broker who asks the right questions and really gets to know your business."

Q: HOW BUSINESSES ENSURE THEIR INSURANCE IS UP TO DATE?

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TP: "We've seen more business owners trying to reduce their premiums in recent years, which can be a tricky line to walk. There are ways to manage costs, like shopping around or increasing your excess, but the key is good communication with your broker so they understand your needs and can help you strike the right balance."





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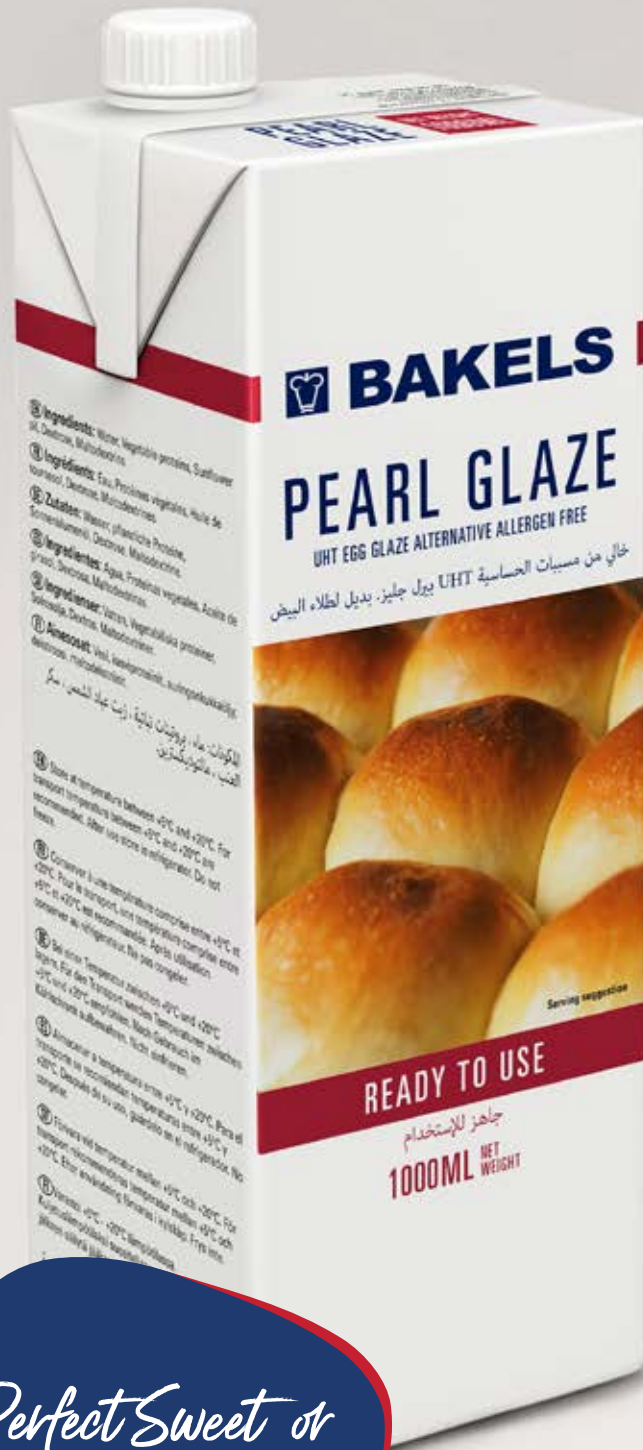
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RĒWENA RISING

THE MĀORI BREAD
AT THE HEART
OF MATARIKI

As Matariki settles into the public holiday calendar, more New Zealanders are embracing the traditions that come with it – including rēwena bread. This uniquely Māori sourdough is experiencing a quiet renaissance, with bakers around the country bringing family bugs back to life and celebrating the stories that come with them.



GEORGE JACKSON OWNER OF JACKSON'S RĒWENA PARĀOA



Matariki is steadily becoming a more widely celebrated and meaningful moment in the national calendar.

While the Māori New Year only became a public holiday in 2022, it's already prompting more of us to reflect, reconnect – and share kai. As with many cultural celebrations, food plays a powerful role in how we mark the occasion, bringing people together in a uniquely Kiwi way.

Bakers are front and centre in many of those moments (think hot cross buns at Easter, or even birthday cakes), and you can now add Matariki to the list.

Traditional Māori rēwena bread is the perfect food to prepare for Matariki, and it's becoming more and more popular year-round.

For those unfamiliar, rēwena is a starchy type of sourdough that's made by taking water used to boil potatoes and mixing it with flour and sugar to form a starter bug. When you use that to bake bread, the result is a distinctive flavour, although it can be difficult to describe.

