

RURAL TEXAS TOURISM LLC

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www.ruraltexastourism.com 979-561-6667 cc@cvctx.com

Contact: Gladys' Bakery- Melissa Varley

www.gladysfruitcakes.com gladys@gladysfruitcakes.com

979-263-5940 800-725-5254

***A LEGACY OF FRUITCAKE REMAINS IN THE FAMILY MIDST
CULTURES AND HERITAGE WITH
GLADYS' BAKERY IN DUBINA, TEXAS***



Servicemen Shipping out the 5' x 6' Fruitcake



Gladys Farek

Dylan (Gladys' grandson) and Melissa Varley (daughter)

The Best of the Best in this rural community is showcased!--Melissa Varley, one of six daughters to Gladys Farek, proudly continues the decades of delicacies with the "best fruitcake in the world" at Gladys' Bakery in Dubina (4 miles west of Weimar), kicking off October 15 and running through January 10, 2015. (Keep in mind that mail order and wholesale is throughout the year with the retail shop open October 15 through January 10).

And in case you've forgotten the legacy, Gladys is the person directly responsible for the World's Largest Fruitcake --150 lbs measuring 5' x 6'. This incredible feat drew attention not only on the "Tonight Show" with Johnny Carson and the "David Letterman Show", but has been enjoyed by a multitude of men and women on the John F. Kennedy during Operation Desert Storm, (including a service man that happened to be on the John F. Kennedy at the time claiming the hometown of Flatonia, Texas.)

The story itself is mesmerizing and movie material. Gladys' Bakery opened for business in 1972 in Cistern (60 miles southeast of Austin) and the creation of Gladys Farek, a mother of six (yes six) girls, looking for an outlet for her creative baking talents. She started baking homemade bread and selling to local restaurants and nearby towns up and down Interstate 10, adding cookies and baking as many as 700 dozen a week (German/Czech Fayette County loves their treats!!). Her garage was converted to a bakery and a hangout on Thursday afternoons when her baked goods went up for sale (sales continue with the business today). Her daughters helped the family business by working after

school. Living on a large farm was hard work, (in and out of the kitchen) and soon Gladys was baking bread, cookies, pies, jelly, and cinnamon rolls.

Then came the world-changing fruitcake--honestly. Gladys created a recipe after many attempts, that boasted being loaded with FRESH pecans and just enough batter to hold it together and NO raisins, dates, spices, or citron added...a whole new concept to the world of fruitcakes. Locals jumped on it, loving every sweet savoring moment and the first year rendered 1,000 pounds worth of the delightful delicacies.

The time came to enlarge, and Gladys Farek knew exactly what to do. The following year, she purchased a cement mixer (with a stainless steel plated interior), painted it bright red and was ready to mix the huge quantities of fruitcakes on order--thus becoming a legend in the making. Melissa (one of her daughters and the one that purchased the business) and her son Dylan continue to use the cement mixer today! A bakery was built next to her home and she became famous overnight for her award-winning fruitcakes. In 1990, she appeared on the Johnny Carson Show and the following year on the David Letterman show boasting her unique and delicious 150 pound Texas-shaped fruitcake. Today they are still shipping around the world and are considered a class of their own.

*Gladys is now retired at the age of 80 (if socializing with her friends and family and attending regular country dances is considered that) and Melissa lovingly carries on the tradition of using that same incredible recipe that has made the family so famous. Gladys' dream is to meet **Oprah** and visit with some chefs that may not have had her incredible fruitcake. Melissa loves to get phone calls and e-mails throughout the year from new and returning clients, but as she gratefully expresses with a smile, "I couldn't do it without my husband Mark."*

Last year rendered three tons of fruitcakes for the business with that cement mixer. And there is never a reason to ask, "Is it fresh?" Melissa Varley at Gladys' Bakery can be reached at www.gladysfruitcakes.com, e-mail gladys@gladysfruitcakes.com, 979-263-5940, or 800-725-5254.

Cathy Chaloupka--Rural Texas Tourism, LLC