



CLAUDIA STUBIN FARM & CULTURE CO.

Claudia Stubin is the founder and owner of Farm & Culture Co., the first kombucha and bone broth bar in Orange County, California. Claudia set out to create gut-healing, nutrient-dense foods that actually taste good and appeal to everyone. She lives in Huntington Beach, California, with her husband, Gabe, and their two boys.

My background is in sales, but I was a busy stay-at-home mom when I developed the idea for my business. After attending the Fermentation Festival in Santa Barbara, California, I was inspired and excited to find a community of people who shared the same beliefs and enthusiasm about fermented foods as I had. My mom is Korean, so my love of stinky fermented foods could probably be explained by my heritage. She is an amazing home cook and has influenced my life tremendously.

You might be wondering, what are fermented foods? Fermentation is a process that was originally used to preserve foods, but it also encourages the production of beneficial probiotic bacteria that enhances the digestibility of the food and increases vitamin levels. These probiotics create a protective lining in the intestines that protects against pathogenic factors. Fermented foods increase antibodies, boost the immune system, regulate the appetite by reducing sugar and refined carbohydrate cravings. Some of the most common fermented foods are yogurt and kefir, sauerkraut and its Korean cousin kimchi, pickles, and miso.

I wanted my business to offer a variety of fermented foods but to focus on the drinkable fermented options of kombucha and bone broth. Kombucha is a tangy, effervescent tea, typically black or green, that can be flavored with herbs or fruit. After being fermented, kombucha becomes carbonated and contains vinegar, B-vitamins, enzymes, probiotics, and a high concentration of acids (acetic, gluconic and lactic). It improves digestion, helps with weight loss, increases energy, detoxes the body, supports the immune system, and reduces joint pain. Bone broth offers many of the same benefits and is a more concentrated version of typical broth. →





“MY MOTHER WORKED TOO HARD FOR ME NOT TO BE GREAT.”

— I FOUND THIS QUOTE ON PINTEREST RECENTLY, AND IT RESONATED DEEPLY WITH ME. MY MOM LEFT HER COUNTRY AS A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL LOOKING FOR SOMETHING BETTER, SOMETHING MORE. I WILL ALWAYS BE THE DAUGHTER OF AN IMMIGRANT WHO WORKS HARD TO MAKE HER MOM PROUD!



CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

- Starting a food business usually requires a lot of capital. There are more affordable ways to test your food products and community response.
- Local farmers markets are a great place to start with a small booth, and more of them are starting to form as people are looking for wholesome food and the handcrafted food movement continues to grow.
- You can rent space at a commercial kitchen to make your products. Most kitchens will rent by the hour or by the week. These kitchens are amazing food incubators full of life and interesting people. I've met some really cool people at Hana Kitchens in Huntington Beach.
- The state of California allows some food products to be made at home under a "Cottage Food License." I work with a few vendors that produce under this type of license, which are usually stay-at-home moms with crazy hours.
- There are many ways to get off the ground. I love the idea of participating in local festivals and fairs. Many of these types of events will have food or recipe contests and these are great ways for amateurs to gain exposure and confidence into taking the next step.
- There is a growing trend of people who want to learn. It's very easy to host a class or demonstration at an established kitchen, restaurant, school, community center, test kitchen, etc. From there, you can start building your email list and client base.



Finding the right location for my business was key. I found a great storefront in Costa Mesa, California, which meant we had the distinction of becoming Orange County's first kombucha and bone broth bar. We offer light bites, locally sourced and made with the cleanest ingredients we can find. We also offer free demonstrations to teach the community how to make these probiotic-rich foods at home.

On a typical day I arrive at the shop before we open for business and take a quick inventory of what the week has in store for us — which new recipes, flavors, or products are doing well and which ones are not. Keeping up with production is always a challenge because we are a rapidly growing business. Our plans for the future include more locations, more free education to serve the community, and more of anything that will help grow the fermentation movement — it's a kombucha revolution!

It was a challenge to find the right people to believe that our very specific business category would be viable, and, of course, health department planning and construction are always stressful, but I've experienced that most people want to help you succeed, so you find a way to get through it. As with most entrepreneurial endeavors, I was expecting a lot of hard work and countless hours, and that was indeed the case — when most people sleep, I am brewing kombucha! The most surprising part of starting my business and watching it thrive has been how rewarding I have found the whole process. This has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my professional life!



Being an entrepreneur is not easy — if it were, everyone would do it. But if you are passionate about the purpose of your business and the positive impact you can make on people's lives, it makes it easier to keep going.

Where Women Create BUSINESS would like to thank Claudia Stubin for her involvement in our summer issue. To learn more, visit farmandculture.com and contact claudia@farmandculture.com.

Photography by Taylor Cole Simshauser. Learn more in *Traveling Companions* on page 138.