

spoonfudge!

Creamy is way more fun than square.

by nancy flowers



Alecia Johnson and Tarah Boykin knew their friendship was meant to be when they met as community volunteers “on a golf cart in the rain at 3 a.m.” Two years ago, they decided to purchase an Internet-based company called Spoonfudge! and open up a retail location in their tiny hometown of Sebastopol. And these friends have been stirring up the sweetness ever since.

Spoonfudge! is “creamy, dreamy fudge in a jar,” and, what’s more, it is gluten free, which is especially important to Alecia because her husband Shawn suffers from celiac disease. The recipe they bought came with 40 flavors, but they’ve tasted and tested their way to the 110 flavors they ship all over the world.

“Under that ridiculous nutrition information they make us print, we say, ‘Stirred with love in Sebastopol, MS,’” laughs Tarah. “A client in Norway said he looked up Sebastopol and discovered there were more people living in his apartment building than in our entire town.”

This small-town business churns out 500 jars of decadent goodness every day, which are packaged in tiny acrylic paint cans with attached shovel-shaped spoons for immediate enjoyment. With creative names like Wedding Belle and Lime in Da Coconut, they produce 15-16 flavors at a time (“to keep ourselves from going crazy”), available both on the website and in their Highway 492 shop. Brides give Spoonfudge! as wedding favors, corporate clients buy it to treat their customers, and organizations sell it as a fundraising tool.

One client, Jordan K. Rose, an author of vampire fiction, contacted Tarah and Alecia, asking them to create a flavor for her main character, chocolate lover Eva Prim. Alecia, Spoonfudge!’s production genius, went to work, and the two friends settled on a chocolate/red velvet flavor named, appropriately, “Eva’s Sweet Fang.” The book featuring the flavor will be released this fall, with the author including a coupon for a free jar of Eva’s signature flavor. Though exciting, this news has kicked this two-woman operation into high gear.

“The book will come out when we’re already in our Christmas season,” says Tarah. “We’re getting a fudge kettle that will let us make more at a time to keep up with the demand.”

Holidays are all-hands-on-deck events—husbands, sisters, brothers, and friends. This past Valentine’s Day, they featured fruit dipped in various flavors of Spoonfudge!. Their expanded workforce, including Shawn and Tarah’s husband Joe, dipped 6,000 strawberries, 3,000 grapes, 4,000 cherries, and 200-plus apples, wrapping the fruit in a luscious coating that puts ordinary chocolate-dipped fruit to shame.

“We like to say the Spoonfudge! ‘hugs’ the fruit so when you bite into it, you see your teeth marks,” says Tarah.

Spoonfudge! has become a regular hangout for kids after school, for high-school football fans after games, and for out-of-towners who have heard about it from one of the regulars. The goal is for people to leave their shop “having made the best memory ever.” For the indecisive and overwhelmed, a sample or taste of all the available flavors might make the choosing easier. Spoonfudge! is served over ice cream, cakes, and scones, and stirred into coffee. But their signature creation is the Fudge Freeze. “It’s our version of a frozen hot chocolate, which you can get with any flavor,” Tarah explains. “We put in chunks of fudge so you’re getting little bites of it through your straw.”

They’ve started taking Spoonfudge! The Shoppe on the road, setting up S’mores Bars at weddings, parties, and festivals. Guests roast their own marshmallows and choose a flavor of Spoonfudge!, and the rest is ooey-goey history.

Tarah and Alecia are renovating the shop to include a party room and are looking to franchise, possibly bringing Spoonfudge! to Madison and Oxford. But for now, serving their customers at home and around the world is creamy, dreamy, delicious fun.

“If you dip it or pour fudge on it,” says Alecia, “we’ll try it.” Tarah agrees, “Fudge just doesn’t have to be square and boring.”^M

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Spoonfudge! The Shoppe
24 Hwy. 492, Sebastopol
601.625.7923 or spoonfudge.com