

# Cookies, social media join for new Vegas business

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WASHBURN REVIEW

A new Las Vegas business will combine gourmet cookies and social media to create a unique consumer experience.

Marquel Martin, who was a contestant on Season 10 of ABC's "The Bachelorette," recently announced plans to open a social media inspired cookie shop, Social Cookie, in Las Vegas.

Martin became known for his love of cookies during his time on "The Bachelorette." Fans of the show began referring to him as "the cookie monster," which he said his friends and family nicknamed him when he was younger.

"I have some sort of emotional connection with cookies," said Martin. "That's kind of where my passion originally comes from. Cookies are my comfort zone. If you want to talk about cookies, I could talk about it all day long."

He said he has always dreamed of opening his own cookie shop. His father, who owned a hair salon when Martin was growing up, inspired the entrepreneurial mindset that he developed at a young age and still has today.

After leaving "The Bachelorette," he began receiving encouragements to make his cookie shop dreams a reality. He met with co-founder Robbie Tripp, who initially reached out to him on social media. Soon, the two started putting Martin's thoughts and ideas into action. Through Tripp's social media expertise and Martin's vision,

entrepreneurship skills and passion for cookies, the concept of Social Cookie began to form.

With an educational background in advertising and marketing, Martin said he knows the importance of setting yourself apart from the crowd. The social media component and the ever-changing menu are largely what will differentiate Social Cookie from other cookie shops.

"Being that we're coining

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- Marquel Martin  
Social Cookie Founder, CEO

ourselves as the 'first social media inspired treat,' people automatically will associate our cookies with social media and automatically associate our messaging with the expectation that things will change based on social media," said Martin.

There will be five segments of Social Cookie's gourmet cookie menu: classic, fusion, lifestyle,

signature and social media.

The classic segment will include well-known cookies recipes, such as chocolate chip and other classics.

Fusion will feature a more interesting mix of flavors. Through cookies such as organic and protein cookies, the lifestyle segment will promote a healthy lifestyle. The signature segment will feature more locally-based cookies.

Cookies based on trending topics will be one of the main aspects of what makes up the ever-changing social media segment of the menu. Martin said that cookies based on good causes also will be featured within this segment.

Martin's father is a prostate cancer survivor, and said he always knew he wanted his future business to include a charitable component. Customers will have the opportunity to support charities through purchasing these Social Cookies.

"For example, October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, so we would have a cookie where part of the proceeds go to breast cancer research," said Martin. "We will attach ourselves with the charity."

Ice cream, yogurt, dessert wines and milk are among the selection of other items that may be offered.

At the shop in Las Vegas, Martin said he imagines a relaxed and modern lounge atmosphere where people can come together and socialize 24 hours a day.

"My ideal night is Netflix, cookies and wine. That's the



photo courtesy of Marquel Martin

**From "Bachelorette" to Entrepreneur:** Former "Bachelorette" contestant, Marquel Martin, to open social media inspired cookie business in Las Vegas. The ever-changing menu will feature cookies based on trending topics, good causes, big events and more.

kind of social environment I want to create," said Martin. "It's social media and the social atmosphere that creates Social Cookie."

Martin also wants to create an interactive and engaging experience where supporters can be and feel involved in the process. For example, customers will be able to vote for, or "like," popular recipes via downloadable apps or social media based

menus within the shop. The popularity of each cookie will be visible on the menus.

"In my opinion, a person is much more likely to visit the shop or have an emotional connection with the shop if they feel like they had a say in something," said Martin. "Having that sense of autonomy is very valuable."

A monthly cookie-tasting event, where local chefs would

come to the shop and create different cookie recipes, is another idea Martin said he would love to incorporate.

Social Cookie also will have a website where customers can order cookies from all around the world. Downloadable apps, an interactive menu and various social media accounts will give customers the chance to share and have conversations about Social Cookie on social media.

"To me, cookies are a conversation piece," said Martin. "They're universally understood."

Martin has received very positive responses and a lot of support since launching the idea of Social Cookie on Kickstarter last November. He said hearing people say they love the concept and has helped re-affirm his ideas that this could be a successful business.

"I knew people might support me because they know me from the show," said Martin. "But I wasn't so concerned with that. I just wanted people to believe in what I believe in and what I've been trying to create."

An official shop location and opening date haven't been set, but Martin said he hopes the shop will be open sometime in the spring or summer of this year. In the future, he said he wants to franchise in major metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles and New York City.

Elizabeth Burgett, senior public relations major at Washburn, is a big fan of "The Bachelorette" and said Martin was one of her favorite contestants on Season 10.

"He stood out because he was the funny, social, down-to-earth guy," said Burgett. "When I heard about the Social Cookie idea in his life after the show, I thought it was an idea that was innovative and fun! He's letting his followers help him choose the ideas for each cookie and that's something only someone like Marquel would think of because he genuinely cares about his fans. The Social Cookie is just like Marquel, interactive and inspiring!"

Martin originally is from Rialto, California. He played football at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas where he received a bachelor's in advertising and a minor in marketing in 2009 and a master's in sports management in 2011. He currently works in sponsorship sales at the Ultimate Fighting Championship in Las Vegas.

