

Meet the Women Bringing Science to Cider and Donuts

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All summer long, we're celebrating our commitment to local flavors, street pricing and outstanding customer service 365 days a year by hosting a series of unique experiences and tasting events with a number of partners and organizations. As the official donut of this year's [Oregon Cider Week](#) and hand-crafted by [Blue Star Donuts](#) using cider from [Bauman's Cider Company](#), we partnered with the two brands to sample the commemorative donut and cider in the airport on June 21.

Bauman's Cider owner, Christine Walter, and Blue Star Donuts CEO and owner, Katie Poppe, took some time to answer a few of our questions about the partnership, their journey as two successful female entrepreneurs and what their favorite donut and cider on the menu is.

How did the idea of your business begin?

CW: I grew up on my family's farm, always raising apples and pressing them for fresh juice. The first time I enjoyed a pint of cider at a bar, I was smitten! I studied biology and chemistry at college, so the science of fermentation was a breeze for me. The challenge was in convincing my family that it would be a great idea to do it on the farm.

KP: Blue Star opened in 2012. My business partner and I had traveled around Europe and were inspired by our visits to French patisseries. We were so impressed with all of the details; the display cases, customer service, and the delicious quality ingredients. The overall experience sparked an idea to bring that luxury pastry experience back to Oregon. We decided to do it a little differently and use a classic American favorite as a platform; the humble donut! Pulling from that French inspiration, we became fixated on doing something that no one else was doing at the time – using a French brioche dough as the base for the donut. After many weeks of recipe testing with newly hired pastry chef, Stephanie Thornton, the Blue Star Donut was born in our tiny apartment kitchen. We opened our first location in downtown Portland on December 5th, 2012.



Christine Walter, Bauman's Cider Company

Did you expect it to be what it is now?

CW: I definitely did not expect to love it as much as I do, nor did I expect to grow as fast as we have.

KP: Nobody quite expected how Blue Star would take off. Some customers were a little unsure at first. They scoffed at the flavor combinations...Blueberry Bourbon Basil? Raspberry Rosemary? But the folks who got it became instant fans and the skeptics were converted after a few bites. We're so proud to have created an experience memorable enough that people wanted to share it with their friends and family.

Why do you love what you do?

CW: First, I love being back on the farm, around family, and all the rhythms of farm life and seasonal crops. Second, the cider industry, both locally and further abroad, is incredible supportive and generous and tons of fun. I love making cider, creating recipes, collaborating with other makers, and sharing my favorite ciders with friends new and old!

KP: It all comes back to a shared passion for quality. We love creating a quality product that we're proud of and seeing someone's face light up as they first bite into that donut! We're also constantly inspired and motivated by our community. Portland is renowned for its incredible bounty and its supportive sense of community, and embracing that spirit is part of

what makes Blue Star so special. Wherever we may be, we prioritize working with our local vendors, because we believe strongly in investing in our neighbors – even though it may not always be the most cost-effective option. Also, because we like them! We are grateful for the opportunity to show off and appreciate the culinary artisans that make our communities unique.

What is your favorite item on the menu and why?

CW: Well, coincidentally, the Logan berry cider that the chef at Blue Star chose for the donut and cider collaboration is emphatically my favorite cider! And I love the way it comes through in this special donut! I will also add that Blue Star’s Meyer Lemon/Key Lime donut is about the most magical thing ever. Though I don’t want everybody to rush out and get one, because I’ll be in the airport in a few days and I certainly don’t want them to be out of my fave!



Katie Poppe, Blue Star Donuts

KP: I am an absolute sucker for our Meyer Lemon-Key Lime Curd. Our brioche donut is stuffed with a thick, bright citrus custard – ours has double the butter of traditional curds, making extra rich, yet smooth. It’s one of those recipes Chef nailed in the early days and we never looked back! That or the Orange Olive Oil (our version of a powdered sugar cake donut) with hot black coffee. Done.

