



The Disruptor

SARAH JONES, FOUNDER OF MISS JONES BAKING CO.
A former accountant takes on mainstream products with her new organic baking brand. **BY ALEJANDRA SARAGOZA**

TAKE A STEP into Miss Jones Baking Co.'s Emeryville office, and it's like you've walked into a baking utopia: Shelves are packed with shiny bakeware, cake mix, and tubs of frosting, while giant golden balloons spelling out *bake* float in the corner. To monitor trends in the baking world, one shelf is devoted solely to products from the company's competitors—the very brands Miss Jones plans on surpassing with its line of organic frosting and baking mixes.

Q: What motivates you?
The desire to succeed. This is our thing to own. We are bakers, we understand the market, and we have the passion that no big company has.

A:

What is your key to success?

When I think about how I went from being an accountant to where I am today, it was all about taking advantage of opportunities, making my own luck, and working really hard.

What's your advice to other women entrepreneurs?

You cannot be afraid of hard work or sacrifice. You have to be willing to lay it all on the line, let the cards fall, and continue to work through it when things don't go your way.

Tired of the bland mixes and frosting found in grocery stores, Sarah Jones launched her company in 2015 with the plan of disrupting the baking goods industry—and she isn't shy about saying so, calling Miss Jones the next "modern American baking brand." While many baking companies pack their products with artificial flavors and preservatives, Miss Jones relies on simple recipes made with natural and sustainable ingredients, resulting in frosting and mixes that taste homemade.

"We use high-quality organic ingredients but focus on taste first so people get a from-scratch experience," says Jones. "People shouldn't know that cupcake was made with a mix."

Jones' company is the culmination of a lifelong ambition. She grew up baking with her mom, trying out new recipes in the kitchen. "I was always looking for something that taught me a new skill set, whether it was how to make caramel, an Italian meringue buttercream, or French *macarons*," says Jones. "I liked pushing myself to do something different."

She decided to study accounting at the University of Texas at Austin, knowing a business background would help when she started her own company someday. She worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers and Apple before meeting Brit Morin, who had just founded the digital lifestyle company Brit and

Co. Jones became one of Morin's first hires, and served as the head of operations and the food editor.

At the same time, Jones was busy developing the concept for Miss Jones. When she premiered the brand at San Francisco's Fancy Food Show in January 2015, the response was overwhelmingly positive, giving her the confidence to strike out on her own. "I thought, if all of these people are interested in [Miss Jones], then it's time to do this full-time," she says. That April, she left Brit and Co. to focus on her business.

Today, Miss Jones' products line the shelves of 2,500 stores nationwide. The six baking mixes and six accompanying frosting flavors are all made with seven or fewer organic ingredients, and each mix comes with alternative baking instructions to create vegan or dairy-free versions. (The frosting is also vegan and dairy-free.) Jones has even managed to make the first natural version of Funfetti frosting, using dyes made from fruits and vegetables.

"We think that's part of being the modern American baking brand," says Jones. "We like to make things as flexible as possible."

She is confident she has something special with Miss Jones—and she's spoiling for a fight against her competition. "We want to be organic for the masses," says Jones. "So, we're going after the big guys." *missjones.co.*