

COOL BEANS

A delicious home-cooked meal, dining with friends, a hearty breakfast to start the day - all evoke positive vibes, make you smile, remind you that everything is “cool beans.”

-by Ardith Stephanson | photos by Francisco Estrada-

Remember that slang saying from the 1970s, which returned in later decades thanks to a popular television show? “Cool beans” means everything is great, everything is awesome, and the restaurant of that name in San José del Cabo plans to make you feel the same way.

Angel Stoughton is the feel-good creator behind Cool Beans, located in the heart of San José, just two blocks from the town square on the corner of Ignacio Zaragoza and Vicente Guerrero. Serving delicious homemade food in a one-of-kind atmosphere, Stoughton’s mantra is that we could all use a little more fun in our lives, especially when we treat ourselves to a meal out.

“Food is a love language,” says Angel,

whose full name is Angela but goes by the shortened version. “I love to cook, and I love to see the reaction when I feed someone.

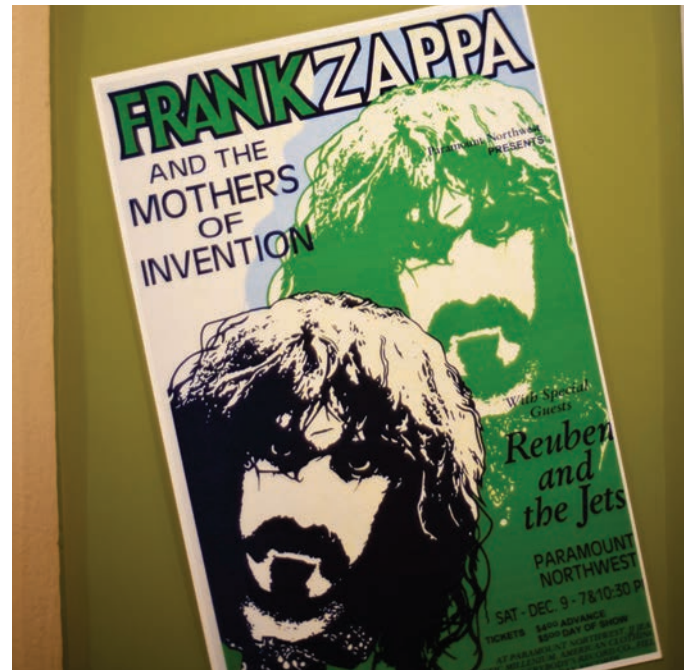
“I wanted something that represented feeling good. The menu is focused on music or words that mean happy feelings. In the ‘70s, “cool beans” meant everything was good. It’s like going back to my childhood: listening to music, feeling free and happy, feeling Cool Beans.”

The end result is a diner-style dining

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(ABOVE) | At the top, the entrance of the new, remodeled restaurant. Below, the same building, prior to remodeling.

room, a rooftop patio, a bakery, and memorabilia from the 1960s and 1970s that's sure to bring a smile to faces of all ages. And then there's the made-from-scratch food displayed on a creative and fun menu.

Angel is originally from Kansas, where she spent 17 years in the restaurant business. The first Cool Beans was located in Sterling, Kansas, a small farming community. After a couple of years, Angel moved her restaurant to the larger town of Hutchinson, Kansas, before retiring from the business.

Retirement didn't last long. Over the

years, she would vacation in Los Cabos, and that was where the restaurant bug bit her again. She started researching what it would take to start up in Mexico, and the community of San José del Cabo fit with her concept. She was sold on the idea when she saw the corner building that would become Cool Beans.

After signing the lease, Angel went to work on major renovations to combine two neighboring buildings into one, and to add a rooftop with a peek-a-boo view of the Sea of Cortez. The work began in 2024, and the

restaurant opened in January of 2025.

“I didn’t want to be a bar, and I didn’t want to be a fancy restaurant,” she explains. I wanted to fill a niche, where people could bring their family. They don’t have to dress up, they don’t have to keep the kids quiet in the corner. We are kid friendly, and we are pet friendly.”

The concept of Cool Beans comes from Angel’s childhood. She was born in the late 1960s and her mother was the stereotypical flower child. Her mother’s turntable was always playing the music of the ‘60s and

‘70s, and her grandmother’s kitchen always smelled like fresh baked bread or cookies. Angel learned to cook in her grandmother’s kitchen, and has brought many of those recipes to life in the kitchen of Cool Beans.

