

PLANT-BASED CAKES & PUNK vibes

Lyndsay Sung the Multi-talented Baker Who Rocks the Stage

By Carole Audet

Lyndsay Sung started experimenting with baking when she was 30, after receiving a KitchenAid stand mixer from her grandmother, a great baker in her own right, as a wedding present. Initially, she ran a small baking business from her home, then went on to publish her first cookbook in 2018 called *Coco Cake Land: Cute and Pretty Party Cakes to Bake and Decorate*, a cookbook mostly focused on cake decorating. This year, she released her second cookbook, *Plantcakes*, vegan cake recipes that are a delight for the eyes and tastebuds. She lives in Burnaby, BC, with her husband, Rich, her son, Teddy, and felines Potato and Percy.



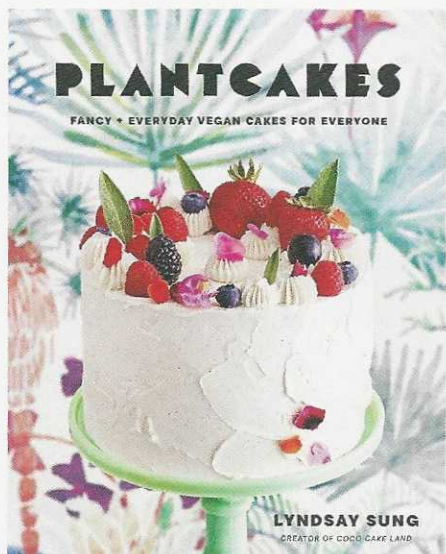
Lyndsay arrived at her career as a successful baker and online influencer in a roundabout way. She graduated from the University of Victoria with a degree in Gender Studies with a minor in Film Studies, then went on to earn another degree in Integrated Media from Emily Carr University. While she didn't know exactly how these skills would translate into her career, it turns out that they are coming in handy as she shares her sweet creations online at Coco Cake Land.

"My degrees ended up happily colliding with my baking career. The learning, studying and discoveries within my degrees inform who I am as a person, which informs what I create—whether it's writing an Instagram caption about raising a feminist son, having fun editing colourful cake decorating videos or styling and photographing my book. What I glean from this is you never know what path you may end up taking, and how it may veer and change and pivot in ways you never expected."

Lyndsay has been veganizing recipes for years to encompass the range of eating styles of her friends when hosting. For example, she feels it's not fair that vegans have to avoid desserts because they may contain dairy or eggs.

Plantcakes, released in September this year, was born when the publishers at Appetite by Random House, a Canadian publisher, loved Lyndsay's idea and offered her a contract. She's included nearly 40 pages of tips, tricks, and techniques to ensure success. She's been researching, combining flavours, and testing recipes since 2020. The real game-changer was when she learned how to make Swiss meringue buttercream using aquafaba—otherwise known as the liquid from a can of chickpeas. When she discovered this substitution, she realized she could get creative with flavours and frostings.

Her media degree is put to use when it comes to showcasing her colourful creations for her cookbooks as well as for her website and social media. "I love



photography. I love styling. I shot everything in our office. I set up a mini studio—I would bake the cakes and decorate them downstairs and come upstairs and do the photography. I try not to overthink the styling, but I love using linens that my friends make or little objects or plates that have meaning.”

Lyndsay doesn't consider herself an influencer despite at one time working with brands and many of her bright cake images getting thousands of likes and shares—such as the Very Hungry Caterpillar cake inspired by the children's book by Eric Carle.

No talk of baking in Vancouver would be complete without mentioning To Live For, the vegan bakery founded by Erin Ireland, a friend of Lyndsay's. “Everyone's obsessed with this place, including us. It's pretty close to where we live so we go fairly often. It's that same idea of delicious first and it's also vegan. I love her approach of encouraging people to try vegan food in a way that is straight-up super delicious. Her approach is what inspires me, too.”



When not baking and sharing on social media, Lyndsay plays bass guitar in an all-female band called KCAR. She's been playing music since her twenties and even spent time touring throughout North America and parts of Europe. “It was a huge part of my life, and all my friends were in that community. I gave it up in my thirties because I got obsessed with baking. Then a couple of years ago I started playing music again and I'm so happy I did. We're all moms in our forties in KCAR; we play loud punk music and it's so much fun. We practice at 9:30 on weekday

mornings after our kids go to school—it's almost like therapy sessions.”

Her bandmates include artist by profession, singer and guitarist Fiona Ackerman, and drummer and singer Jenni Lee, who owns a vintage clothing shop. “I love that we're three strong women playing loud music. When I was a kid, I never saw someone who looked like me or even just women playing music together.” There's no doubt that these women are inspiring younger generations, including their children.

“I was raised by strong grandmothers and my mother, and I believe I've always been a feminist even before I knew what feminism was. It's innately a part of me. It's so cool to see feminism being a large part of many young folks' lives and upbringings in the present day. We're raising our son by example—he sees his mom with strong friendships,



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KCAR recorded an album called *Up Top* in April and played a release show on September 29th. Fiona takes the lead in writing music, and then Jenni and Lyndsay add their parts; together, they arrange the songs. These women originally connected through music so forming a trio was a natural progression: Lyndsay previously played in a band with Fiona's husband, and Jenni's husband played in a band with Rich over 30 years ago. "They grew up in Calgary and their first show was opening for Green Day."

As a child, Lyndsay learned to play the piano and read music. On *Up Top*, she plays bass guitar, the instrument Rich plays as well when he's not working as an emergency room physician. These two musicians, along with their son who is following in his parents' footsteps, often jam together in a shared rehearsal space.

What's next for Lyndsay? One goal is to grow her YouTube channel where she's thinking of doing a



'Plantcakes Redone' series—the recipes stay the same, but the designs evolve. Baking cakes to resemble characters, such as the Baby Yoda cake she made earlier this year, is the most fun for her.

She's also thinking of creating a plant-based cookies cookbook, another favourite in her baking repertoire. And she has other ideas. "I was thinking about how much I enjoy putting on parties, maybe a book about plant-based parties. That could have savoury elements, too."

Lyndsay's come a long way from her original Blogspot.com blog. "Always be open to new ideas, experiences, and people. I think Gender Studies taught me a lot about community, which I bring forward into everything I do now." ●

If you'd like to learn more about Lyndsay's baking, her new cookbook *Plantcakes*, or her music; follow her on social media at:



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