George Jackson has been baking rēwena commercially for three years, and eating it all his life. Even he struggles to say what it tastes like.

"You really need to try it to understand. It's a bit sweet and a bit yeasty, but that's about as far as I can go. I can taste a slice and tell you if it's true rēwena or not, but it's so unique in its flavour that you can't really say what it's like."

It's common for family starters to be passed down from one generation to the next, with the bread typically prepared for special occasions (although this is changing today, where it's more common to have it any time). These bugs can become hugely special for the genealogy, or whakapapa, associated with them.

George knows this all too well. The bread he sells from his shop, Jackson's Rēwena Parāoa in Whanganui, is all made from his family starter that dates back to the 1840s.

"It was handed down by my great-grandmother to my grandmother, to my cousin, to me. My Nan always baked the bread for us when we were little, and she was a bit of a local legend. In the community, she was the one who would bake the bread - no one could do it like her."

Daily Bread head baker Rhys Harvey is currently writing a thesis about how bread plays a role in shaping our identity, as part of his studies to become a bread sommelier through Germany's prestigious Weinheim Baking Academy.

He says there's a case for rēwena to be considered New Zealand's national bread - similar to baguettes in France or pretzels in Germany.

"I see certain breads holding more prestige than others, and for me, rēwena holds a place like that. It's not the most commonly consumed bread in New Zealand but it does have a mana in the type of bread it is.

"A lot of it centres around the bug itself, the potato culture that's used to essentially rise the dough. There's a lot more work that goes into making this sort of bread than your regular yeasted bread. It requires a lot more care or tikanga - trying to follow the correct processes so you can share it with those you care about."

In the Autumn issue of Slice magazine, Little Bread Loaf owner Lynda McGregor spoke about how she got into baking rēwena when she realised the tradition was at risk of not surviving from older generations of her family.

It appears that may be a familiar story around Aotearoa. Rhys and George both say the art of baking rēwena had begun to disappear, but it now seems to be booming.

"It's an interesting thing about rēwena is it's not the first time it's come up to prominence," Rhys says.

"It's had a couple of waves of coming into the limelight, dropping away then coming back again. I hope this time it might be able to keep progressing to a point where it does become a national bread.

"We have a window of opportunity now around Matariki becoming a public holiday fairly recently, and a lot of particularly non-Māori New Zealanders are trying to figure out what they should be doing for it. It would be a nice thing to see people baking rēwena, or any kind of bread, with their family."

George says rēwena is gradually growing in popularity among customers of all different backgrounds - not just Māori.

Rhys is in charge of Daily Bread's rēwena, which they even sell wholesale to Air New Zealand for their Auckland Koru Lounge.

George encourages any baker who wants to try it out to get involved - you don't need to be Māori.

"We need more confident rēwena bakers. Anyone can do it, the key is just knowing how the bug works - how to feed it, when to feed it, when to make bread. If you get that right, you'll be away."



DAILY BREAD HEAD BAKER RHYS HARVEY



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How to Make Rēwena

Rēwena is essentially a naturally fermented bread. Its microbial life is developed over the course of several days from a starter that consists of mashed or grated potato (or even potato water), sugar, and flour. The bug becomes the bread's living essence. The process of creating and maintaining the Rēwena bug requires patience and care, as the fermentation can take several days. Families often pass down their Rēwena bug recipes through generations, making it a treasured cultural heirloom. (Matariki, 2024).

It is this process that gives Rēwena its characteristic sour tang, soft crumb, and nostalgic flavour. Making the bug – and the bread itself – is less a technical task and more a ritual, requiring patience and care. One traditional method I've followed is outlined below. The recipe is adapted for a modern kitchen from versions found in *The Māori Cookbook* (1960) and the *Edmonds Cookery Book* (1955).

STEP 1: MAKE THE BUG (STARTER)

Figure 13. Edmonds Cookery Book (1955). Rēwena Bread Recipe. Edmonds Baking Powder Ltd., Christchurch, New Zealand.

- 1 medium potato (150g, boiled and mashed)
- 100g potato water
- 10g sugar
- 150g strong flour

Allow the boiled potato and its cooking water to cool to room temperature. Mix the mashed potato with the flour and sugar, gradually adding the potato water to create a loose, thick batter. Transfer the mixture to a clean glass jar or ceramic bowl. Cover with a lid or tea towel and place in a warm spot.

Feed the bug daily with small, equal amounts of flour and water to maintain its activity. Bubbles and a sour aroma are positive signs of a healthy, active bug.

