

= Leonard 's Bakery =

Leonard 's Bakery is a Portuguese bakery in Honolulu , Hawaii , known for popularizing the malasada . The fried pastry , slightly crispier and chewier than a doughnut and with no hole , is known as a cuisine of Hawaii . Though Portuguese immigrants brought the malasada to Hawaii at the turn of the 20th century , Leonard 's opened in 1952 and brought it to a wider audience . They offer filled and sugar @-@ coated malasadas as well as coffee cakes , sweet bread , and pão doce meat wraps . Leonard 's is a household name in Hawaii and is well known in the continental United States and internationally . A franchise location opened in Japan in 2008 .

= = Background and history = =

Margaret and Frank Leonard Rego Sr. opened Leonard 's Bakery in 1952 . Rego 's mother had encouraged him to sell malasadas , a holeless Portuguese doughnut with a " crispier " outside and a " chewier " inside . Portuguese plantation workers brought the dessert to the Hawaiian islands when they immigrated at the turn of the 20th century , though Leonard 's is known for popularizing it . The plain malasadas are coated with white sugar , but the bakery sells variations garnished with cinnamon or filled with haupia , custard , or chocolate pudding . The bakery sells anthropomorphized malasada stuffed animals and other malasada @-@ related items . Leonard 's is otherwise an " old @-@ fashioned , plain @-@ Jane bakery " that sells coffee cakes , sweet bread , and pão doce meat wraps . As of 2011 , the bakery remains a family business owned by Leonard Rego Jr. whose own children participate in its operation just as he once did .

Andrew McCarthy of the National Geographic Traveler wrote that the bakery is an institution that " anchored " its neighborhood . In Hawaii , Leonard 's is a " household name " . Residents from the other Hawaiian islands often bring home Leonard 's malasadas as an omiyage (souvenir gift) . The fried doughnut @-@ like item may be unique to Hawaii , but are well known both in the continental United States and internationally . The Honolulu bakery is a point of interest on at least one island tour . In 2012 , the Honolulu Star @-@ Advertiser reported that the bakery sold over 15 @,@ 000 malasadas daily , or over 160 million since its opening .

Rego Jr. opened a franchise location in Japan 's Yokohama World Quarter Shopping Center in December 2008 . The location only sold cinnamon and sugar malasadas at first , but later added malasadas with fillings . Japanese investors Forest Inc. first asked Rego Jr. about licensing the brand in March 2008 , and Rego Jr. felt that the timing with the Great Recession " couldn 't have been more perfect " . The deal was completed three months prior to the opening , and the owner flew in to train the staff for a week and a half . Rego Jr. plans to open more franchised locations in Japan and on the other islands of Hawaii . In 2009 , the company employed 60 people between three stores (two in Oahu and one in Yokohama) and two Oahu food trucks .

= = Reception = =

The bakery 's malasadas were Foodspotting 's top " Hawaii food find " , and USA Today described the doughnuts as having become " a Hawaiian icon " . Sunset recognized Leonard 's for making the sweet a " Hawaiian classic " that is now served at Honolulu restaurants from drive @-@ ins to Chef Mavro , " the city 's classiest restaurant " . Vinnie Tong of The New York Sun wrote that Leonard 's was " a required stop for foodies and ... dessert addicts " .

Frommer 's calls it a " Honolulu landmark " , and The Huffington Post lists Leonard 's malasadas alongside poke , Spam musubi and shave ice as " must try " Hawaiian cuisine experiences . It is also profiled in Mimi Sheraton 's critical food book 1 @,@ 000 Foods to Eat Before You Die , and John T. Edge 's Donuts : An American Passion .