

Bob Katz is one of those ambitious, no nonsense-types of guys that keeps his eye on the prize and doesn't look away until the reward comes easily, like a piece of a cake that only your grandma could make. But, according to Katz, Grandma ain't got nothing on My Grandma's Coffee Cakes of New England.

"If somebody sends you this cake, you remember who sent it because they went out of their way to send you something special," Katz says. "That's not an advertisement. That's a fact."



BOB KATZ

He's not kidding. My Grandma's is so busy during the holiday season you need a reservation just to get your hands on one. The Boston-based coffee cake maker was founded in 1990. "I tried one, and I said, 'This is phenomenal! I've got to get involved somehow,'" he recalls. Katz sold everything he owned, and despite slow business at first, "I didn't care; I knew it was going to be something."

Business took off when the cakes made their debut at The Plaza Hotel's Tea Room in New York City. Once they were featured on "Oprah's" "O List," there was no turning back. Now, the cakes will soon be sold at Gelson's Markets across California. This month, Katz will make a special appearance on QVC, explaining to viewers nationwide what makes My Grandma's Coffee Cakes so unforgettable.

—Kathryn Jones

MY GRANDMA'S COFFEE CAKES OF NEW ENGLAND

MYGRANDMA.COM

2007 SALES:
\$6.2 MILLION

HQ: BOSTON

EMPLOYEES: 32

BOB KATZ, PRESIDENT:
"I TRIED [A COFFEE CAKE], AND I SAID, 'THIS IS PHENOMENAL! I'VE GOT TO GET INVOLVED SOMEHOW!'"

10 The number of coffee cake varieties My Grandma's Coffee Cakes offers, with two more in the works.

Katz: Celebrities Who Love My Grandma's Coffee Cakes

- "Arnold Schwarzenegger was one of the first people to call our new number 1-800-8Grandma. I thought it was some wise guy doing a bad imitation of Henry Kissinger: 'Whey's my cake?' It turns out, **Jamie Lee Curtis** had given Arnold a cake for Christmas, and he was calling to order more.
- "We're **Roger Clemens'** good luck charm. On the fourth time we sent the cake to Yankee Stadium, he tried some and then made his 300th victory. Coincidence? I think not.
- "Other people who have enjoyed our cake or sent us correspondence letting us know they enjoyed them are **Norm Crosby, Doris Day, Mike O'Malley, Donald Trump, Warren Buffett, Neil Diamond, James Woods, Tia Carrere** and **Oprah Winfrey**. The cakes have also been served at the Vatican and the Academy Awards."



Why My Grandma's Coffee Cakes are Famous

My Grandma's Coffee Cakes of New England uses all-natural ingredients with no transfat or artificial flavorings, colors or preservatives. The company uses pure bourbon vanilla from the Bourbon Islands, fresh-farm eggs, cultured sour cream that has been soured naturally, and Mariani walnuts from the Mariani orchards of Northern California.

"The food industry can be broken down into two categories: people who eat to live and people who live to eat," Katz explains. "People who eat to live don't avoid trans-fats that are clearly unhealthy for you. A grandma would never do that. We cater to people who live to eat because we do, too."

The cakes are also kosher-certified. "To make it kosher-certified is a byproduct of the fact that we don't bake on Saturdays and we only use high-quality ingredients that don't conflict with cultural laws," Katz notes.

"We actually exceed kosher standards and people should know that it means that it comes from clean facilities. A rabbi is like a health department but tougher, actually. That's good for us because they come in and do inspections by surprise, and that keeps us on our toes."

The top-selling coffee cakes are:

- Cinnamon Walnut (right)
- Granny Smith Apple
- Cape Cod Cranberry
- Cappuccino

The company is in the process of developing two new flavors – Lemon Poppy and Pumpkin Spice.

