



## A COMPETITION THAT STARTED EVERYTHING

The sign said "Win This Space", and so she did. Meet Jamie Koh, owner of Chupitos, the first and only shots bar in Singapore.

Chupitos won the Martell V.S.O.P. Ultimate Start-Up Space Competition back in 2010 where the prizes were a rent-free space for 6 months in Clarke Quay and \$20,000 seed capital. With that and her passion for food, drinks and hospitality, Chupitos became a huge success in Singapore.

But things were not always that smooth-sailing. In the early days, when the concept was "too new" in Singapore, it did not catch on immediately and she had people telling her to shift the focus away from shots. However, Jamie was confident that her concept would work and with her background in market research consulting, she worked hard to push the Chupitos concept out to Singapore.

Jamie had a very clear direction of where the business is going, but that does not mean she is adverse to changes.

"In any business, it is important to react quickly when problems arise. To find out what the main issues are, be on the ground speaking to your customers and staff, and observe full shift of operations. Once you have identified the issues, take action immediately. Many businesses fail when situations change but, whether out of habit or complacency, the operators stick to the same routine day in and day out."



Five years on, Jamie now runs Chupitos as well as The Beast, a restaurant specialising in Southern American cuisine.

"I believe to succeed in Singapore's F&B industry, you have to offer something different. I enjoy developing and creating concepts that are different from what is commonly found in our F&B scene here. Just like how Chupitos is Singapore's first and only shooters bar, The Beast specialises in Southern American soul food and is also the only Bourbon bar here."

Already a boss of two F&B outlets at the young age of 30, Jamie cautioned that the F&B industry is fun, but not for everyone.

**"Aside from the long hours, one needs to be familiar with every single aspect of the business.** From negotiating with suppliers, leading your team, finance and accounting, creating the menu, developing your brand, etc... and that barely even scratches the surface!"

Indeed, in Singapore's competitive F&B industry where new concepts are opening every day, it is vital to have a well-thought plan and be equipped with full knowledge of the business before entering. **Be prepared to spend every waking hour developing the business and be on the ground every day** during the initial start-up for a successful F&B business in Singapore!

**Jamie Koh**

Director and Founder of Chupitos  
and The Beast