

CASE STUDY

# How SFA Trade Shows Helped LADY BABKA Break Into National Retail

10 **NEW RETAIL ACCOUNTS**

$100K **IN SALES**

National **RETAIL AND DISTRIBUTION EXPANSION**



BACKGROUND

# LADY BABKA is a specialty food business producing handcrafted babkas in the Austin, Texas area.

After founders and sisters Sariel and Adar won a 2024 pitch contest that landed them a booth at the Specialty Food Association's (SFA) 2025 winter trade show, they saw an opportunity to take their growing business beyond its regional roots.






**By November 2025, LADY BABKA had exhibited at two SFA shows**, generated $100,000 in sales from new partnerships, and established relationships with 10 new retail accounts. Three of those partnerships led to national distribution for LADY BABKA through Williams Sonoma, Uncommon Goods, and Misfits Market.

WILLIAMS SONOMA CALIFORNIA

Misfits Market

uncommon goods

THE CHALLENGE

# Establishing National Retail Relationships

For an emerging specialty food brand, getting in front of the right retail buyers and building enough credibility to turn those conversations into partnerships can be challenging.

LADY BABKA was preparing to expand beyond its Austin roots. In late 2024, the company rebranded from Babka ATX to LADY BABKA, positioning the brand for greater national relevance.



**SFA trade shows provided an opportunity to put their refreshed brand, specialty products, and story in front of a diverse audience of retail buyers primed for discovery.**



THE STRATEGY:

# Show Up, Stand Out, and Keep Showing Up



LADY BABKA approached SFA trade shows as more than a one-time sales opportunity. The team combined preparation, strategic visibility, and consistent participation to develop relationships over time.

In January 2025 at the SFA winter show, LADY BABKA booked both exhibit space and a $200 paid spot in a product showcase area, a smart dual investment that paid off big.

The product showcase spot brought the Williams Sonoma buyers to LADY BABKA's booth and initiated their eventual retail partnership.

## But the win wasn't immediate.

Conversations with Williams Sonoma stalled that spring after the buyer LADY BABKA had originally connected with left the company.

Rather than treating the lost contact as a missed opportunity, LADY BABKA returned for SFA's 2025 Summer Fancy Food show. There, the team reconnected with Williams Sonoma and restarted sourcing conversations.



**By fall, LADY BABKA had finalized and fulfilled the Williams Sonoma order. Their products were on shelf in November in time for holiday shopping.**

GROWTH JOURNEY

# Momentum Builds in 2024-25

### REBRAND

LATE 2024

Babka ATX becomes LADY BABKA.

### WINTER SHOW

JAN 2025

Booth and $200 product placement attracts Williams Sonoma.

### CONVERSATIONS STALL

SPRING 2025

Original buyer leaves and LADY BABKA's outreach goes unanswered.

### SUMMER SHOW

JUNE 2025

LADY BABKA returns and reconnects with Williams Sonoma, resulting in their largest order yet.

### NATIONAL RETAIL

NOV 2025

Order fulfilled and products reach national shelves.

GROWTH JOURNEY

# Growth Expands in 2025-26

### SUMMER 2025:

summer fancy food show

Initial meeting between LADY BABKA and Misfits Market buyer.

### WINTER 2026:

Winter Fancy Faire

LADY BABKA reconnected with Misfits Market at a second consecutive SFA show.

### MARCH 2026:

Fulfilled the first order of 10,000 units.

### SUMMER 2026:

summer fancy food show

At a third consecutive SFA show, LADY BABKA was able to meet again with Misfits Market, reinforcing the relationship and resulting in a new order.

### NOVEMBER 2026:

Scheduled to fulfill a second order, double the first order's volume.

## WHY LADY BABKA CAME BACK



There are many food industry trade shows where an emerging brand can potentially meet buyers. **For LADY BABKA, however, SFA offered something beyond access.**

Sariel and Adar point to the community, quality of connections, and sense of joy they experienced at SFA events.

For LADY BABKA, those opportunities worked together. Paid placement created an initial point of discovery. Returning to another show allowed the team to revive a promising relationship. Continued participation helped turn connections into measurable business growth.

***"SFA and its shows feel like a safe place for happy people... at the Fancy Food Show, it's like you just get a big hug."***

SFA shows create opportunities for brands to connect with relevant industry audiences through buyer attendance, networking and promotional tools, paid visibility opportunities, and pre-show educational sessions and live Q&As.



THE RESULTS

# LADY BABKA's strategic, consistent participation in SFA trade shows helped create measurable growth across sales, retail relationships, and geographic reach.

10

**NEW RETAIL ACCOUNTS**

Conversations at SFA shows initiated and reinforced retail relationships.

$100K

**IN SALES**

New partnerships created specifically through the show generated $100,000 in sales for the business.

National

**RETAIL AND DISTRIBUTION EXPANSION**

LADY BABKA secured partnerships with Williams Sonoma, Uncommon Goods, Misfits Market, and smaller local retailers across multiple regions.



**LADY BABKA reports sustained high order volume year-round from both Williams Sonoma and Misfits Market.**

# TAKEAWAYS FOR EMERGING BRANDS




## TREAT TRADE SHOWS AS A GROWTH CHANNEL, NOT A SINGLE EVENT

LADY BABKA's results didn't come from one booth interaction.
The company used multiple SFA touchpoints to develop relationships.

## CONSISTENCY CAN TURN A STALLED CONVERSATION INTO AN OPPORTUNITY

When LADY BABKA's original Williams Sonoma contact left the company, the relationship could have ended. Returning to the next SFA show gave the team another opportunity to reconnect before the lead went cold.






## STRATEGIC VISIBILITY DOESN'T ALWAYS REQUIRE A LARGE INVESTMENT

LADY BABKA spent just $200 on a paid product placement that attracted Williams Sonoma buyers to its booth. For an emerging brand, carefully selected visibility opportunities can create an outsized impact.



THE BOTTOM LINE




# What began as an opportunity to exhibit at an SFA trade show became a pathway to national growth for LADY BABKA.

Through strategic visibility, repeated participation, and smart preparation, LADY BABKA turned its first trade show booth into 10 new retail relationships, $100,000 in sales, and national distribution expansion.

It's not easy to grow a specialty food brand. But exhibiting at SFA's Summer Fancy Food Show or Winter FancyFaire* offers companies an invaluable leg up: three days of connection, feedback, and opportunities.

sfa summer fancy food show

sfa Winter FancyFaire*