Denise Buckley

Sugar Plum Sweetery

GOING FOR GROWTH

Denise Buckley is the CEO and co-founder of Sugar Plum Sweetery, an Irish chocolatier, confectionery and gifting brand co-owned with her husband, David Quirke. Established in 2022 and headquartered in Mullingar, the business combines e-commerce, multiple retail stores, wholesale partnerships and social commerce. With a focus on quality, creativity and customer experience, Sugar Plum Sweetery has grown rapidly from a local enterprise into one of Ireland's most exciting and fastest-growing chocolatier brands.

Denise and David have built a distinctive brand inspired by nostalgia, imagination and the magic of gifting. Their vision was to create an experience that went beyond traditional confectionery, bringing together premium chocolate, carefully curated pick & mix sweets and beautifully presented gifts. Building on their entrepreneurial experience with Wholesome Kitchen, the award-winning Mullingar restaurant they co-founded in 2019, they developed Sugar Plum Sweetery into a complementary business with a strong identity of its own.

Quality and innovation remain central to the brand. Drawing inspiration from their travels and a shared passion for exceptional confectionery, Denise and David have developed a distinctive product range, with chocolate handmade by their team of chocolatiers at the company's Mullingar factory. The business prioritises premium ingredients, with its milk chocolate containing at least 34% cocoa solids and no palm oil. Its imaginative product development, theatrical retail experiences and distinctive packaging bring the brand's "Memories Made Sweeter" identity to life.

Sugar Plum Sweetery has achieved exceptional growth over the past two years. Its Dubai Chocolate Bar range became a standout success during the viral chocolate trend, with hundreds of thousands of bars sold and significant attention across social media. In 2026, the company won the overall National Enterprise Awards, recognising its entrepreneurial achievement and remarkable growth. Its profile continues to expand through digital platforms, media exposure and a highly engaged online audience.

The business has developed a growing retail footprint, with stores in Mullingar, Kildare Village, Cork and Blanchardstown, which opened in October 2026, alongside ambitions to establish a presence in further Irish cities and Northern Ireland. Sugar Plum also supplies leading retail partners, including Brown Thomas, Arnotts, Avoca, Kilkenny Design and Dublin Airport, while continuing to develop its online and wholesale channels.

Denise and David are focused on building Sugar Plum Sweetery into a recognised national and international brand. Priorities include expanding retail operations, developing wholesale and corporate gifting, strengthening e-commerce and social commerce, and exploring export opportunities. With continued investment in people, production capacity and product innovation, the business is positioning itself for its next stage of sustainable growth.

Denise participated in Starting Strong in 2023 and subsequently completed the 18th cycle of Going for Growth. Reflecting on the experience, she said: *"It was amazing to have access and time with such successful entrepreneurs in Ireland and learning from their experiences and gaining from their feedback. The programme covered an array of key topics that were discussed in detail, but the key for me was being introduced to such an amazing group of female entrepreneurs, with such wide business backgrounds, and learning from each and every one of them."*

GOING FOR GROWTH PROFILE

NAME:
Denise Buckley

BUSINESS
Sugar Plum Sweetery

POSITION
Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder

WHAT WE DO
An Irish chocolatier, confectionery and gifting brand specialising in handmade chocolate, premium pick & mix sweets and beautifully presented gifts for all occasions.

CONTACT US
W: www.sugarplumsweetery.ie

Sugar Plum SWEETERY

Enterprise Ireland KPMG Manverton