

# Gourmet Bakers Celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival In Style

*Cakes By Happy Eatery Honors Mooncake Tradition with a Contemporary Edge*

MANASSAS, VIRGINIA, USA, September 29, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Mid-Autumn Festival – which is today, the 15th day of the 8th month of the lunar calendar – is traditionally celebrated by many East Asian countries by watching the full moon that is supposed to be at its brightest point of the year, and was first celebrated 3,000 years ago during China’s Zhou Dynasty (although it wasn’t widely recognized until about 1,500 years later during the Tang Dynasty). Fresh baked mooncakes became a staple of the celebration somewhere along the way.



Mooncakes are made by hand using traditional wood molds with intricate patterns.

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*Victoria Wu, Co-Owner of Cakes By Happy Eatery*

“We grew up making mooncakes with our parents during that first full moon of the fall,” remembers Victoria Wu, one of two sisters who took over their parents popular bakery and café, Cakes By Happy Eatery, that is a staple in the Manassas, Virginia. “Fall Festival was about making our own mooncakes and gathering as a family.”

Victoria and her sister and bakery partner Emily Wu-Rorrer both noticed a dramatic uptick in interest after the success of the movie *Crazy Rich Asians* in 2018, largely because of the over-the-top dazzling fall festival party depicted in the movie.

“Suddenly Fall Festival came hip almost overnight,” says Wu-Rorrer. “College kids were doing ‘Moon Fest’ parties, and just as in the movie, there a was more contemporary feeling about the celebrations.”

The Wu sisters were known throughout the DC region for their delicious traditional mooncakes

before the boom, and have set the pace with introducing new flavors for the expanding new audience for the holiday. Traditional mooncakes include Red Bean, Lotus Seed, Mixed Nuts (literally translated is five nuts, but they go beyond that and have 10+ combination of nuts and seeds including, but not limited to peanuts, almonds, pecans, cashews, hazelnuts, pistachios, sesame seeds, flax seeds, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds), Double Yolk Red Bean, and Double Yolk Lotus Seed.

“We frequently experiment with new flavors in everything we bake,” says Wu, “and mooncakes are no different. The trendier new flavors include Green Tea, Wintermelon, Taro, Lemon Ginger, Red Bean with Mixed Nuts – which brings together two classic mooncake flavors – Black Sesame and Pina Colada.” Other modern flavors the Wu sisters have seen include chocolate, truffles, foie gras and ice cream.



The gourmet art of enjoying mooncakes involves pairing gourmet teas with them to balance the sweetness of the rich bean and nut filled cakes much the way you would pair wine and cheese.



Fish-shaped mooncakes symbolize prosperity, and salted egg yolks represent the full moon combining the sweet and the savory.

Mooncakes are small, palm-sized round pastries with a thin crust and dense filling that typically are cut into four bite size pieces, and traditionally paired with a variety of gourmet teas. The traditional custom is for people to exchange mooncakes as gifts. Different regions in China offer different styles of mooncakes. The most recognized selection is the Cantonese-style with its buttery caramel, baked golden brown pastry dough and embossed with intricate floral patterns or Chinese characters symbolizing good-luck, longevity, harmony, or prosperity. Some mooncakes contain a salted egg yolk center which symbolizes the moon.

“In Chinese culture, mooncakes are the traditional dessert for the festival just like pies are for American Thanksgiving,” explains Wu-Rorrer. She also says that mooncakes have been a part of the festival since the Ming dynasty.

The Wu sisters kicked off the week by sharing their mooncake expertise with WJLA’s Good Morning Washington on Monday, where they showed host Brian van de Graaf how to pound out traditional wood mooncake molds among other tricks of the trade (<https://wjla.com/good-morning-washington/small-business-spotlight/happy-eatery-sisters-share-mooncakes-and-mid->

[autumn-festival-insights-on-gmw#](#)).

For more information about mooncakes and Mid-Autumn Festival, go to [www.cakesbyhappyeatery.com](http://www.cakesbyhappyeatery.com)

### About Mid-Autumn Festival

Also known as the Moon Festival or Mooncake Festival, this celebration dates back over 3,000 years and is held on the 15th day of the 8th month on the lunar calendar. It pays respect to the hard work by all for the success of the autumn harvest, typically rice and fruits. The festival falls on September 29th this year, and is an important part of the East Asian community, particularly in China and Vietnam.

The Mid-Autumn Moon Festival is the Asian culture's version of Thanksgiving. The celebration is filled with family gatherings, giving thanks to the bountiful autumn harvest, and symbolic traditions. Some of these traditions include lighting lanterns, which are said to light the path to prosperity and good fortune.

As with many holidays and traditions, there are always legends and takes of how they came to be and why they are celebrated in such ways. One of the legends is the story of Chang'e, the moon goddess. There are multiple versions of this myth, but they all involve the elixir of immortality. For when she drank it, she floated up to the moon and continues to live there for all eternity. If you look closely at the moon, legend has that you can see her silhouette. Her distraught husband displayed her favorite fruits and cakes for her, evolving into our current day mooncake. Its traditional round shape is the symbol of unity, reunion and perfection.

### About Cakes By Happy Eatery

Known regionally for their inventive, fabulous and versatile creations in the kitchen, Cakes By Happy Eatery was founded in 1984 by Woei and Fu-Mei Wu and have been Manassas since 2009. Two of their daughters – Victoria and Emily – operate the business today and have since 2000, although their mother Fu-Mei still comes in almost every day and is still the defacto matriarch. The sisters create and design custom cakes and dessert bars that showcase every kind of special occasion, event or season, producing pieces of art that taste incredibly delicious. Their full-service bakery includes an onsite café for dining throughout the day, and also operate a thriving catering business featuring cakes are baked from scratch daily and never frozen (besides ice cream cakes) by a team of very talented bakers and pastry chefs.

Victoria and Emily are both regularly featured as guests and dessert experts on NBC, FOX, ABC, and CBS affiliates in Maryland, DC, and is known for showcasing cutting-edge trends and creative recipes and presentation designs. For further information go to [www.cakesbyhappyeatery.com](http://www.cakesbyhappyeatery.com)

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