

# I Want to Be a Baker

Lexie Morris bakes, designs and sells sweet treats

**H**ong Kong native Lexie Morris may have been slaving away in an office in London, but she was dreaming of cupcakes. In late 2009, the University of Cambridge graduate left her corporate strategy job behind to set up Lollipop Bakery. Drawing inspiration from afternoon tea shops in London, this Beijing brand brings Western flavors to Chinese and foreign palates alike. A household name in the Beijing cupcake enterprise, Lollipop offers an array of mouth-watering cupcakes from their signature Earl Grey and unique Red Bean to a classic Chocolate and Red Velvet. Morris shared mini-cupcakes and chatted with students at the **Beijing City International School** – explaining how boredom and a love of all things sweet blossomed into a business of butter crème frosted cupcakes and an iconic multi-colored logo. *Kara Chin* 🇨🇳



Lollipop Bakery

www.lollipopbakery.com

## "For me, what's been important is cultivating a family within the bakery"



**Jack Todd, 12, UK**  
*What inspired you to start Lollipop Bakery?*

I studied Chinese at university and I was in Beijing in 2006, just for six months. I have a really sweet tooth: chocolate, sweets, everything – I love it. And when I came here in 2006, there wasn't any good cake. My parents were sending me cake, sweets and chocolate from the UK. So after I graduated, I did a couple years work in London and I hated it: working in an office until midnight basically every day. I thought, "I know that Beijing doesn't have any cake and I've got a really sweet tooth, so I thought it would be cool to come here and get baking."



**Katherine Wang, 12, China**  
*Is there a Chinese name for the business?*

There isn't. It was conscious decision. I wanted people to know it's an English bakery through and through.



**Helen Qin, 13, China**  
*What is the biggest challenge when opening a bakery?*

It's probably different depending on where you are. If you are in the UK or US, I think a lot of the problems would be the expense of setting up. Costs are a lot higher than in China. But in China, all of that stuff is easier. Also, it's a much smaller population to market to here. But the biggest thing here is running a business as a foreigner. The regulations are quite difficult and there are a lot of licenses you have to get. You have to jump through all the rings that the government sets down for you.



**Ian Garcia, 13, Spain**  
*Where does the name Lollipop Bakery come from?*

I wanted a name that is easy to pronounce for people who don't speak English. My friend said, "Yeah, you probably can't do something like Lollipop Bakery." And I thought it was an amazing name. I bought all the of the



**Jessica Cheong, 13, South Korea**  
*How many stores do you have in Beijing?*

I'm from London and I kind of brought over the concept and flavor from London. Here in Beijing, we have four coffee shops that work with us, including Crepanini and Fisheye Café. And hopefully next year, we'll open our own store, which is really my dream: to have my own space, my own design, my own cakes. And hopefully doing cookies, biscuits, ice cream and chocolates too.



**Omer Golan Kaplan, 13, Israel**  
*Why do you use the name London if you don't have shops there?*

I wanted people to know that we're doing things the way they get done there. Because I'm from London, I wanted people to know that our methods, ingredients and flavors are British.



**Ian Garcia, 13, Spain**  
*What happens to cupcakes that don't get sold?*

For all our customer cupcakes, we make them fresh to order, so there's no waste. For the coffee shops though, if they don't sell, we have to throw them away. But because I keep an eye on it, we manage to provide the shop with as many cupcakes as they sell.



**Christy Jensen, 12, UK**  
*Have you seen dramatic prices in the ingredients you use?*

Yes. We have. It's definitely a problem we're seeing at the moment. The price of my ingredients has been rising quite a lot. For example, eggs have gone up 50 percent since I started a year ago. And when you're buying



**Sabrina Yu, 13, China**  
*How much money do you earn?*

Not very much, because it's a pretty new business. At the moment, the most important thing is making sure quality is there and people are happy. I think you need to be massive before you're making a lot of money. So ask me again when I've got 200 stores and I'll be happy to tell you.



**Katherine Wang, 12, China**  
*Did your employees work in a bakery before?*

The girls that I chose had never worked with cakes before. I didn't want them to have any preconceptions. I trained them up from scratch. They're also younger than me, because I wanted them to be enthusiastic and feel like this could be a career long-term for them. For me, what's been important is cultivating a family within the bakery.



**Jessica Cheong, 13, South Korea**  
*Did you design the boxes?*

Kind of. I have a designer friend [who made it]. I thought it would be cool if the boxes looked a little bit like handbags. And it's a bit more environmentally friendly. By having a bag and box in one, we save a little on packaging.



**Vicci Li, 12, China**  
*What kind of imagination helped you start Lollipop Bakery?*

A creative one maybe? I was pretty bored at work in London and I'm quite creative. It was probably a product of sitting, being bored, thinking about what else I could do. And this idea slowly mullied itself over and became Lollipop Bakery.