



LOCAL BUSINESS

Real Cookies are Really Good

By ROBERT HINSHALWOOD

Finding tasty baked goods for people with dietary restrictions or the health conscious can be intimidating. Lauren Berger and Marla Felton, founders of *The Real Cookie Company*, have changed that (we know because we taste tested them at the Sentinel and they are really, really good). The new Greenwich based business was started by the two lifelong friends looking for an answer to the problem they and many other people were experiencing-- How can I find healthy snacks that taste good?

"I love cookies," said Lauren, who ran a yoga studio on Greenwich Ave for 6 years and has always prioritized living a healthy lifestyle. "I crave them all the time, but as someone with my own food sensitivities, I always felt like there weren't the right real options for me that taste good." Marla, a former attorney and now cookie entrepreneur, shared the same sentiments. "We became set on the goal of creating the best healthy cookie in existence-- one we could feel good about sharing with our friends, family, and the community."

For these two it was about creating something that can satisfy everyone's individual dietary restrictions while also tasting great. "Together we decided to come up with something that fits our health needs but also tastes delicious"



explained Marla. "Our family has had various health issues, and also just dietary restrictions because of the health issues, and then also just wanting to eat healthy. So it's really been a quest to find something that is healthy but also doesn't taste so healthy. It tastes like the real thing." The Real Cookies recipes do not substitute ingredients found in traditional cookies such as gluten and sugar. Instead, they built a cookie from the ground up using all natural ingredients packed with healthy energy. This makes it the perfect snack for grabbing in the morning or on the go.

The perfect healthy cookie did not come overnight. Lauren and Marla spent the last two years baking, testing, and

tweaking their recipe until everyone who tried it liked it. They invited around 25 friends and family members ranging from kids to grandparents to taste and give feedback on the cookies. "It's really been about community," said Lauren, "even in the development of these cookies we have done taste testings all here in Greenwich. So we feel like we have an army of supporters locally cheering us on all the way." With the backing of Greenwich behind them, they felt it was important to create a product that brings happiness to everyone regardless of their dietary restrictions.

The cookies come in three different flavors-- classic chocolate chip, peanut butter chocolate

chip, and lemon blueberry. "The lemon blueberry ones kind of taste like a blueberry muffin so they are perfect for breakfast" said Lauren. This idea that a delicious cookie can replace other snacks was shared by Marla as well, she remarked "some people might grab a bar to be a meal replacement, my son grabs these cookies before going to work". Because of all the healthy energy the cookies get the best of both worlds-- the ability to fill you up like a healthy granola bar does while also tasting like a sweet baked treat.

The best part about these cookies is that both Lauren and Marla enjoyed the process. "We have a great team because we all have interesting different backgrounds and respect for one another, we like dealing with issues together" remarked Marla. Lauren echoed this statement noting "what makes working on this so fun is that we are doing it with friends, and we are doing it together, so I never think I'm working." Their enthusiasm and excitement has fostered a working environment filled with happiness and dedication to creating the best possible tasting healthy cookies.

As a result of their strong friendship, community backing and a shared goal, the two best friends were able to come up with the recipe for "best healthy cookies on earth." Not only are their cookies gluten free, dairy free and grain free, they are also paleo friendly, kosher and plant based vegan, and best of all they taste great! They are for sale now on their website realcookiesco.com, as well as on Amazon, and

