

Edible Arrangements “makes life sweeter” for greater New Bedford residents



Edible Arrangements has two locations to serve the Greater New Bedford and Fall River areas.

Edible Arrangements is a local business that specializes in putting smiles on people's faces. While the Wikipedia definition of Edible Arrangements states that they "...specialize in fresh fruit arrangements, melding the concept of fruit baskets with design inspired by the floral business." what they really do is make people *happy*. quite simply, they've taken the idea of gifting someone with flowers and improved upon it. Flowers are nice – you can enjoy their beauty and aroma, but a fresh-fruit arrangement you can also eat!

Edible Arrangements in North Dartmouth and Fall River are two franchises that are owned and operated by the exuberant sisters Isabel Da Silva Levissee and Jessica DaSilva. The inspiration came via a fruit arrangement Isabel had received while pregnant. The New Bedford natives opened their Fall River store in 2006 where an existing Edible Arrangement store was available for purchase and the North Dartmouth location in

2009. It's no surprise that the chain itself, and these two locations in particular, have enjoyed great success. There's a reason the Connecticut based company that started in 2001 has become one of the most popular franchises on earth and has been voted first – yes, first – in Entrepreneur Magazine's Franchise 500 seven years in a row.



Isabel, Jessica and crew have all occasions, big and small, covered!

Why should anyone pay for a fruit arrangement? For the same reasons one would buy a bouquet of flowers: to say "I love you," to apologize, to say "I'm thinking of you," get well, happy birthday or congratulate someone for an accomplishment like graduation or just "because." These aren't just for mom, girlfriend, wife, daughter, or ill friend, but that guy in your life likes chocolate whether he admits it or not. Besides, with all that steak and potatoes in his life, some fruit would be good for him!

In fact, Isabel and Jessica mentioned that arrangements have been ordered to thank people for plowing a driveway, getting a business promotion, getting out of the "Dog House," a thank you to nurses for saving a life, "rubbing in the UConn win w/ fruit in a basketball container," a wedding centerpiece, and many other reasons. Certainly not just for birthdays!

One of the most common misconceptions that the two sisters encounter is that folks believe that arranged fruit is too expensive. However, a quick glance at the menu will show that

just like a bouquet of flowers there are a range of prices depending on what you buy, from \$15 on up.

Can you simply buy all the fruit and make it yourself? Sure, you can head to the supermarket, wait in line, come home, chop everything up, arrange it and in 2 hours or more you'll have something special. I can brew my own coffee. I can easily make my own pizza. I can save money by laying in the sun instead of going to a tanning salon. I could do my own hair and nails, but...oh, wait. I can't do that!

I think you get the point. It's an unfair misconception. Regardless, you really can't put a price on the end result, the smile it creates, the message it sends. You could buy flowers, balloons and a card or purchase a fruit arrangement for the same price.



This is what it feels like to get gifted with a fruit arrangement "just because"!

The other misconception that was important to her to have cleared up: that everything arrives frozen and pre-arranged and Edible Arrangements is simply a re-seller. This is flat out untrue. Each morning a delivery of fresh fruit arrives and the fruit is arranged right there on the premises. In fact, they arrange many ahead of time, so you can call and head right over and pick them up right away! Each is hand-designed

by a person, not a machine. I didn't need to take her word for it, since I could see one being hand arranged nearby.

Each arrangement is made fresh to order from locally sourced farms to what is called Fruit Expert® standards. The brilliance behind Edible Arrangements is even though they retain the “mom and pop” feel because they are independently owned, being a franchise means that each is held to specific, high standards.

All the familiar, favorite fruits are there: aromatic oranges, succulent apple, pear, and banana. Juicy pineapple and strawberries. Honeydew, cantaloupe, kiwi, apples, grapes and more! The coup de grace, if you will is that these can be dipped in chocolate, one can add balloons, card messages, stuffed animals, or a variety of fun containers. There is an astounding variety to what Edible Arrangements offers, which means there will be something for everyone.

I spent 2 hours one afternoon with co-owner Isabel, asking her about the two locations and the motivation the two sisters had. She finds it an incredibly rewarding experience. She knows the effect that receiving a gift from Edible Arrangements has on people. She hears the anecdotes, since she has a large regular customer base. Once a person sees for themselves its effect, they return for each special occasion.



Each fruit arrangement can be customized with a container,

*balloons, and
more!*

This was evident to me, once the shop had opened and the customer's began to flow in. Each customer that came in she knew on a first name basis and some conversed with her in Portuguese – which she speaks fluently. She mentioned how rewarding the entire concept is, and wasn't embarrassed in the least to admit that everyone that works at Edible Arrangements, from the worker to the driver to owners Isabel and Jessica, has shed tears. Isabel says it best: "We've cried with customers who've lost spouses and came in looking for a thank you arrangement to send to the nursing staff who cared so diligently before he passed, a friend who doesn't know what to say when she finds out her best girlfriend has breast cancer so she sends our cancer awareness basket, the apologetic tearful neighbor who didn't see the dog, the sympathy basket for the woman who meant so much to so many and how will we make it without her, the doctor who saved my life after so many treated me like a number, or the baskets we're asked to send after tragic car accidents involving children..."

Franchise headquarters are affiliated with and donate to the National Breast Cancer Research Foundation and during the month of September and October 2010, 10% of the purchase price from the Awareness Celebration, Breast Cancer Awareness Bouquet and Heels for Healing Bouquet™ are be donated to National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc. ("NBCF"). Isabel and Jessica go a step further and are actively and voluntarily involved in numerous local charities as a way to give back, i.e. school fundraisers, St. Vincent's, and one that is a personal and dear to them both is Cerebral Palsy through United Cerebral Palsy Boston. This is a personal choice they have made.

So, if you want to put a smile on someone's face, say congratulations, thank you or happy birthday; if you want to

wish someone good luck, happy anniversary, get well or for no reason at all – there is something better than flowers to give: a fruit arrangement, dipped in chocolate (in my opinion), with some balloons and a creative container. It's fun, it's healthy, it's something out of the ordinary. What Isabel has at her two stores is extra-ordinarily good – deliciously so!

Edible Arrangements (North Dartmouth)

85B Faunce Corner Rd

Phone: 508-858-5450

Fax: 508-858-5453

Website: ediblearrangements.com/stores/dartmouth

Instagram: instagram.com/ediblearrangements

Monday-Friday: 8:00 AM-7:00 PM

Saturday: 8:00 AM-5:00 PM

Sunday: 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

Edible Arrangements (Fall River)

Executive Plaza, 101 President Ave

Phone: 508-730-3410

Fax: 508-730-3413

Website: ediblearrangements.com/stores/fallriver

Instagram: instagram.com/ediblearrangements

Monday-Friday: 8:00 AM-7:00 PM

Saturday: 8:00 AM-5:00 PM

Sunday: 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

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