“This whole concept is basically a love letter to my mom and grandma, for giving me such a happy childhood,” she says. “I was raised on love, folk music and

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(BELOW) | Mural of musicians inside of Cool Beans. Rooftop VW bar.



homemade bread. Everything in this era was love and acceptance.”

It’s easy to smile as you walk in, where a life-sized Elvis statue sits in the window. Other musicians are painted on the walls outside, and a stunning mural of musicians in an *Alice in Wonderland* theme snakes up the stairs to the rooftop deck. Mom and Grandma are both represented in the mural in the form of hummingbirds, and Angel has a spot among the folk musicians too. There’s a sitting area with stuffed Smurfs and Care Bears, popular with the kids, who also love the retro Pac-Man and Ms. Pac-Man video games.

You can browse through original *Time*

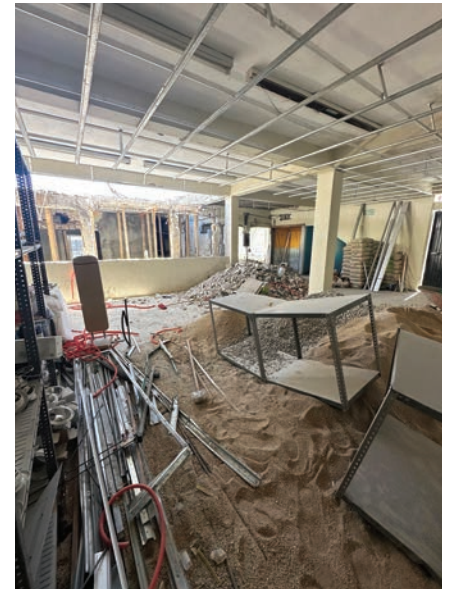
and *Life* magazines from the ‘60s and ‘70s, and thumb through record albums of the same era. Eat in diner-style booths, with salt and pepper shakers and wall hangings in a ‘70s mushroom theme. There’s even macrame hangings and a fondue pot. Upstairs, a Volkswagen van forms the basis of the bar, where you can order a beer or choose from a variety of mixed drinks. There’s also live music upstairs once a week.

Despite the decades old theme, Cool Beans is bright, open, and clean. And while the memorabilia, murals and music might draw you in the door, the food is what will bring you back.

Everything is made in-house from

(BELOW) | Rooftop dining area. Murals of musicians on the exterior of Cool Beans.





scratch, from the bread and buns for sandwiches and burgers, to the sauces like raspberry vinaigrette and spicy ranch. Food is sourced locally as much as possible, and you can drop in to grab goodies from the in-house bakery (many using Grandma's recipes) if you can't stop for a sit-down meal.

The menu is peppered with creativity, with names invoking a '60s or '70s musician or song, or reflecting happiness and joy. Burgers include the homemade beef burger stuffed with three kinds of cheese, known as the Cool Cat. Red Red Swine is the pastor burger; Three Little Birds is the hand-breaded fried chicken burger; and the On the Road Again beef burger is popular, featuring in-house cooked ribeye.

Good Buddies are the homemade sides, offering potato or sweet potato chips or fries, the addictive onion rings, and mac & cheese. Among the sandwiches are Elation, Ecstasy, Euphoria and Paradise, and salads include In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida and Berry Groovy. There's a kids menu, and delicious drinks like smoothies, milkshakes and floats.

Breakfast is a highlight, and is served all day, in keeping with diner tradition. The chilaquiles are popular, known as Chill All-Kill Less, or get on the Soul Train of fried chicken and waffles.

So would you like to add a little whimsy

(ABOVE) | At the top, the current dining area. Below, a view of the dining area during construction.

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to the everyday, a little more fun to go with a delicious made-from-scratch meal? Everything can be Cool Beans in San José del Cabo, where Angel wants to share her good memories with everybody who comes through the doors.

“This is my happy bubble,” she concludes. “I moved the happy bubble to Los Cabos, and I hope it can be everybody else’s happy bubble.” **El Fin!**

(BELOW) | Arcade games. Mural of musicians in the stairwell.

