



Local Business Fridays

“Kuroki Bakery is a small, one-person run, artisanal bakery that strives to bring fresh, unique, and all natural breads and pastries to the Arkansas River Valley!”

- Andi Kuroki

How did you come up with the name “Kuroki Bakery”?

“Kuroki is my last name. It’s actually Japanese and means ‘black tree’. Before deciding on the name, I actually considered many different options. I knew I wanted something that sounded natural which represented my baking. All of my bakes are 100% natural with no preservatives or artificial additives and I use unbleached flour and low processed sugar. In the end, Kuroki fit perfectly.”

How long have you been in open?

“Kuroki Bakery became official this last year. It was originally something to keep me busy and then I gained a lot of popularity at the farmers market and the bakery grew from there.”

What do you specialize in?

“I do artisan breads, French pastries, and Japanese pastries. But, I do almost anything”

How did you learn how to bake?

“My grandmother was a cake decorator and when I was little I did lessons with her. I also learned how to cook from my mother growing up. It was not something I had planned to be doing. I originally went to college as a psychology major, but life happened and I realized I couldn’t spend eight years in school. So I changed my major and went to culinary school.”

Was baking something that always interested you?

“Yes, but I never considered it to be a career until that moment when I felt like I could make something happen.”

What made you decide to start your own business?

“I really didn’t make that choice, it happened organically. I was originally making pastries for a local coffee shop but then it closed. So I moved on to the Pope County Farmer’s Market, where I still am. I’m now also on the online Russellville Community Farmers Market where people can order online but you can also request specialty orders from me directly by phone, email, or Facebook.

Did you have any past experience in having your own business?

“No, I’m just tumbling through it. Nobody tells you what you need to do and the internet doesn’t really help. I have past experience working as a pastry chef before I moved to Russellville, but none of it is knowing how to run my own business.”

Was it hard to get started?

“No, not really. The way that the bakery is now was easy to start. Moving forward into a legitimate business with a store front will be hard. Baking bread requires a lot of space and finding that perfect space is hard. It’s difficult because I didn’t have an expectations when I started Kuroki Bakery. I thought it was just a way to keep myself busy.”

How many hours a day do you spend baking?

“It honestly depends on the day. Thursdays I can work about 12 hours baking and Fridays are usually 18 hours. Those are the two days that I spend prepping for the farmers market. I typically only sleep 45 minutes a night. I bake from Monday to Tuesday and can produce over 75 loaves in a day. This is using my regular oven, regular stove, and 3 stand mixers. You must be able to multi-task when baking. Timeline is important and control is key.”

What is your favorite thing to bake for the community market?

“I love anything with crème patisserie, but I love baking the breads most of all. They just feel so nice to work with, it’s very soothing.”

Where do you see yourself and Kuroki Bakery in 5 years?

“Running an empire and Starbucks going under. I’m kidding, but I would like to have a place somewhere in town that has enough space to bring people together. Hopefully by then people in Fayetteville will know of me.”

What is your favorite thing about owning your own business?

“I am really fond of no one telling me what to do. I tend to be particular about my baking and products. I dread the day I have to hire someone. Working in a bakery is a huge commitment. It is long hours with a very finicky product. There are a lot of risks with bread and it is hard to trust someone with that. With a cake if you mess up you can start over and 20 minutes later be right on track. But because bread takes so long to make, rise, and prove, one mistake could cost you days of work. It is hard to trust someone with that responsibility when I know I can do it myself, but I hope to one day find someone passionate who can handle it.”

Do you have social media for people to find you at?

“Yes! You can find me in Facebook at Kuroki Bakery: Artisan Breads and Pastries, Instagram @kurokibakery, or on the Russellville Community Farmers Market!”

<https://russellville.locallygrown.net/growers/show/8654>

