

## WANNA BUY A BRIDGE?

*One woman immortalizes the landmark in buttery dough.*

BY CAROLINE POTTER

People have joked about selling the Brooklyn Bridge to unknowing rubes almost since it opened in 1883. Now, 125 years later, one woman is selling that famous landmark to cookie connoisseurs in the know. Deann Horack, founder of Brooklyn Cookie, began baking her beautiful, buttery, hand-painted Brooklyn Bridge replicas late last year and they're fast on their way to becoming edible icons in their own sweet right. "It's been a whirlwind," acknowledges the budding pâtissier.

While Horack's business is new, her love of baking is not. As a teen in Milwaukee she created portrait cakes, one with a New Kids on the Block theme. The hobby became something of a last hope when she returned to Brooklyn in the fall after spending several months volunteering at a school in Ecuador. "I had \$34.70 in my bank account and I didn't have a job. I was really good at making cookies, and people kept saying, 'I would totally buy these!'" Brooklyn Cookie was born.

Her signature Brooklyn Bridge cookies, adapted from her grandmother's recipe and sweetened with once-local Domino Sugar, were the product of desperation, inspiration, and a kitchen utensil drawer. "I was thinking about what my brand would be, how I could bring the community together through food," she remembers. Enter the Brooklyn Bridge cookie cutter she'd purchased "I don't know how many years ago" for 99 cents and forgotten about.

Her new Web site confesses, "Brooklyn Cookie never expected to sell over 1,000 hand-painted sugar cookies in our first 23 days as a company. But did we ever!"

Though her bridge cookies have attracted attention, Horack, 30, has set her sights beyond the legendary span. "I'm interested in the borough's architecture. I've been doing other Brooklyn landmarks, namely the pair of 'chubby checkers' water towers that were demolished

back in 2000 and the 'onion dome' Russian Orthodox Cathedral near McCarren Park." While she cuts and paints her confectionary creations by hand, she claims to lack artistic ability outside the kitchen: "I can't draw with a pencil. I can only draw with frosting.

It's weird."

When she's not baking and painting cookies (or locked in an editing suite for her television day job), Horack can be found with her nose buried in a copy of Mrs. Fields' autobiography, or penning her own handwritten manual for success, *The Cookie Bookie*. "[The Fields book] is like the greatest book on starting your own business—until *The Cookie Bookie* is published," she jokes. "But seriously, I always turn to Debbie Fields when I have questions or a crisis. It's 'What would Debbie do?'"

Horack's hard at work expanding her collection. In addition to her Bridge cookies, chocolate-espresso "love bites," and the new banana-chocolate-chunk with butterscotched walnuts, watch for a Brooklyn Harvest line of cookies in the works—"we'll use only locally grown ingredients,"—and her vegan line comes out this spring. She swears, "They're normal looking!" A portion of proceeds will benefit Williamsburg's Bark Animal Shelter. She also custom creates clients' cookies, say with the name of your new baby, or your record label.

Brooklyn Cookie cookies, which are all made to order, are available via mail order and at local street fairs, including Brooklyn Flea, but are not yet in stores, though a few have expressed interest. Shares Horack, who does her baking out of a Long Island City commercial kitchen, "I'm not ready to do that yet. I'd rather grow slowly and do things the right way." Until then, visit [www.brooklyncookie.net](http://www.brooklyncookie.net), which brings a whole new meaning to the phrase "cookie-enabled browser." ©



Psst...bridge (cookies) for sale.