

HOLE IN ONE



SPARK ST. JUDE

Kamal Grant

Sublime Doughnuts reinvents the pastry wheel

BY HOPE S. PHILBRICK

Sublime Doughnuts, which has been open about a year and is owned and operated by Chef Kamal Grant, has not only fans but devotees—a quick online search yields pages of rave reviews. A Marietta native, Grant followed his four-year stint in the U.S. Navy by attending first the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y., and then the American Institute of Baking in Manhattan, Kan. While he was out driving when he was working for what he calls “a big baking manufacturer,” he discovered a doughnut shop for lease and decided to try his hand at running his own business.

Q You're a trained chef. Why doughnuts?
A I love doughnuts! I'll admit that I love bread more, but the doughnut shop was here. I took over the lease for the doughnut shop and it was turn-key—everything I needed was here. I'm trying to make the best possible doughnuts using the equipment that I have.

What's your inspiration?

I like cooking. When I was in high school, I was in a food service class and this speaker came in who used to be an executive with Dunkin' Donuts. He talked about his role with experimental flavors, and I thought I wouldn't mind playing around with flavors and trying stuff. I wanted to become a baker, a pastry chef. Also, while I was in high school, I got to eat a three-course meal at 103 West, which made me want to go to the Culinary Institute of America.

What are the most popular flavors?

Peanut butter cup, fresh strawberries and cream, caramel apple fritter, cookies and cream,

orange dream, which is like a creamsicle—that's a real good one!—A-Town, which is like an éclair with vanilla pastry cream inside and iced with dark chocolate.

How often do you introduce new flavors?

Whenever I come up with a new idea. I'm currently trying to figure out a honey bun to package and sell at Whole Foods, so I haven't introduced a lot of new flavors recently. Normally with flavors the question is, “Is it selling as well?” If not, I'll move it out and add another flavor. I don't do a lot of competing flavors: I had a strawberry-glazed doughnut, but then came out with strawberry and cream, which sold more, and so I dropped the strawberry-glazed because I don't want to confuse people. I try to do things that are fun, think of a good flavor and see if it works.

Anything on the menu besides doughnuts?

Strictly doughnuts right now. I've only got doughnut-making equipment and can only fry stuff right now. The menu is frosted, crispy, crunchy, soft and gooey. I want to add other stuff, and once we get a line out the door with doughnuts, then we can start adding other things like maybe cupcakes, loaves of bread. I'm a baker and would definitely love to have a full line bakery here, but don't want to rush it. I don't want to put out something just to put it out. I want people to love whatever they get here, no hard choices because it's all delicious.

How is business?

I've got three employees now. A couple of months ago, it was just me. We've picked up a little bit, but it's still slow going. Hopefully, people can come check us out. We work real hard to try to put the best product out. The goal is to be delicious and make people happy first, and then we can make money. **SP**

Sublime Doughnuts is located at 535 10th St. 404-897-1801. www.sublimedoughnuts.com.

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