

Fall 2018 Issue 23

*Complimentary*

# *edible*

San Luis Obispo & Wine Country  
Celebrating the Food and Drink Culture of SLO County



## THE DRINKS ISSUE

Member of Edible Communities

A Los Osos-based probiotic yogurt company creates quite a stir across the US.

# JOIN THE CULT

By Kacey Janeen Waxler Photos by Hugo Martinez

**C**reamy, overwhelmingly delicious and comprised of pure, organic ingredients, one spoonful of yogurt from **The Coconut Cult** ([TheCoconutCult.com](http://TheCoconutCult.com)) will leave you yearning to devour the jar and lick the lid. The only thing better than how good this probiotic coconut yogurt tastes, is how good it is for you.

Founder Noah Simon-Waddell, a San Luis Obispo native, had no idea his passion for holistic health would take off the way it did. Instead, The Coconut Cult flourished out of a sincere desire to share a nourishing creation with others: A plant-based yogurt, potent with beneficial probiotics to boost health.

Simon-Waddell's foundational recipe was based on one main objective: "What I wanted to do was ferment the powerful strains doctors were prescribing; those were the strains I was interested in because people weren't making fermented foods out of them. You could buy [the probiotics] as a freeze-dried powder, but people didn't have access to these living cultures." When Simon-Waddell achieved that goal in a delectable package, word spread—and fast. While the brand itself is only two years young, the yogurt has already secured a fan base that is anything but premature. In fact, they are loyal, vast, booming, and wildly passionate about being members of "The Cult." Just one look at The Coconut Cult's Instagram feed, which is littered with fan recipes and reposts from prominent, wellness-niche influencers, shows their Cult-obsessed enthusiasm. Even the rapid expansion of yogurt stockists was largely initiated by their devoted fan base.

At the start, Simon-Waddell's early product was found in just two juice bars, located in Santa Barbara and Montecito. Word circulated quickly about the zesty, healthful yogurt. Customers began buying in bulk; the jars rapidly

went out of stock; expectant patrons waited anxiously for future shipments.

Soon, Simon-Waddell started getting calls from Los Angeles residents. They'd had a taste while up north and were hooked. Could he stock their local stores in L.A.? In the spirit of spreading the love, while simultaneously getting their own Cult-needs met, they also asked, could they help? Help, they did. Los Angeles, and then San Francisco, began stocking The Coconut Cult. And when the obstacles of cold-shipping to customers' doorsteps were solved, raving fans from all over the nation took jars into their local markets, requesting the stores pick up the label.

To this day, the evolution continues in this fashion—as organic as the yogurt itself. And with The Coconut Cult's bright flamingo-clad packaging, groovy branding and superb product, declaring product-love, whether in-person or through social shares, is a no-brainer. Their creative array of flavors—including Vanilla Toffee and Peaches N' Cream, both dropping this fall—can now be found in over 300 stores nationwide and can be shipped via their online site to anywhere in the United States.

Behind the eager explosion of fan-love, it was time for the overworked founder to build a team. Friends were on-boarded, adding to the community-like feel of the brand, though overseeing all things production was left for only the best of the best. "So we brought mom onboard," explains Simon-Waddell, in response to the sudden need. You heard right: the yogurt creator's mother, Kathy Waddell, enthusiastically gloved-up and dipped her hands into the mix. And she continues to run the show in their flamingo-donned, Los Osos production facility, where the magic of blending, pouring and fermenting takes place.

Simon-Waddell has continued refining his recipe into



what it is today. He's transitioned from dry to fresh organic coconuts and coconut water and omitted additives, while continuing to utilize the highest quality probiotics, directly compatible (between the lines: ready to go to work) with the human gut. And that colorful, cool label that now dons each jar? Simon-Waddell drew the initial design on a napkin at Linnaea's Café. (Now that's as local as it gets.)

When asked about the brand's catchy title, Simon-Waddell mentions two reasons for labeling his yogurt as a self-proclaimed cult: Its namesake doubles as the prefix of "culture"—the starter bacteria that inoculates their pure ingredients—while also poking fun at the often cult-like nature of the wellness scene. The Coconut Cult endeavors to break away from exclusivity. Instead, it's about creating a positive tribe around something nutritious, while being fun, approachable, and all-inclusive.

When it comes to future plans, Simon-Waddell says that while a transition to LA would be an easy one—into the hotbed of the health and wellness movement—The Coconut Cult has plans to stay in SLO County. The prevailing reason? "This is where my community is," Simon-Waddell says, without hesitation. We couldn't agree more. 🍌

*The Coconut Cult can be found in multiple SLO County locations. For more information or to purchase directly, visit [TheCoconutCult.com](http://TheCoconutCult.com).*

## FALL SWEET POTATO SMOOTHIE

Created by Cult member @leefromamerica

*Makes 1 smoothie*

2 tablespoons The Coconut Cult  
 1 large raw carrot, chopped  
 1 tablespoon almond butter  
 ½ cup steamed and then frozen cauliflower  
 ½ cup steamed and then frozen sweet potato  
 1 scoop vanilla protein powder  
 1 teaspoon each: cinnamon, allspice, cardamom  
 1½ cups any nut or seed milk

Place ingredients in blender. Blend for three minutes until smooth.



*Kacey Janeen Waxler is a California-based writer on the hunt for adventure and good stories. Her words can be located amongst noteworthy brands including Corona Extra, Athleta, and Wanderlust Festivals, and in the flesh she can be found leading yoga classes and wellness retreats, reading unapologetically from the glow of a headlamp, or neck deep in a deliciously hot bath.*

*Hugo Martinez is a Central Coast photographer who enjoys great food both for consumption and photographs. He uses photography as a tool to help elicit the senses through a visual platform.*