

TOP COLLEGES, TOP BUSINESS SCHOOLS

# Entrepreneur

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has four company-owned stores and one

## SATISFYING CRAVINGS

Growing up poor in rural Northern California, Arleen Scavone spent most of her early years cooking on a wood stove and trying to find ways to stretch her family's homegrown vegetables. She managed to get out of the kitchen and spend a long career in banking, but in 2008, as the recession hit, she wanted to try something new. That's when her passion for baking resurfaced. She decided to specialize in cupcakes and bread pudding, and spent more than a year perfecting her flavors and recipes.

The result was Sweet Arleen's, which she opened in November 2009 in Westlake Village, Calif. While the bakery and catering business was popular, Sweet Arleen's became internationally famous after winning Food Network's *Cupcake Wars* three times. That gave Scavone the confidence to start a franchise program, which she launched in May 2013, with eight territories sold so far.

Although many people believe the heyday of the cupcake is over, Scavone says the quality of her products and her attention to detail will ensure Sweet Arleen's longevity. Her French and Italian buttercream icings aren't quite as sweet and sugary as typical offerings. And her bread puddings are available in flavors both sweet and savory—including dulce de leche, bananas Foster, eggs Benedict, mac 'n' cheese and corn with smoked chicken sausage—allowing the stores and their associated food trucks to operate through multiple dayparts.

Scavone isn't afraid of some sort of



Treat yourself: Arleen Scavone of Sweet Arleen's.

sugar backlash—she believes high-quality sweet treats are a trend that will last.

"I'm in my mid-50s, and I'm in the best shape of my life," she says. "I hope this next generation has learned a balance around eating and enjoying food—not eating three jumbo cupcakes in one sitting. People are starting to look for comfort with a balance. In fact, my personal trainer just texted me. She told me to bring her a red velvet cupcake because she's having a craving!"

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### WITH A TWIST

's original store is in Berkeley, it's working with Atlanta Group in hopes of expanding to ons in the U.S. in the next few er Radke says he's excited by ovations in sweet treats. "Find-

choices, like piña colada and pumpkin spice, and 21 toppings, including graham crackers and blackberries.

Radke says most customers don't even realize Cinnaholic's fare is vegan. "I don't believe you can just put a product on the market because it's vegan," he notes. "It has to be outstanding. It's important to us that the product is amazing. We don't advertise the fact, but the vegan community knows we're here. My wife developed

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