STEP 2: PREPARING THE DOUGH

Once the bug is active (typically after 3–5 days), combine:

- 750g strong flour
- 18.75g salt
- 250g starter
- 500g lukewarm water

Mix and knead until the dough is smooth and elastic. It should feel firm yet pliable. Cover and leave to rise until doubled in size – this may vary depending on the strength of your starter and the room temperature.

STEP 3: SHAPING AND BAKING

Shape the dough into a large loaf and allow it to prove again until puffy.

Traditionally, Rēwena was baked in a cast iron pot or Dutch oven over an open fire or in a hāngi. These days, a home oven set to 180–200°C works well. Bake for 45–50 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown and the loaf sounds hollow when tapped.

STEP 4: CARING FOR YOUR BUG AFTER BAKING

Feed the bug regularly to keep it active. If you're not baking frequently, store it in the fridge and feed weekly. To revive, add fresh mashed potato and potato water.

The science of Rēwena, though simple in practice, is complex in microbial terms. The fermentation is driven by lactic acid bacteria and wild yeasts, captured from both the environment and the potato itself. The potato also provides a starchy substrate ideal for fermentation.

Unlike commercial yeast, this natural, slow fermentation breaks down gluten—making it more digestible – and imparts a subtle sourness while extending the bread's shelf life.

In the *Māori Cook Book* (1960), Rēwena is described less as a recipe and more as a symbol of continuity:

“The bug must be kept warm and fed regularly, just like a living thing.”

There may be no sentence that better captures the spirit of Rēwena. It's not just about breadmaking – it's about caring. The starter becomes a living connection between generations, gifted with mauri.

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NZ BAKELS TRAINING SCHOOL

STUDENT INTERVIEW

MOESHA BERNSTEIN

WHAT TYPE OF PRODUCTS ARE MADE IN YOUR BAKERY?

Our bakery offers a diverse range of baked goods, including an assortment of cakes, cookies, muffins, and both sweet and savoury breads. These include speciality items such as brioche, ciabatta, pizzas, and a variety of soft and crusty rolls.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING IN THE BAKING INDUSTRY?

I began my career at 18 years old in the bakery industry as a packer, a role I held for two years. Over the past three/four years, I have gained hands-on experience and steadily progressed to my current position as a Charge Baker. In this role, I am responsible for overseeing daily production operations while ensuring the highest standards of product quality, consistency, and efficiency are maintained.

WHICH STRAND OF THE BAKERY QUALIFICATION ARE YOU CURRENTLY STUDYING?

With the support of my bakery team, I pursued further training at the NZ Bakels Training School, where I successfully completed the New Zealand Certificate in Trade Baking (Level 4 – Plant) in March 2024.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE PRODUCTS TO BAKE – AND WHY?

Bread and cakes are my favourite items to bake. They offer a rewarding experience—not only do they fill the bakery with an incredible aroma, but the process is both creative and therapeutic. Baking provides a wonderful opportunity to enjoy and evaluate your own work. Bread, in particular, presents a wide range of production methods, from traditional sourdough to various bulk fermentation techniques, each offering unique textures and flavours. Cakes, on the other hand, are deeply tied to celebration and tradition. Their sweetness and variety make them a joyful addition to any special occasion, which is why they're so universally loved.

WHO HAS BEEN SOMEONE WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU IN YOUR BAKING JOURNEY?

My Bakery Manager, Karnaljit Singh, has been incredibly supportive and has encouraged me to pursue this opportunity,

“Their mentorship has played a significant role in my growth and development as a baker.”



recognising my strong passion for baking. Additionally, my Bakery Supervisor, Lin Mei, has consistently provided valuable guidance and advice throughout my career at Woolworths. Their mentorship has played a significant role in my growth and development as a baker, and it has given me the confidence to take this to the next step.

WHAT HAVE BEEN SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR CAREER SO FAR?

I successfully completed the New Zealand Trade Baking Level 4 qualification in March 2024, demonstrating strong performance in both the practical and theoretical components of the apprenticeship. My dedication, multitasking ability, production planning, commitment to product quality, and teamwork led to my promotion to Charge Baker. Additionally, I just recently participated in the Hot Cross Bun Competition, where I was proud to win Zone 1 in my region at just 23 years old.

WHAT COULD YOU SAY TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO JOIN THE INDUSTRY AND BECOME QUALIFIED?

The baking industry offers a rewarding and dynamic career filled with opportunities for growth, creativity, and hands-on learning. From my own experience, I can confidently say that I learn something new every day – especially from seasoned bakers who generously share their insights and advice to help improve my craft. This continuous learning not only strengthens your skills but also opens doors throughout the industry. If you have a passion for baking and enjoy early starts, it's a career path well worth considering.

