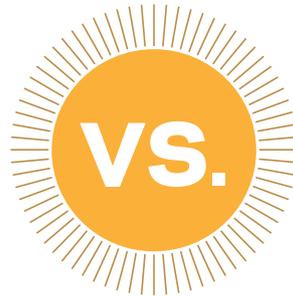


Food Fight!

Two towns claim to be the fruitcake capital of the world. Who takes the cake?



Corsicana, TX

Claxton, GA



Collin Street Bakery (multiple locations; collinstreet.com) was founded in 1896. But it gained worldwide fame in the 1940s when the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus started coming to town:

Workers brought the cakes to friends and family across the globe.



Claxton Bakery (203 West Main St.; claxtonfruitcake.com) opened in 1910 and has been a fruitcake powerhouse ever since it hosted an exhibit at the New York World's Fair in 1964. The town is also home to the smaller **Georgia Fruitcake Company** (5 South Duval St.; georgiafruitcakecompany.com).

FRUITCAKE HISTORY

Each **ring-shaped** cake weighs nearly two pounds and is a dense mass of mostly nuts and fruit. It's packaged in a red tin with a picture of a cowboy and a couple walking in the snow.



Claxton Bakery's **loaf cakes** are more cake-like in comparison. They come in an allspice-and-molasses-heavy "dark" version and a moderately spiced "light" version.



CAKE COMPOSITION

Collin Street Bakery produces up to 20,000 cakes a day—about the same number as the town's population—and it ships **1 million** fruitcakes a year.

ANNUAL PRODUCTION

Claxton Bakery makes more than **4.5 million** pounds of fruitcake annually, most of which is sold in one-pound loaves.



Marc Murphy raved about Corsicana's fruitcakes on a holiday-themed episode of *The Best Thing I Ever Ate*.

FAMOUS FANS

Although he refuses to name names, Claxton Bakery vice president Dale Parker says his customer list includes **"several former presidents, a lot of athletes and actors."**

The **post office** recognizes the town as the true fruitcake capital, says Hayden Crawford, a partner at Collin Street Bakery: They deliver letters from across the country that are addressed to **"Fruitcake, USA"** here.

OFFICIAL STANDING



Fruitcake Capital of the World signs are dotted all over Claxton. The town's **water tower** even has the slogan on it.

"Claxton way back when decided to make a loaf cake," says Crawford. "But **we make the classic ring cake**—the one that people are familiar with."

FIGHTING WORDS

"We have **two fruitcake bakeries**," says Claxton Mayor Luther Royal, Jr., "and we're proud to have both of them. I don't know of any other town that can say that."

PIECES OF FRUITCAKE: BEN GOLDSTEIN/STUDIO D (2); WHOLE FRUITCAKES: GREG MARINO/STUDIO D (2); CLAXTON BAKERY AND WATER TOWER: WARREN REED.