



Bermuda Jam Factory: Joel McDonell and Grant Kennedy.

Photo by Mark Tatem

## Bermuda Jam Factory launches online ordering

By Alex Wright

One of the Island's top jam producers has gone truly global with the launch of a new online ordering and shipping service.

Bermuda Jam Factory, which is run by Joel McDonell and Grant Kennedy, will enable visitors to the Island to have the popular brand of spicy sweet jams sent to them and residents to have them delivered to friends and family overseas at US shipping prices.

The jams will also continue to be available at local stores, such as grocery and gift shops, and open air markets and the business plans to expand into the US and the UK in the future.

Mr. Kennedy and Mr. McDonell, both Bermudians and the founding partners of the company, decided to sell their products online and undertook a four-year project to get the

service up and running.

"The demand for overseas shipping has been there almost from the beginning of our company back in 2003," said Mr. Kennedy.

"We found that as more and more visitors to Bermuda tried our jams, we began receiving requests almost daily to provide overseas shipping.

"We also had locals approaching us with questions about sending our jams as gifts overseas all the time."

Mr. McDonell said that the customers had been the driver behind the move with tourists and locals alike picking up their jams to take home or as gifts, some of whom had to forego their purchases due to baggage weight and hand luggage restrictions or simply because they could not be bothered to pack them so they decided to sew up that part of the market.

"We're really proud to be able to offer our customers this option," he said.

"Being able to offer the right, cost effective online ordering and shipping solution is a huge milestone for our little Bermuda company.

"The time it's taken us is a direct reflection of our commitment to delivering a quality product with exemplary service along every step of the way."

Mr. McDonell, who taught cookery classes, and Mr. Kennedy, who was a social studies teacher, both met at CedarBridge Academy where they worked and became good friends and because of their shared interests and similar personalities decided to go into business together.

"The pepper jam was just a product sitting in Grant's fridge," explained Mr. McDonell. Having made jam initially



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as a hobby for family and friends, Mr Kennedy was looking to ramp up his production and turned to Mr McDonell to expand and improve the range.

So the fun-loving pair enlisted the help of focus groups and promoted their products at farmers markets and Harbour Nights, before buying some proper equipment and going into mass production based on demand, while maintaining their same high level of quality using natural products and no preservatives.

Last week they made 160 gallons or 100 cases of jam and with a loyal customer base of about 1,000 offer a variety of flavours based on weather systems from Easy Breeze (honey pepper), Gale Warning (ginger pepper) and Storm Surge (jalapeno pepper) through to Hurricane Force (hot pepper) and Tropical Storm, as well as the seasonal Christmas Breeze and Princess Breeze, commissioned by the Fairmont Hamilton Princess for its 125th anniversary, and variety six-packs and corporate gifts, stocking fillers and wedding favours.

Operating out of the kitchen at the Fairmont Hamilton Princess as part of an agreement with to supply the hotel with jam, having worked everywhere from their own kitchens to inside a church and even the Colony Club, the duo have been getting their story out by word of mouth and via a video on their website and the jams have enjoyed a good following at big events across Bermuda including the Rugby World Classic last week.

Their next plan is to take the world by storm with setting up some representation in the US, having already scooped two Scovie Awards for the intensity of their pepper jams and travelled to a show at Albuquerque in New Mexico to exhibit their wares, and they will be returning to the same venue in February next year, followed by the UK in due course.

Mr McDonell said that they had used a combination of influence of the jams from the UK and the pepper sauces from the Caribbean to establish a distinct identity for their products, incorporating the use of local ingredients such as Bermuda honey, and the Gombey face and Island logos on the jars - one which has stood them in good stead since starting out six years ago and which is now set to take to the international stage.

To place an order or for more info about the jams available at the Bermuda Jam Factory visit: [www.bermudajamfactory.com](http://www.bermudajamfactory.com)