

PACKAGE OF THE MONTH



Galaxy Desserts' individual gourmet dessert line offers products and packaging that are ...



OUT of this World!

With packaging designed to match retailer and consumer expectations, what you see is what you get from the one-pack line of gourmet desserts from Galaxy Desserts, Inc.

Based in San Rafael, Calif., Galaxy Desserts produces full size and individual gourmet desserts such as Tiramisu Classico, Forest Berry Tart and Cappucino Mousse for the wholesale and retail markets. The company remains privately held, with sales expected to exceed \$5 million in fiscal year 2001.

In October 2000, Galaxy launched its individual gourmet desserts into the retail channel. "We developed the products, designed the packaging and refined the overall positioning based on our own experience, as well as specific input we garnered from consumer focus groups and our key retail customers," said Danny Rubenstein, chief "orbiter" of Galaxy Desserts. "The initial results have been outstanding as nearly every retailer we have presented it to has decided to take on the line."

As with any product launch, it took time. "It took us nearly a year to develop and refine our strategy as well as our product mix and packaging," said Mr. Rubenstein.

Among the numerous considerations, the capability of the package to be able to support the product in both refrigerated and frozen conditions was a priority.

"We had to think about what would be efficient for our production department, how the package would perform through its distribution channels, the overall cost of the package and how it would display in retail," explained Mr. Rubenstein. "All of these issues had to be taken carefully into consideration."

In the end Galaxy decided on a colorful 18-point laminated sbs chipboard box with gold labels attached to distinguish the dessert varieties.

"This type of packaging permits multiple merchandising options. We are able to have a presence in the deli, bakery and freezer sec-

tions, and all we have to change is a label," said Mr. Rubenstein. "With this flexibility, we can have a new product out in less than four weeks."

Another unique aspect of this package is its see-through polypropylene window, which is glued to the interior of the box. Often companies marketing a frozen product opt to use a graphic of the product on the package rather than revealing the product itself. Instead, Galaxy decided to put its product in the spotlight.

"We found from our focus groups, consumers do not want to be disappointed when the product does not measure up to a picture on a package," explained Mr. Rubenstein. "By showing the product itself, we eliminate that problem."

The design of the box was a collaborative effort between Galaxy Desserts and Gauger and Silva Associates, San Francisco, to create a package that was both upscale and fun, according to Mr. Rubenstein.

"Most important for us was making sure the package reflected our positioning, the product was visible, the product held its integrity and that it was easy for the consumers to get the dessert out of the package," said Mr. Rubenstein. "For example, we created little 'thumb lifts' on the tray within the box to ease product removal."

As a "marketing-focused" company, Galaxy is emerging as a category leader for all-natural, handcrafted, individual gourmet desserts. It reaches out to its customers with its elegant desserts. "We know who and where our customers are and we make sure we are there — at special events, trade shows and in stores with our tasting programs," said Mr. Rubenstein.

Galaxy Desserts are available in more than 600 retail stores in California, Washington, Oregon, Texas, Arizona, North Carolina and several East Coast states at retail prices ranging from \$2.99 to \$3.99.

— Jessica Salzman