WHERE TO IN THE FUTURE?

I am currently working at Woolworths, where I am continuously expanding my knowledge through bakery-related research and practical experience. I am focused on improving product quality, streamlining workflows, and recently have made significant progress in reducing waste and maintaining consistency in production. Looking ahead, my goal is to become a highly skilled and knowledgeable baker. I am committed to ongoing learning and growth, and I am eager to take on new opportunities that will allow me to advance to higher roles or even open my own bakery.

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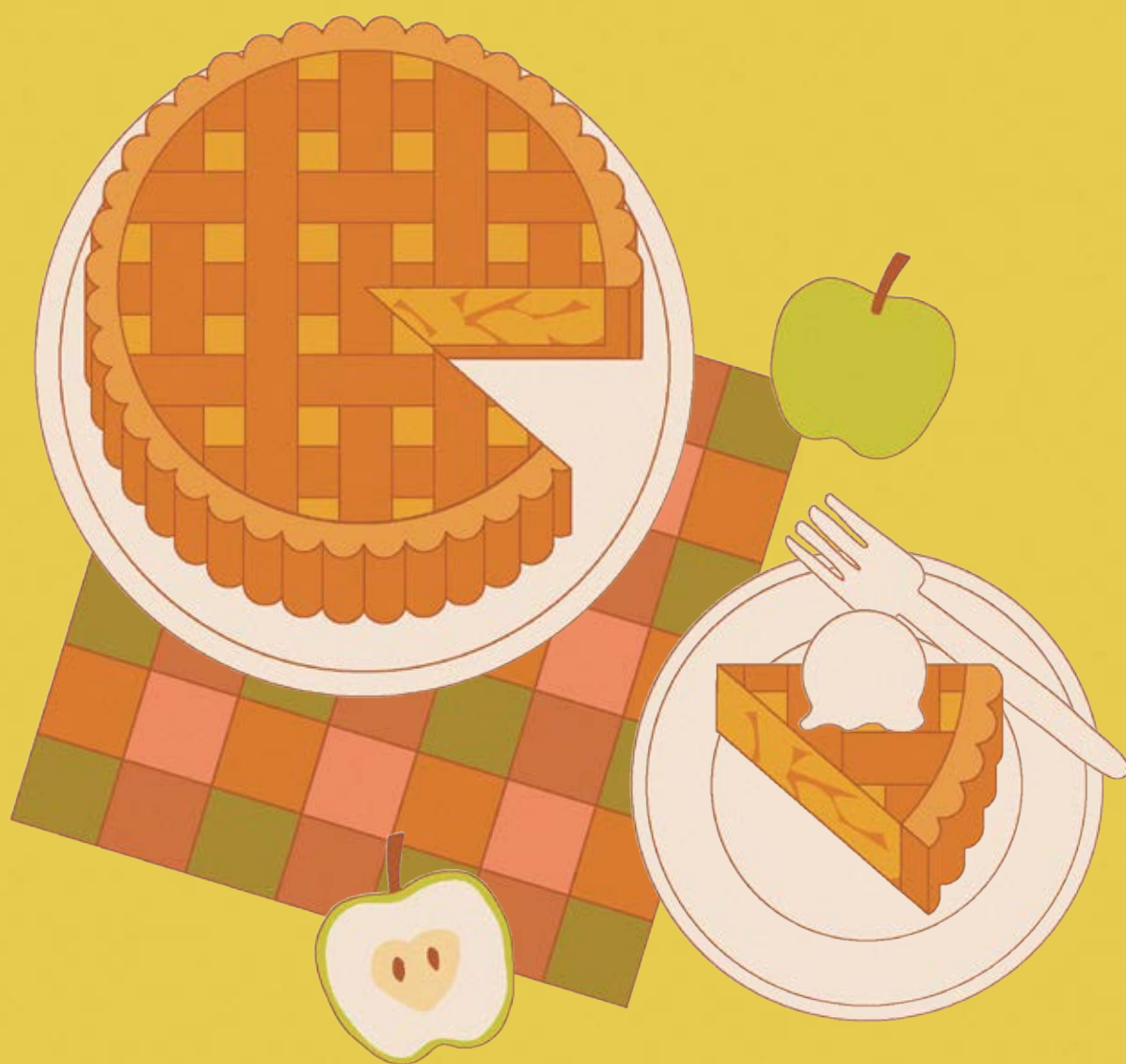
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