

FROM BAKERY TO COMMUNITY STAPLE

Moké’s Bread and Breakfast | Keola Warren

Moke and Teri Warren met working at Peter’s Alpine House in Waikīkī in the 1970s. Through dating and marriage and becoming parents, they stayed in the restaurant industry—a graduate of Kapi’olani Community College’s culinary program, Moke worked at the Halekulani Hotel for 15 years as head butcher while Teri waited tables. Then, in 2001, they decided to open a bakery in Kailua. They poured their financial resources into converting a vacant dive bar, getting a loan from First Hawaiian Bank for equipment and materials. After three years, the wholesale business hit a ceiling, and Moke thought: What about a breakfast restaurant?

Since then, Moké’s Bread and Breakfast has been a family affair while becoming a beloved brunch destination. Keola Warren, Moke and Teri’s son, waited tables and washed dishes while at UH Mānoa alongside his sister. The restaurant’s pancake recipe is the same one his grandma made every Sunday in his childhood.

Eventually, Keola became the restaurants brand manager. He also helped bring local ingredients to the kitchen including beef, eggs, vegetables, and coffee. Next, he pitched a location in his Kaimukī neighborhood. “We looked for a couple of years, and when we found one it went fairly quickly—First Hawaiian made sure we had what we needed financially to take that plunge,” Keola recalls. “That was a huge step for us.”

In 2024, Keola took over the business from his parents, which required ensuring they had a smooth transition into retirement while also onboarding new managers. According to Keola, everything went well with the support of FHB, which made sure there was still cash flow for the business while getting through the nitty gritty of future planning and retirement.

Keola’s newest project is a beer bar, which will be opening soon next to Moké’s in Kaimukī with the support of a small business loan from FHB. There will be local beers on tap and a menu featuring local ingredients. As always, family is a throughline. “There’s a lot of nostalgia,” Keola says. “Even though my grandma never worked in the restaurant, a lot of the recipes came from her. The new project is going to have some design aesthetic that will pay a little homage to her as well.”

Keola Warren at Moke’s Bread and Breakfast in Kaimukī, surrounded by their delicious brunch offerings, a family tradition rooted in love and nostalgia.

