

SAANICHNEWS

Reality TV show documents Saanich's business savvy Cupcake girls

Natalie North
May 3



Best friends Lori Joyce, left, and Heather White worked together as teenagers at Mayfair Shopping Centre some 20 years ago. Best known as the Cupcake Girls, the women star in a reality series based on their business.

Twenty years ago, best friends Heather White and Lori Joyce bonded as employees of Mayfair Shopping Centre.

The two women knew they wanted to stop making money for other people and launch their own business one day, but as 15 year olds, they weren't sure how.

Their answer came 11 years later in New York when Joyce brought White to a bakery, specifically for a cupcake. White liked it so much, she figured they should go into business and create an entire brand around the sweets.

The brand has grown into a small empire and the subject of a reality TV series.

"I thought she was crazy because neither one of us baked or had ever worked in the food industry and usually when you start a business, it's in (a field) you know something about," Joyce said.

"We just literally quit our jobs and decided to do this."

Joyce and White grew up in Cordova Bay and Cadboro Bay, respectively. They opened their first bakery, Cupcakes, in Vancouver in 2002.

The retro-styled business used basic, full-calorie and full-fat ingredients, and was successful enough for the women to expand into two corporate locations and six franchise locations across the Lower Mainland.



On April 30, Joyce and White were back in their hometown to officially launch a franchise, owned by Nanaimo-couple Kelsi and Ryan Stolz, at Uptown shopping centre.

When the cupcake girls returned to Saanich for the grand opening, so did their camera crew for the TV show of the same name, now filming its third season for the W Network. It's something that the new franchisee hasn't quite gotten used to yet.

"I'm out of my comfort zone, but it has become funny and fun," said Kelsi, a fan of the show.

Kelsi discovered the business on a trip to Vancouver and jumped on the opportunity to buy in and sell her favorite cupcakes (the lemon drop) at an Island location.

Joyce, accustomed to being full time in front of the camera, describes The Cupcake Girls as a docu-drama featuring typical best friends being entrepreneurs, expanding their business and experiencing day to day life.

"It's entertaining because we're dramatic and we're very strong-minded, strong-headed and kind of aggressive."