

Retro Bizzaro - Old School Treats with a Twist



Creative pastry chefs Michael and Amanda Joyner present their candy bar and snack cake samples to me...in a Star Wars lunch box at the HOPE farmer's market!

Irony. It's everywhere. Take the phrase "old news", for example. Think about that. If it's news, then it is new information. So how can news be old? Similarly, how can something antiquated also be new? It can. We see it in vintage clothing and furniture, for example. The whole idea of history repeating itself that applies to fashion, has seeped into the Austin culture through recreation and food.

Maybe trailer restaurants are a new take on an old tradition: ice cream trucks. The concept is that a moving vehicle carries sweet treats that customers can purchase from it. A mobile storefront that quenches peoples' appetites. This idea has been applied and executed successfully around town and this older tradition has now become a new city feature and tourist attraction.

In Austin, new gastronomic businesses popping up has become the status quo...some may even say "old news" since it happens all the time. Due to this fact, the brains and passions behind these new culinary ventures must find ways to differentiate. I learned this weekend that emerging from the crowd are local pastry chefs Michael and Amanda Joyner, who are starting up a new business to bake and sell old school candy bars and snack cakes under the brand: Retro Bizzaro.

I came in contact with this spunky and passionate dessert-loving couple when I received an email saying RetroBizzaro was following me on Twitter. I had never heard of this crazy name before, so I looked up their profile to find their fun new culinary concept. On their page, I found their latest Tweet, which read "Be our 50th follower and get a hug!". I immediately clicked the "Follow" button, and emailed Amanda through their site to find out where I could purchase their treats. She wrote back, saying I would receive a hug and a treat, offering to either drop it by my office, or hold it for me at the HOPE Farmer's Market this Sunday. (Such customer service!) I had been wanting to check out the market, so I did, and was so glad I got to meet the brains behind this bizzaro baking concept!



Consistent with the brand name, I received my package in a Star Wars lunch box--haha! Michael and Amanda described the contents, including the Bananas Foster bar, which I took a bite of...well a few, and was packed with delicious flavor! To get the smokey/roasted taste of the fruity, yet toasty dessert, they include cinnamon cookies, add rum to the caramel, and, liquify their bananas in an all-natural, but special way. Also in the package were Mango Chili bars, Vegan Chocolate snack cakes, and Chocolate Pear cakes (which look a little bit like empanadas, only round in shape).

The couple told me about how they use local, organic, and fresh ingredients whenever possible. Michael stated, "Whenever I find a local ingredient, I replace whatever I have been using with it." They currently use Vital Farms for eggs, Texas Coffee Traders for coffee ingredients, and Finca Pura Vida for produce, which had set up camp immediately across from our meeting spot at the HOPE Farmer's Market.

They produce their goodies in their commercial kitchen, and are busy finalizing their website, their flavors, and getting ready to set up shop at the HOPE Farmer's Market in two weeks.

Get excited, Retro Bizzaro treats are coming our way....and boy are they tasty! I honestly can't remember the last time I bit into a candy bar, and the experience definitely took me back to a place in my childhood. Next on my tasting list, the Mango Chili. Thank you to Michael and Amanda for allowing me to sample their yummy treats!