

## How the Ugly Mug Business Adapted with Coronavirus

Jeromy and Amanda Macon own the family-run coffee shop, Ugly Mug, in Clayton, NC. The shop is popular for its friendly atmosphere, its fabulous selection of coffee drinks, wines and local beers and limited, but unique, menu, which includes delights such as the Adult Grilled Cheese (mozzarella, cheddar and apple butter on toasted bread). But when the Covid-19 restrictions were put in place, there was a week of uncertainty when they had to quickly assess their operation and make some immediate near-term changes to stay afloat. They shifted to online ordering, phone orders, and outdoor seating, which has been surprisingly successful.

But the pair had other plans in the works that had to be altered, as well. They were at the front end of planning to open a second shop. However, with the uncertainty of Covid-19 stay-at-home orders and limited capacity and other restrictions placed on restaurants, this plan was put on hold. They had to reinvent a way of sustaining a livelihood going into an uncertain future. Jeromy began talking to a friend who owns a food truck, and with some further research, this seemed like a viable option for these times.

Jeromy, a fearless visionary, jumped right in and purchased a food truck and an extended cab pickup to pull it. Although the couple has no experience running a food truck, Jeromy notes they do have transferrable skills running a kitchen. They designed their dream kitchen for the truck and plan to serve the same menu that has been successful at Ugly Mug, with one delicious addition, chicken and waffles.

The truck, now in the final stages of preparation, will be painted in Ugly Mug's famed steam-punk theme. Jeromy has been lining up venues, and soon he will take the new business on the road, and a new adventure will begin. .

080520