

success brews SUCCESS

REDUNDANCY HOLDS NO FEARS FOR THE COFFEE GUYS

⇒ One of the most welcome sights on a cold and frosty morning is the silver van of The Coffee Guy. The mobile espresso vans have become welcome visitors in many parts of the country since 2006, with over 50 franchisees of The Coffee Guy throughout New Zealand. Despite that, says founder Richard Karam, there's room for many more. One of the reasons for this is the flexibility the business offers.

Andy Carnihan is a telecommunications specialist who also spent three years in the police force. 'When my telecoms job became part-time, my wife Lynn and I wanted another income that would give us a good lifestyle,' says Andy. 'We realised that a franchise could give us the back-up we would need as first time business owners and looked at everything from lawn mowing to security doors. The Coffee Guy was the best we found. Quite apart from the fact we both like coffee, when we went to meet them they came across as completely sincere.'

The couple took up their franchise three years ago on what they describe as a quiet part of the Kapiti Coast. 'Our van rolled up on a transporter one day, then the next day one of the franchisors arrived and spent the next ten days solid with us, training us in making great coffee and establishing our client base. Their technical backup and advice has been superb throughout. We are using the business as a secondary income, and although you wouldn't expect to become a millionaire doing this, it does what we want it to do. In fact I'm facing redundancy shortly but having the franchise means I'm not worried at all – we will just go out and sell more coffee!'

Andy believes that the key to success in a smaller area is to keep looking for events. 'In addition to our regular Monday-Friday route round local workplaces, we're also out there every Saturday at our local football park. There are lots of other events, too, and The Coffee Guy is very popular – as Lynn says, this is certainly not a work, work, work business.' 'That's true,' grins Lynn, 'Everyone comes to us with a smile and in fact a local musician is even writing a song for us called "The Coffee Angel". We're part of the community.'

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Bryce Gore and his partner Anna know that only too well, having been The Coffee Guys in Waiuku, Christchurch and now Ashburton. Isn't that taking the mobile concept to extremes? Bryce laughs. The former decorator bought the Waiuku franchise four years ago, and when chef Anna wanted



ANDY & LYNN CARNIHAN:
THE COFFEE ANGELS OF KAPITI

to move back to the South Island, he was delighted to find the franchise was flexible enough to move with them.

'In fact, we created a bigger business with two vans in Christchurch, but then the opportunity came up to move even closer to Anna's family in Ashburton and start a new area there. We did our homework and took the plunge. I wouldn't say it was easy to start off with, and we did consider only going with the one van, but we could see the potential and our perseverance has paid off. Essentially there are a lot of tourists and plenty of cold weather,' he grins. 'Together, those two factors mean we sell a lot of coffee!'

Bryce and Anna have taken full advantage of the flexibility the franchise offers in other ways, too. 'We have one van on from 7am until the afternoon. I start that off, which allows Anna to take our little boy to school. Then she does a corporate run of about an hour with the second van before joining me for the rest of the day. What has amazed us is that in that single hour she is selling 40-odd coffees, so the potential is considerable. We know from previous experience that there is room for a lot of growth.'

And the second van is busy at the weekends, too. 'There is no shortage of events here. We do the farmers markets at Methven and Ashburton regularly and we have plenty of school fairs and sporting events. The only problem we've had in the southern winter was when our water hoses froze solid on us. The franchise has always been very supportive, but that was one problem they couldn't sort!'

AFFORDABLE BUSINESS, GUARANTEED EARNINGS

The Coffee Guy still has plenty of opportunities for new franchisees. The purchase price of \$35,000 +gst includes full training and support, and the only thing not included in the purchase price is the custom-fitted, signwritten van itself. 'That can be financed or leased through a number of options to make The Coffee Guy franchise very affordable indeed,' says Richard Karam.

'The franchise fee includes all barista training, an exclusive territory, and includes a minimum earnings guarantee, which is something else to bear in mind if you're facing redundancy. In fact, our franchisees are consistently generating annual turnover of \$100,000, and several are doing much more,' he says. 'If you'd like to find out more, ring Brent Ardern, our franchise development manager.' ■



TWO VANS, ONE SON AND
FLEXIBILITY TO ENJOY IT ALL:
BRYCE & ANNA WITH SON FELIX

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