

INTERVIEW WITH AWARD WINNING BAKERY, PINJARRA BAKERY

Mauri was fortunate enough to catch up with one of their customers, Jodie Pantaleo from Pinjarra Bakery, who recently won the Great Aussie Pie Competition. She kindly took the time to celebrate their success by telling us all about their award-winning bakery including their top tips to make the best Aussie pie! Keep reading for the full interview.

Tell us about your store(s) - where are they located, how many years have you been in operation, what areas do you specialise in?

We actually didn't start out as pie makers or bakers! But our Italian roots have inspired a love of food and coming together as a family. The bakery was founded in the mid 90's when mum and dad (Larry & Narda Pantaleo) decided to start producing a small selection of specialty baked goods within their existing fresh food mart business. The bakery component of the business became so successful, they decided to move next door into an independent bricks and mortar store and in 1997, Pinjarra Bakery & Patisserie was born. After 10 years of doing what we love, we finally moved to a brand-new, purpose-built flagship store in Pinjarra.

Not long after, we celebrated the opening of a second store in Waroona and finally Maddington in 2014. We have had such success so far and are thrilled to share that we have plans to open a 4th store in Port Kennedy in November! It's been a long time coming! Together with our 80-strong team, we've been rolling out award winning goodness for more than 23 years.

Our speciality has to be our award-winning pies! They are what we are known for. Our signature pies are distinctive, unique and crammed to the brim with tasty fillings you can see and flavour combinations that have become crowd favourites.

You recently won the Great Aussie Pie comp for the best meat pie in Australia - how did your business prepare for the competition (what was the process)?

We have been entering for so many years now that honestly, there isn't really a set process. The team know exactly what they need to do and we trust them to experiment and create the best tasting, most creative pies. The guys are lucky to have the opportunity to produce special edition flavours (invention pies) throughout the course of the year leading into awards season- so this really helps us with nailing flavours and producing a winning recipe that has already been tried and tested.

Can you share any tips for other bakeries thinking about entering next year?

It has taken us 20 years to win this award. There are so many factors that make up an award-winning pie- however we feel the quality of meat is vital. Find the perfect meat to gravy ration and pack in as much flavour as possible! The best advice we can give is to keep persevering, take note of the judge's feedback and experiment with new recipes.

How has winning this competition helped your business?

It's been a whirlwind since winning the award. Customers are loving using the "best meat pie in Australia" tagline. I think they have taken ownership and are very proud by association. It's been a wonderful message to help drive more people to our stores and has supported our goals to continue building a strong, successful brand.

Personally, what is your favourite pie?!

From the mainstream range it is the Chilli Beef. But from the Invention pie range, it has to be the Beef, Camembert and Caramelized onion! They are just delicious!

What are your favourite Mauri products to use and why? What types of end products do you create with them?

The Supreme flour is our favourite and definitely the one we use the most. We make all our amazing puff pastry using the Supreme Flour and also our pie bottom for our pies. It's the best!

What was the main reason you decided to work with Mauri?

We have been partners with Mauri for the past 20 years and have found throughout the years Mauri has always provided us with the highest quality products, service, technical support and product range. No one else compares.

Do you have any tips for apprentice bakers just starting out?

- Make sure you love what you do and be passionate about it
- Always give that little bit extra without being asked
- Be loyal to your employer, listen and respect your colleagues
- Read books, watch tutorials, don't be afraid to ask questions, always look at ways to gain more knowledge.
- Enter industry competitions, keep on challenging yourself
- Don't be afraid if you make a mistake, learn from your mistakes and do a better job next time.
- Have a dream, have a plan, set your goals and don't be distracted from achieving your goals.