

# Delivering Expertly Crafted Delight.

Photo by David Gibb



MEDFORD, OR - Nestled in the heart of Southern Oregon, the sprawling pear orchards have long been landmarks for the Rogue Valley. Like the region's namesake river, the wide expanse of trees supports a broad array of local businesses, big and small—none more so than Medford's own Harry & David, which has delighted customers nationwide with sweet fruit and gourmet gifts for over 80 years.

The sprawling 94-acre Medford location employs more than 3,000 year-round and seasonal employees, in a region home to more than 200,000 individuals. In the bakery kitchen, veteran manager Steffanie Wolf leads a diverse team that takes pride in all they do. "One of the first things I was taught was: 'If you wouldn't send it to your grandma, it is not good enough.' That statement has always been the guiding principle in everything we do."

Harry & David has served an integral role in the growth of the region for more than a century, since Samuel Rosenberg, a Seattle businessman, purchased the Bear Creek Orchards and began producing the now-iconic Royal Riviera® Pears. It wasn't until the Great Depression that Rosenberg's sons, Harry and David Holmes, earned the company its nationwide foothold. In 1934, the brothers ventured to New York, delivering boxes upon boxes of their signature fruit to captains of industry in the city, with the mind that one taste would have them hooked. The gamble proved a wise one, and the direct-mail fruit industry in the Rogue Valley flourished.

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Over the decades, the Harry & David corporation has expanded its offerings to include hundreds of gourmet products, ranging from classic fruit and gift baskets to sweets and baked goods. The majority of its baked goods, including cheesecakes, baklava, and galette cookies, are still crafted in the Medford location neighboring the Bear Creek Orchards.

At Harry & David, small-town values blend with the needs of the large company to create a unique corporate culture. The company's workforce is drawn primarily from a pool of talented locals. "Everyone knows everyone else—or they quickly get to know each other," says Sasha Kincaid, an Art Director who recently celebrated her 10th anniversary with the company. "People who come from outside the area are often surprised at the warmth within the company."

That warmth reaches beyond the company and out into the community at large.

Harry & David regularly donates goods and time to local nonprofit organizations such as ACCESS and the Teresa McCormick Center, which provide food, housing, and other services to low-income families in Jackson County. The company also contributes to an elementary school reading program called SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) and encourages employees to participate in regional conventions in collaboration with the local university, such as the Women's Leadership Conference of Southern Oregon.

The family atmosphere is also evident in the day-to-day lives of the employees. Despite the highly seasonal nature of the business, Harry & David does its best to retain hard-working individuals. Many seasonal employees migrate to regular full-time work after the busy fall and winter months, and many more celebrate long-term work anniversaries. In October of 2015, 74 employees celebrated at least 5 years of service, with 29 reaching anniversaries of 20 years or more.

Outside of the human factor that contributes to the company's success, the Valley itself contributes as well. "It goes without saying that Southern Oregon's climate and geography play a big role," says longtime employee and geographer Jon Anderson. "The microclimates across the valley, the warm summer days and cool nights, and the rich soils make Southern Oregon one of the few places in the world where winter Comice pears can grow."

All of these things together—the legacy of the Harry & David brand, the quality of its products, the interactions with the community of Southern Oregon, the culture of Jackson County, and the perfect climate of the valley—have even attracted notice from far outside the region. In September 2014, Harry & David was acquired by the New York-based floral company 1-800-Flowers.com, and the company has since expanded into a wider array of promising avenues together with other 1-800-Flowers brands. Harry & David now offers new product lines created in collaboration with their traditional treats, such as Royal Riviera® Pears and Moose Munch® Gourmet Popcorn.

The leadership at the new parent company has no plans to transplant the Medford-based offices anytime in the near future.

"It is exciting to see Harry & David return to its core value system. It is even more exciting to have 1-800-Flowers.com as our parent company because it believes in investing in the long term growth of Harry & David," says President Steven L. Lightman. "The great iconic Harry & David brand has been enhanced since the acquisition by 1-800-Flowers.com. It has given us new opportunities to expand our brand with product offerings through our sister companies."



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Locally grown and crafted products ready for shipment

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