

New bite-size Christmas treats from Corner Bakery

Franchise management and investment company, Retsol, which owns Corner Bakery, a chain of 300 stores situated in Engen QuickShops countrywide has launched three new Christmas fare products.



Ruth Ward Corner Bakery Master Baker

'Bite-size' Mini Glazed or Frosted Fruit Cakes and six packs of Fruit Mince Pies are part of the next worldwide confectionery trend, micro baking. Ruth Ward, the Corner Bakery's new master baker, says the cupcake craze has had its day and trendy treats are now the in-thing, including miniature versions of traditional classics such as tarts, biscuits, macaroons and truffles.

Because there is nothing more classical than the traditional Christmas cake or mince pie, she says this seemed the perfect opportunity to introduce locals to tiny treats. They are easier to eat on the trot than larger cupcakes, are perfect for nibblers who cannot cope with massive muffins and they look great on platters.

Master baker keeps franchise on trend

Corner Bakery took the unusual step of bringing a master baker into its kitchen to stay on trend. There are less than 20 in the country. "We are taking our emphasis on quality products and ingredients a step further to ensure that busy consumers get value for money treats every day and ensuring that best practice fresh bakery goods are available in the convenience market segment," explained Corner Bakery's marketing manager, Jason Tunguy-Desmarais.

Durban-based Ward, who was trained in the UK, sees her role as helping to position the franchise as a leader in its sector by ensuring the production of innovative, high quality, tasty confectionary goods. "For the first time, I'm in a position where all my skills are needed in one way or another. I get to do everything from product innovation to working on the ground and training staff. I am the caretaker of the brand's products, making sure all improvements and innovations are implemented to ensure quality, taste and convenience."

She explains that master bakers go beyond television-style celebrities. "A master baker is both technically and theoretically fully qualified to practise as a baker and to train others in the profession. It's not only about baking and producing food, but also about having the technical and administrative skills necessary to manage the production area of a full-line independent bakery or an in store commercial bakery. One must be able to produce high-quality baked goods and demonstrate a working knowledge of sanitation, management, retail and training."

With access to this level of expertise and because creating products such as these require additional equipment and skills, Tunguy-Desmarais says that the company has decided to deviate from its strategy of on-site baking. "These products are pre-packed and sealed for guaranteed freshness. This allows our master baker to monitor the quality of ingredients and to ensure competitive pricing. It is more appropriate for us to bake them centrally and distribute them through our supply chain."

The six Fruit Mince Pies retail for R26.90 and the four-pack of 'bite-size' Mini Glazed or Frosted Fruit Cakes, retail for R34.90 and R38.90 respectively.

For more information, go to www.cornerbakeryonline.net.

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