Martin appeared on Season 10 of "The Bachelorette" and Season 1 of "Bachelor in Paradise" in 2014.

Social Cookie's slogan is "Something Social, Something Sweet." Supporters can keep up with Social Cookie, as well as give feedback and ideas, by following the business on social media and using the hashtag #SocialCookie. Twitter: @socialcookieLV; Instagram: socialcookieLV; Facebook: Social Cookie.

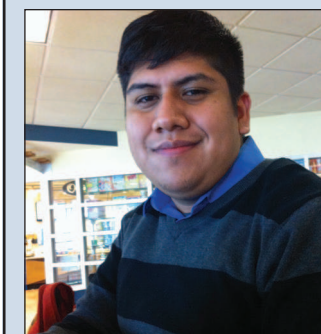
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## "Do you think Social Cookie is a good idea?"



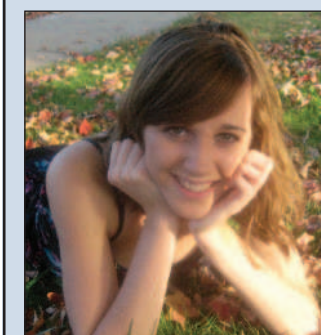
*"...I thought Marquel Martin used a very creative method [in the Kickstarter campaign video] to attract the audience into supporting local charities. The social cookie is a great way to give everyone the opportunity to make a difference in someone's life. After all, doesn't everyone enjoy cookies?"*

- Emily Czepiel, freshmen mathematics major



*"Yeah, I think so. In a place like Las Vegas, it's a dense population and you can get away with doing things with social media. You couldn't open up a cookie store like that in Topeka, Kansas."*

- Ivan Moya, senior political science major

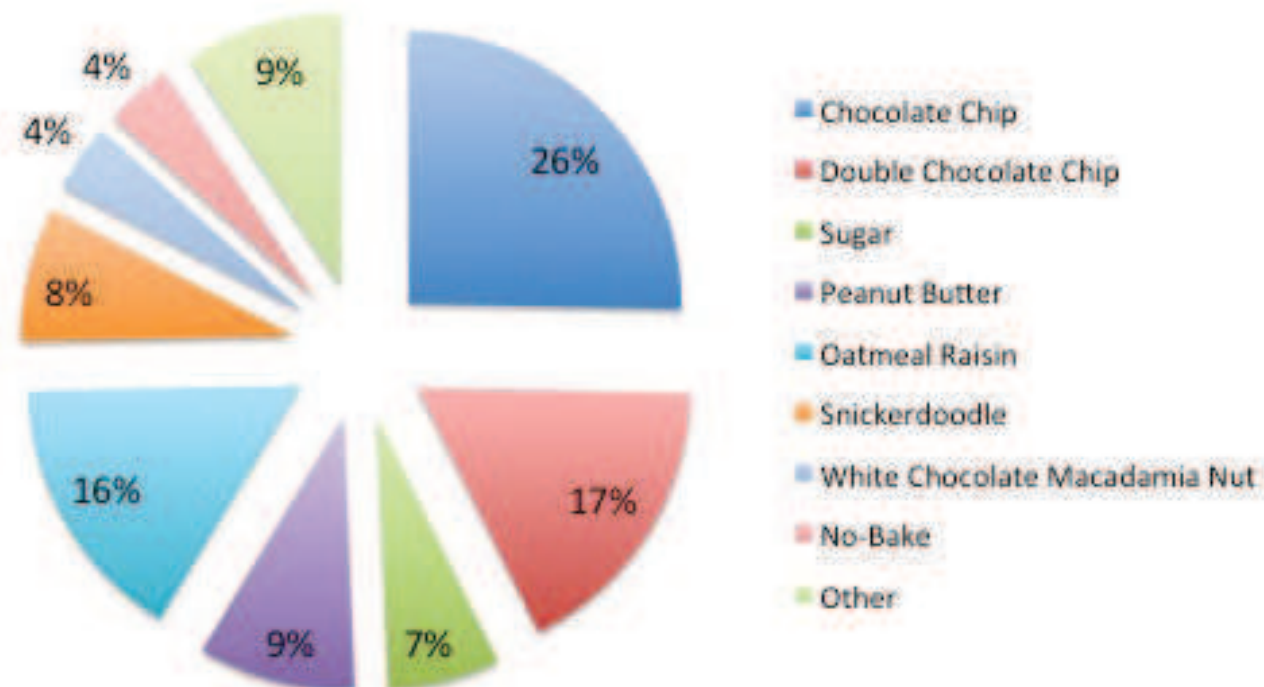


*"I think it's a good idea. I like how they are looking to help and support charities. With how popular social media is today, I believe that this could be a very successful business."*

- Sarah Minneman, junior communications major

## What is your favorite kind of cookie?

\* This survey was conducted over three days using Survey Monkey. A chance to win a free batch of cookies was used as an incentive. A total of 75 people responded.



images courtesy of Marquel Martin

**Packaging concepts:** These packaging concepts were introduced on the Social Cookie Kickstarter page. Final graphics and colors may change.