Do you have any favorite employee or customer stories?

CW: One of my favorite things is when I am in cognito and having a drink a bar or restaurant where they carry my cider and I overhear a patron trying a Bauman’s for the first time, and raving about it. It makes me so happy—every single time!

KP: One of our most recent favorite customer stories actually started at PDX! A long-time Blue Star fan made a special trip from Boise, Idaho just to spend National Donut Day with Blue Star. He and his girlfriend flew down in the morning and visited 5 of 8 Blue Star locations, ate all the donuts, and hopped back on a plane that night to head back home. We finally got to meet them and they were just the sweetest people. It’s really special to have fans like that, it keeps us going!

Tell us more about this year’s Oregon Cider Week and the partnership between Blue Star Donuts and Bauman’s Cider Company.

CW: I felt so incredibly honored to have my cider chosen for the partnership. I am blown away by the talent and creativity that Stephanie shows in every single amazing flavor she makes. What an awesome woman!

KP: The people behind Oregon Cider Week asked us to make the official donut for OCW, and of course we said yes! They suggested looking into Bauman's for flavor inspiration. The following day we had our employee party at a venue in town that was serving Bauman's Loganberry Cider and we fell in love! It's such a perfectly refreshing and flavorful cider. It's also not too sweet, which makes it great for a donut recipe. Chef went to work and created the Loganberry Cider with Salted Lemon Crumble donut. She blended the prize-worthy cider with fresh raspberries and blackberries for a juicy, slightly tart glaze that goes perfectly with our fluffy, moist citrus cake. It's finished with a homemade salted lemon zest crumble, that actually uses olive oil instead of butter for a more earthy note. The icing on the cake (er..., donut?) was to meet our new friend Christine and get to know her business and story.

What do you most love about PDX?

CW: I've never seen an airport that goes to such lengths to have the very finest that the local market has to offer, right in the terminals! From restaurants, brewers, distillers, local craftspeople and clothing manufacturers—you'll find it all PDX, and at the same prices as in town.

KP: Our favorite thing about PDX is the local vibe. With our company commitment to local collaborations and community events in Portland, it feels natural to be in a place where we're surrounded by businesses we know and love and work with outside of the Port.

Given the Port of Portland's commitment to women and minority-owned businesses and equity, what does it mean to you to be a leader of your business?

CW: Every time a strong woman steps up and leads a company or takes on a big challenge, it is an invitation for other women, telling each and every one that they can do whatever they put their minds and hearts into.

KP: You know, I feel very fortunate to be the co-founder and majority owner of my business, and as CEO I take being a good steward of our company very seriously. The buck stops and starts with me – not only am I responsible for making sure we don't run out of money, but I'm also responsible for setting the tone and culture of our company. It's a privilege to be in this position; so to me, leadership is about being very thoughtful and deliberate about what kind of example to set. I respect that the Port is setting its own example.

What's next? What's on the horizon for your business?

CW: Well, more growth in our local Portland area, and other Northwest cities. There are always new flavors that I can't wait to try and make into exciting and delicious ciders!

KP: Right now, we're heavily focused on the product. "Obsessed with perfecting" is a good description! Chef is in the test kitchen working on some flavors unlike anything anyone has ever seen before. We're so excited to share the new things we've been cooking up!

Is there anything else you want to add or share with PDX travelers?

CW: Whenever I hear of awards that PDX has won, I think “Of course it did! It is the best airport!” We are pretty fortunate here, in so many ways, and I’m proud to brag about how great the airport is with friends. Thanks for being so great at what you’re doing!

KP: Just remember that we’re pre-security, so grab those donuts before you go! We’ve got some unique packaging options to make it safe and easy, and the donuts are TSA approved (and thoroughly taste-tested).



Loganberry Cider with Salted Lemon Crumble Donut, the official donut of Oregon Cider Week

Join us in our summer-long celebration that highlights the great food and shopping options you can find at America’s Best Airport.