

Beverly Hills: Where the Cupcake is King



Sprinkles cupcakes

BY HERBERT EAFORD

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New York has its pizza. Philly has its cheesesteaks. Memphis has its barbecue. But here in Beverly Hills the cupcake is king! Everyday of the week you'll find dozens of locals and tourists alike lining the sidewalks, all waiting to get their hands on those sugary, carb-loaded little pieces of heaven. So when did this love affair with cupcakes begin in our fabulous city, you ask? In April 2005, according to *Sprinkles Cupcakes* owner Charles Neslon, who says, "We were the world's first cupcake bakery."



And the story of how Sprinkles got started is truly amazing. Nelson tells us, "My wife Candace and I were both investment bankers. On a whim, she decided to go to pastry school." Those classes obviously paid off, because it wasn't long before Candace was getting orders from all over town for her delicious pastries. Nelson goes on to say, "We decided the only way to keep up with the orders was to open a bakery, which is now Sprinkles."

Just six months after the grand opening Barbra Streisand stopped by to pick up some goodies. The iconic singer was so impressed by the cupcakes that she sent them as gifts to her other celebrity friends. "She mailed Oprah Winfrey a box of cupcakes as a holiday gift. Oprah loved them so much that she featured them on her show, which made the business explode overnight," he says.



Crumbs cupcakes

Sprinkles has continued to grow since those early days. The bakery still calls Beverly Hills home, but they now have stores in New York, Dallas, San Francisco and Phoenix. Nelson says their formula for success is simple, "Our focus is on quality. We bake fresh all day, using only the best ingredients. Our chocolate is imported from France and our cocoa comes from Belgium."

Red velvet is their signature cupcake and this summer they're introducing some new flavors, including key lime, lemon-blueberry and cherry. "There's something for everyone," he says.

Another destination-du-jour for cupcake lovers here in Beverly Hills is *Crumbs Bake Shop*, which is just a few blocks away from Sprinkles.

"Crumbs offers a decadent gourmet cupcake experience as well as the charm of a neighborhood bakery," according to Crumbs spokesperson Marissa Sanchez.

Upon entering the store your sweet tooth will be overwhelmed! There are rows upon rows of colorful cupcakes, in 85 flavors to be exact, ranging from caramel-apple to cosmopolitan (yes, just like the drink.) "Crumbs is the nation's largest retailer of cupcakes with more than 25 locations. Our signature size cupcakes are the largest, each with it's own personality. Everyone is sure to find the perfect cupcake," Sanchez tells us.

This summer they are spicing things up by introducing the Picnic Basket Collection, which includes flavors like, apple cobbler, pink lemonade and pina colada, which Sanchez says is, "just right for both the hostess and the partygoer this summer."

Sounds delicious! ●

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